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Off the menu

Making a difference at your school

Student fact sheet

The WA School Canteen Association Inc. (WASCA) recognises that schools have an important role to play in promoting health and wellbeing. A school that does this well involves the whole school community of Principals, teachers, parent body, parents **and** students.

A Health Promoting School is a school that is constantly strengthening its capacity as a healthy setting for living, learning and working. Students can support a 'whole school approach' to health and well being by being advocates within the school community.



10 Tips for students to make a difference in the school



1. **Request a meeting** with your Canteen Supervisor to ask about current efforts to improve the menu and find out how you can get involved. He/she can answer questions about everything from menu items and preparation methods to waiting time in line. For more detailed questions, the Canteen Supervisor may refer you to the parent body or Canteen Committee who oversees canteen operations.

2. Find out if your school has a **student advisory group or health committee** to provide feedback on meal choices and help with special events. This is your chance to get involved and have your voice heard!



3. Talk to the school Principal and/or parent body about **fundraisers**. All food and drinks provided in public schools must comply with the Department of Education's *Healthy Food and Drink* policy including fundraisers organised by the Principal or teachers. Fundraisers organised by the parent body are exempt. Make sure the school fundraising supports a whole school approach to healthy eating by using non food based when possible, see the WASCA fundraising booklet for ideas!

4. Put some **positive peer pressure** on your friends, encouraging them to try the healthier menu choices and the variety of fruits and vegetables offered from the canteen. Sometimes we all need a little encouragement to give a new food a try!



Department of **Health**
Department of **Education**



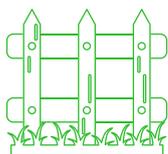
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5. Investigate the possibility of starting a **school garden**. Students are far more likely to eat fruits and vegetables when they raise the produce themselves. To get you started, check out the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program.

6. Offer to host a **fruit and vegetable taste test** using produce from the garden, or to sample a new, healthy school menu item. No one can pass up a free sample, so taste tests are a great way to encourage kids to try new foods. Your Canteen Supervisor may need some help setting up and handing out the food.



7. Ask for a copy of your schools **Healthy Food and Drink Policy** and the process for updating it. This document establishes guidelines on all food and drinks provided at school e.g. canteens, classrooms, camps and excursions.

8. Offer to organize a **student recipe contest!** Work with the Canteen Supervisor to create contest rules, send any suggested recipes to WASCA for assessment or use one of the many on the WASCA website. The winning recipe could end up on the canteen menu.



**THANK
YOU**

9. Give your canteen staff some **appreciation!** Show the people who work in your canteen that you appreciate their hard work to serve up healthy items. Place a thank you note in the school newsletter, on the school Facebook page or thank them at an assembly.

10. Don't forget to **buy your school lunch!** The more students and staff who use the canteen the more opportunities the canteen will have to make healthy improvements to the menu.



Need more help?

Contact WASCA for support resources such as posters and cookbooks. The WASCA website also has a wealth of information such as recipes, fundraising kit and templates for surveys.

wasca@education.wa.edu.au - 08 9264 4999
www.waschoolcanteens.org.au

