

Canteen Menu Planning Guide

In schools and on the web now!

The *Canteen Menu Planning Guide* has been forwarded to all schools across NSW.

The *Guide* aims to make the job of designing healthy canteen menus a lot easier.

The *Guide* provides information about the nutritional value of foods and selecting the best choices. It outlines the nutrient criteria for identifying foods that need to be restricted in their sale.

A copy of the *Guide* has been posted to all school principals by the NSW Department of Education and Training, the Catholic Education Commission and the Association of Independent Schools.

Extra copies of the *Guide* can be printed from the CD or accessed via the websites of:

NSW Health

www.health.nsw.gov.au/obesity

Department of Education & Training

www.schools.nsw.edu.au

Catholic Education Commission

www.cecnsw.edu.au

Association of Independent Schools

www.studentnet.edu.au/aispd



Communication Kit

As mentioned earlier, the *Canteen Menu Planning Guide* includes a 'Communication Kit' CD-ROM.

The CD-ROM includes a copy of the *Guide*, the 'Occasional Food Criteria', Canteen Menu Planner Model and presentations with accompanying scripts.

The presentation that is included on the CD-ROM will be useful for the entire school community.

The presentation outlines why healthy canteens are important, and how the Strategy came about.

This information will enhance the school community's knowledge and awareness, and may help to engage additional support for setting up a healthy canteen.

The presentation is suitable for parents' group meetings, student or staff meetings, and canteen committee meetings.

The materials can be placed on the school server for access by students and teachers as part of the teaching and learning process, and put onto your school website for access by parents.

This newsletter is for circulation to:

- Principals
- Canteen managers and volunteers
- Students (SRC)
- Food manufacturers
- Distributors
- Lessees and catering companies
- Parent organisation
- Teachers
- Parents & Carers

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In a recent NSW School Canteen Association Secondary School Survey of 140 students, 27 students ranked a salad sandwich as one of their three favourite foods sold by the canteen.

"Salad sandwiches received more votes than any other item!" said the NSW SCA Adolescent Health Officer.

The NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy is a partnership between the NSW Department of Education and Training, the NSW Department of Health, the Catholic Education Commission and the Association of Independent Schools

Canteen Menu Planner

The Canteen Menu Planner is a tool designed to assist those involved in planning school canteen menus.



The food spectrum is a visual guide that shows you where certain foods fit on the menu.

Each part of the spectrum has key words that describe how these foods fit on the menu and help to guide menu planning.

RED 'Occasionally'

Do not sell these foods on more than two occasions per term

AMBER 'Select Carefully'

Do not let these foods dominate the menu. Avoid large serving sizes.

GREEN 'Fill the Menu'

Encourage and promote these foods

There is a definite line between the AMBER and RED segments on the food spectrum.

This is because under the NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy the sale of foods in the RED segment needs to be limited to twice per term.

To help schools determine RED foods there is an *Occasional Food Criteria Table* on page 13 in the *Canteen Menu Planning Guide*.

Food Industry Briefing

A food industry briefing was held on 1 March to inform interested food manufacturers, suppliers and peak bodies of the key components of the *Fresh Tastes* strategy, including the nutrient criteria for 'occasional' foods.

The briefing attracted over 150 attendees and provided the food industry with the opportunity to ask questions about the Strategy. The NSW Health website will also aim to answer many of the frequently asked questions www.health.nsw.gov.au/obesity.

Food manufacturers and distributors that attended the briefing or requested information on other occasions will receive the *Canteen Menu Planning Guide*.

The briefing session suggested some ideas as to how the food industry might support the implementation of the new strategy including:

- providing easy, reliable access to nutritious food and drink choices through canteen distribution channels
- the development of nutritious, competitively priced foods and drinks, including snack food options
- providing promotional materials for use in the school canteen
- providing equipment, both large and small, along with food products.

The food industry was also encouraged to work with the NSW School Canteen Association through the Registered Products program and to involve themselves in the 'Healthy Kids' School Canteen Food Expos.

Both provide excellent opportunities to promote products to school canteen decision makers.

Train the Trainer Session

To assist schools in accessing support to implement the Strategy, the *Fresh Tastes* project team ran the 'Train the Trainer' session for Health and Education professionals across the State.

The session was specifically targeted to Area Health Service staff (ie community dietitians, health promotion officers, school nurses), student welfare consultants and TAFE teaching staff.

The training session was repeated in seven locations throughout NSW (one in Sydney and six in rural and regional areas) with a total of 132 people attending.

The session aimed to inform participants of the *Fresh Tastes @ School* strategy, familiarise them with the *Canteen Menu Planning Guide* and *Communication Kit*, answer questions and discuss ways participants can support schools during the change process.

Feedback on the sessions was very favourable. Participants left the session well prepared to support schools in developing a *Fresh Tastes* canteen.

Schools will be advised of local information sessions.

These may be in the form of canteen network meetings or more formalised training sessions for principals, teachers, parents and other school community members.

Next phase of resources

The *Fresh Tastes* project team is developing the second phase of resources to support schools in implementing a healthy canteen.

The *Canteen Menu Planning Guide* contained the nuts and bolts of the Strategy. The next package will be more about 'How to go about' developing a healthy canteen.

For some schools, this may be old news as they are well on their way, but there will be some Fresh new ideas for all schools.

The next package of materials will include the following.

The development of a *Fresh Tastes* Canteen

- a whole school approach.

Setting the canteen's direction

- committee, canteen policy and communication.

Planning and managing change

- self assessment checklist, action plan.

Managing a successful canteen

- staff, money, food and promotion.

Check your progress

- feedback and review, maintaining the momentum.

Canteen staff and computer technology

The recent Food Expo provided an opportunity to collect some information on canteen manager use of and access to computer technology.

The results showed that the majority of the 133 canteen managers surveyed have embraced computer technology.

Of those surveyed 82% have access to a computer either at school or home or both. They all use a computer in their work.

Of those surveyed 16% can get someone else to access information for them.

Only 2% reported that they don't use a computer, have no access to one and no one to help.

The computer is used mainly for canteen management tasks as well as producing promotional material and printing.



NSW School Canteen Association - Food Expo

Over 600 canteen managers and volunteers attended the NSW School Canteen Association Food Expo at Blacktown on the 24 March.

There were representatives from over 30 companies at the Expo. They reported that they were "rushed off their feet".

A number of Area Health Service staff were also present. These staff will be supporting the Healthy School Canteen Awards program conducted by the NSW School Canteen Association, throughout 2004.

The response to the presentations on the *Canteen Menu Planner* was positive. Many canteen staff took the opportunity to use the *Occasional Food Criteria Table* to assess food products at the Food Expo following the presentations.

A number of questions were raised by those attending the session on the *Canteen Menu Planner*. These included questions on compliance, foods that fit the occasional food criteria, fundraising, communication, food access and food ideas.

Answers to these questions will be provided in a variety of ways. These include:

- the NSW School Canteen Association 'Healthy Kids' newsletter – a selection will be answered in the next edition

- the NSW Health website – answers to the questions raised at the Food Industry briefing are on the website – some questions are similar to those asked at the Food Expo
- the Term 2 P&C Federation Journal also answers some commonly asked questions
- fact sheets – available on the NSW School Canteen Association website
- *Canteen Menu Planning Guide* – a look through the Guide will answer most of the specific food related questions
- the next set of resources will also answer many questions
- ongoing – some questions raised are currently being researched eg improving access to certain products, ideas on streamlining food production. These will be answered as soon as possible.

STOP PRESS

NSW School Canteen Association launches their new website!



#Healthy Kids
+ Calculator =

Use the new calculator to determine if a food is an 'occasional' food or not and find healthier alternatives.

Visit
www.schoolcanteens.org.au

Money matters

A concern of some is the possibility of reduced profit when moving to a healthier canteen.

Case studies show that profits can be maintained and possibly improved. Consider and follow up the factors listed below.

Phasing in new foods

The successful phasing in of new foods is important in maintaining the profitability of the canteen. Use the process described in the column below to support the phasing in of new foods in the canteen.

Portion Control

Standard serve size and portion control is essential to ensure customers receive food of the same quality and quantity each time they buy it. For example, a salad sandwich should have the same quantity of ingredients on it each time it is prepared. This also means the cost to the canteen is the same and profit is maintained.

Phasing in new foods

- Select a food you want to change.
- Look for alternatives, in your distributor product list and the NSW School Canteen Association Canteen Buyers Guide.
- Trial these alternatives with your customers eg taste tests, samples.
- Get feedback.
- Select one alternative.
- Promote this as a 'special' at the canteen or use it as part of a 'meal deal'.
- Evaluate your choice based on customer acceptance and interest.
- If successful incorporate this food as part of the regular menu.

Overheads

Consider the cost of overheads. Your canteen needs to turnover enough money to support your food and staff costs. If your canteen is volunteer run, staff costs won't be an issue. Turnover also affects the number of menu items that can be stocked in the canteen.

Mark ups

The mark up is the difference between the wholesale price of food and the selling price. If you make foods consider the cost of **all** ingredients and don't forget to include the cost of packaging in your costing calculation.

Accounting for stock

Record all wastage (ie left over foods that are not sold). Record the cost of foods that are given to your volunteers as lunches. Over a year these costs can add up and will be reflected in the profit made.

Stocktakes

A stocktake of all remaining food and drink should be done at the end of each term. There may be considerable profit tied up in the stock that is remaining at the end of a term. All stock on hand is accounted for in the profit and loss statement.

WEBLINKS

For more information about the strategy and to obtain additional copies of this newsletter go to websites at:

NSW Health
www.health.nsw.gov.au/obesity

Department of Education & Training
www.schools.det.nsw.edu.au

Catholic Education Commission
www.cecnsw.catholic.edu.au

Association of Independent Schools
www.studentnet.edu.au/aispd

For other helpful information visit:
 The NSW P&C Federation
 Ph: 9360 2481 www.pandc.org.au.

The NSW School Canteen Association Ph: 9876 1300
www.schoolcanteens.org.au

Promotion

Good promotion of foods and drinks is essential in a profitable canteen. Consider the following points.

- When you introduce a new product let the students know about it.
- Foods in the canteen should be positioned so they can be seen by all students. Put them on top of the counter or in special display arrangements.
- The canteen menu either in the form of a printed menu or as a menu board is another form of promotion.
- Ask your food distributor to provide you with point of sale material or ask students to create 'specials' fliers to promote new foods.

Further advice on each of these areas is available at the NSW School Canteen Association website www.schoolcanteens.org.au.



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