



Department of
Education
and Training

Healthy food and drink choices in schools

Information for parents and carers

The school day is often busy, filled with learning and involving concentration and physical activity. Food is fuel for our bodies and healthy food provides your children with the energy and nutrients they need to get through the day.

Food from home

We recommend these five simple steps to help your children get through the day:

- 1) A healthy breakfast
- 2) Plenty of fruit and vegetables
- 3) Dairy products – two to three serves of milk, cheese or yogurt to meet their daily calcium needs
- 4) Water – the best thirst quencher
- 5) Lunch and snacks like those to the right.

Tips for packing a lunch box

What you pack in your child's lunch box is really important. Try to include as many healthy foods as possible – and definitely keep junk away from school.

Packing a frozen drink or an ice brick in your child's lunch box will help to keep food fresh and safe to eat.

Keeping your child's lunch box healthy and interesting can be a challenge, so it's important to find food that will stay in the lunch box and out of the bin!

When making lunches at home we encourage parents to choose a variety of foods.

Healthy lunch ideas

- ✓ sandwiches, rolls or wraps
- ✓ quiche
- ✓ mini pizza with cheese and vegetable toppings
- ✓ muffins made with corn or grated vegetables such as carrot or zucchini.

Healthy snack/recess ideas

- ✓ rice cakes and reduced fat cream cheese
- ✓ fresh fruit pieces and yoghurt dip
- ✓ plain popcorn
- ✓ small tub yoghurt
- ✓ cheese stick or triangle
- ✓ muffins with fruit
- ✓ english muffin and cheese
- ✓ fruit bread
- ✓ scone – plain or fruit or pumpkin
- ✓ pikelets
- ✓ small sandwich
- ✓ crispbreads and spread
- ✓ wholemeal crackers and reduced fat cheese.

Please keep these foods at home

- chips, crisps and similar snacks
- high fat savoury biscuits and snacks
- sweet biscuits and cereal bars
- lollies and chocolates
- fruit straps
- cream and chocolate biscuits
- iced cakes and buns
- soft drinks and artificially sweetened drinks.



A couple of recipes for creative lunch box ideas

Roast Vegetable Frittata

This roast veggie frittata makes two serves and is a yummy alternative to a sandwich.

Get your children to help you make it – there aren't too many ingredients and it's quick and easy to put together. It can also be eaten hot or cold so it's ideal to slice up and put in your child's lunchbox.

Any combination of roasted vegetables can be used, for example red capsicums, sweet potatoes, pumpkin and parsnips. Try other left over cooked vegetables.

Ingredients

- 4 eggs
- ¼ teaspoon dried basil salt and pepper
- 1 cup cooked roast vegetables, cubed
- 1 tablespoon parmesan cheese

Method

1. Whisk eggs with basil, salt and pepper.
2. Heat roasted vegetables in a non-stick frypan for two minutes. Pour over eggs and reduce heat. Cover and cook until almost cooked.
3. Sprinkle with parmesan and place under the grill. Grill until browned and set.
4. Slice into wedges and serve.

Banana loaf

This simple recipe doesn't require beating or whisking – all that's needed is a bit of elbow grease to stir the ingredients together. Get your children to have a go!

The banana loaf makes 12 slices. Freeze slices individually and pack into lunchboxes.

Ingredients

- 2 cups self raising flour
- ¼ cup raw sugar
- 2 ripe bananas, mashed
- 2 oranges, juice and rind
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- ¼ cup vegetable oil

Method

1. Combine flour with raw sugar in a large bowl.
2. Mix mashed bananas, orange juice and rind with egg and oil.
3. Stir into flour and sugar. Pour mixture into lightly greased loaf pan and bake at 180c for 45 minutes or until cooked.
4. Let loaf cool. Serve dusted with icing sugar.

At school

Schools have a vital role to play in helping reduce the worldwide epidemic of childhood obesity. It is important to reinforce messages being taught in the classroom by modelling healthy food and drink choices in canteens and tuck shops, with class treats, on school camps and excursions.

The traffic light menu

In Western Australia, public schools follow a traffic light system of standards to ensure a wide range of foods that make up the majority of a healthy diet are on the menu. These easy to follow signals help to plan menus full of healthy, nutritious and affordable food for your children.

The table to the right provides examples of GREEN, AMBER and RED foods under the food and drink standards for public schools. Your school will also have a policy about nuts and nut spreads.

Healthy food and drink choices in schools

GREEN	Examples
Fill the menu with:	
Breads	A variety of bread types
Cereals	Wholegrain cereals, pasta, noodles, rice
Vegetables	Vegetables and salads (reduced fat dressing only), all salad mixtures
Fruit	Fresh, frozen and tinned (in natural juices)
Legumes	Tinned (eg bean mix, kidney beans), cooked
Reduced fat dairy products	Reduced fat, milk (plain or flavoured), yoghurt (fresh, frozen, plain or fruit), cheese
Lean meat, fish, poultry and alternatives	All lean meats, chicken (no skin) or registered meats*, fish (eg tuna, salmon, sardines) and egg
Sandwich fillings	All lean meats, chicken, fish, creamed corn/corn kernels, egg, canned spaghetti (reduced salt), salads, baked beans, low fat cheese, hommos, vegemite, yeast spreads and fish spreads*
Hot food	Jaffles/hot rolls/toasted sandwiches (fillings as for sandwich fillings), baked potatoes, rice, soups, toast, English muffins, crumpets (wholemeal), raisin toast, and meals meeting the criteria for registration such as curry and rice and pasta dishes
Snacks	Yoghurt, scones, raisin or fruit bread, pikelets, cheese sticks, bread sticks, bruschetta, water crackers, rice crackers, rice cakes, popcorn (plain/low fat/flavoured), dried fruit, seed packs, trail mix based on breakfast cereals, registered snacks*
Drinks	Water, reduced fat milk, fresh fruit milkshakes, soy, 100% fruit juice (small size), plain mineral water
AMBER	Examples
Select carefully:	
Breakfast cereals	Refined cereals with added sugar
Full fat dairy foods	Milk, yoghurt, custard, low fat dairy desserts and cheese
Savoury commercial products	Registered products such as ovenable fish/chicken/potato portions should be chosen because they are lower in fat/salt*
Snack food bars	Registered products such as breakfast bars, cereal bars and fruit bars.
Savoury snacks	Registered products such as oven bake vege chips, garlic or herb bread lightly spread*
Cakes, muffins and sweet biscuits	Registered products such as cakes, muffins or biscuits (reduced fat and/or sugar based on wholemeal flour*)
Ice-creams, ice-blocks, fruit based icepoles, slushies	Registered ice-creams, milk based confectionary, frozen yoghurts and rice cream*
Drinks	Fruit drinks, mineral waters flavoured with fruit juice, low joule cordials
RED	Examples
Off the menu:	
Sugar and artificially sweetened drinks	Soft drinks, artificially sweetened soft drinks, energy drinks, cordials, sports drinks and mineral waters flavoured with sugar, high caffeine drinks (eg drinks containing guarana).
Confectionary	All types, caramelised pop corn
Pastry items	All types that do not meet the criteria for registration
Sandwich meats	High fat sandwich meats including polony and salami
Deep fried foods	All types
Savoury snacks	Crisps, chips and other similar products that do not meet the criteria for registration
Ice-creams	Chocolate coated and premium ice-creams
Sandwich fillings	Honey, jam, chocolate spreads, confectionary sprinkles
Cakes, muffins and sweet pastries	Croissants, doughnuts, cream filled buns, cakes, sweet pastries, slices

* Meets the criteria for Star Choice registration