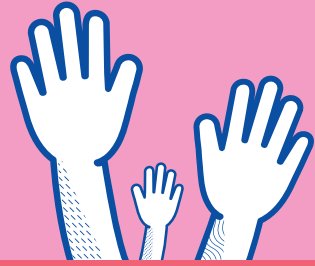


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**CREATE HEALTHY
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WE CAN CREATE HEALTHY SCHOOLS



Every school can foster a culture of healthy choices and habits by providing nutritious food and drink choices, as well as time for recreation and sport, and putting practical education about food and physical activity on the school curriculum.¹

Providing healthy choices in school canteens and cafeterias to ensure children have access to lower energy density meals and snacks, and to water as an alternative to sugar-sweetened beverages, can have a considerable influence on the development of positive attitudes towards food and promote healthy behaviours.¹ In some countries, there are also opportunities for schools to participate in programmes on food growing, harvesting, cooking and eating. For example, kitchen garden projects in the United Kingdom and Australia support primary schools to bring pleasurable food education and cooking skills to life, and aim to change the way children think about food through fun and hands-on learning.^{2,3}

In some cases, policy changes can support improvements in access to healthier foods and nutrition education in schools. For example, the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act 2010 that allows the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to make real reforms to the school lunch and breakfast programmes such as establishing national nutrition standards for all foods sold

on the school campus throughout the school day.⁴ The establishment of standards for meals provided in schools, or foods and beverages sold in schools, that meet healthy nutrition guidelines, is one of a set of recommendations by the World Health Organization to promote healthy school environments.¹

Inclusive, quality physical education should also be part of the school curriculum. Physical education programmes provide instruction and skill-learning opportunities that contribute to the development of physical literacy, which is linked to a greater likelihood of life-long participation, as well as positive attitudes and behaviours.^{5,6} Regular participation in quality physical education can also improve a child's attention span, enhance their cognitive control and processing.¹

For some schools, appointing a person to oversee investment and policies that support a healthy school environment may have wide-reaching benefits for improving the physical and mental health of students and staff that extend to the whole community.⁷

Schools can be champions of healthy behaviours among children, staff, parents, families and the wider community by cultivating an environment that supports good nutrition and physical activity.

This factsheet is aimed at



Schools

1. WHO (2016). Report of the commission on ending childhood obesity.
2. Food Revolution Day. School Resources. <http://www.foodrevolutionday.com/schools/#DVCHyRBLzJQL3Elf.97>
3. Kitchen Garden Foundation. Teaching Resources. <http://www.kitchengardenfoundation.org.au/free-resources/teaching-resources>
4. American Heart Association. Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act: A health recipe for school nutrition. https://www.heart.org/idc/groups/heart-public/@wcm/@adv/documents/downloadable/ucm_474338.pdf
5. Let's Move: Active Schools. <http://www.letsmoveschools.org/about>
6. Australian Sports Commission. Clearinghouse for Sport. https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/knowledge_base/organised_sport/value_of_sport/school_sport
7. The Guardian. Want a healthy school? A head of wellbeing could be the answer <https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/2015/nov/03/healthy-school-head-of-wellbeing-the-answer>