

Appendix 5:

Newsletter Articles for Q4: *Live Outside the Box* Campaign

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This school is ready. Is your child ready to...



All primary schools in the local area have been invited to participate in a fun competition aimed at raising community awareness about the components in our daily lives contributing to the increasing rate of obesity in children and adolescents.

Q4: Live Outside the Box aims to promote practical ideas for including more daily physical activity and healthy eating habits as ways of combating overweight and obesity.

This competition was developed by the *Q4: Live Outside the Box* Working Party, a group of local government and non-government agencies working together to raise awareness in your local community about the factors contributing to the problem.

Soon, your child will be bringing home a *Q4: Live Outside the Box* passport.

Over 2 weeks they will be recording:

- Time spent watching TV/computers,
- Time spent being active,
- Amount of “extra” foods they eat, and
- Amount of fruit and vegetables eaten each day.

Your child may also bring home a few “Activity Sheets” which are designed to be a fun learning experience for your child and your family. We hope you enjoy these activities with your child.

PRIZES!

Each child participating will receive a certificate at the end of the 2 weeks. There are also lucky draw prizes for students in each year and for the 3 schools with the highest participation rates!

Have fun Living Outside the Box!

TIPS FOR HEALTHY FAMILY LIFESTYLES

There has been an increase in the number of children who are overweight or obese.

Why?

There are numerous reasons, some of these include:

- Children are eating more high fat and sugar snacks and less fruit and vegetables.
- Busy families rely more on takeaway and snack foods.
- Children are being driven to and from school instead of walking.
- Children are spending more time being sedentary, eg watching TV, and playing computer and video games.
- Children are spending less time engaged in outdoor play.

What can families do?

- Set a good example yourself.
- Even if it is difficult to have a proper family meal each night, try to plan two or three nights per week where you can all sit down together.
- Involve children in food preparation and shopping to inform them of healthy eating choices.
- In summer, select one night where the family goes for a walk together.
- Try to place some foods eg. Vegetables in the middle of the table at mealtimes so children can select foods in the quantities they want.
- Encourage water as a thirst quencher instead of soft drink and other sugar containing drinks.
- Always eat breakfast to keep the metabolism going and to prevent poor morning snack choices.
- Let members of the family have their say about main meals they really like, and those they don't, and try to incorporate some of their ideas.
- No food should be banned or called 'bad' or 'unhealthy'. Instead some foods are eaten as 'every day' foods and others as 'sometimes' foods.
- Discourage eating in front of the TV or computer, as this encourages 'non-hungry' eating.



KEEP AN EYE ON TV WATCHING!

Did you know?

- Watching more TV increases the risk of obesity.
- The more TV watched the less active kids are.
- The more TV watched the more food products seen and the more food products requested.

Healthy TV Tips

- Regularly discuss with children the content of the programs they are watching; be involved in the selection of programs.
- Limit the amount of TV watched and develop rules / guidelines for all family members.
- Promote TV as a privilege.
- Use the TV classification system eg, PG, G.
- Children will copy your behaviour eg. Eating dinner in front of the TV.
- Do not use TV as a reward or punishment.

Alternatives to Watching TV

Outdoor activities

- Involve children in gardening.
- Walking with the family.
- Involve children in after school activities like sport.

Indoor activities

- Play family games, not the computer e.g. monopoly, cards, twister.
- Listen to music your children enjoy and encourage dancing to it.

Reference: Perlstein, R. & Edis, K. (2003) *Primary Fight Back, Healthy Eating and Physical Activity: A Resource for Teachers, Students & their Parents*. International Diabetes Institute, Victoria.

SNACK FOOD AND LUNCH BOX DILEMMAS

What are our children eating?

On the day of the National Nutrition Survey in 1995:

- 1/3 of Australian children had consumed unhealthy snack foods eg. potato crisps
- ½ of Australian children had consumed confectionary eg. chocolate/ lollies
- ¾ had consumed high fat food eg. biscuits, commercial hamburgers
- 1/3 did not consume any fruit or vegetables

Snack ideas to take to school:

- Fresh fruit - whole or pieces
- Fruit tubs/tinned fruit
- Dried fruit (but these can stick to teeth)
- Chopped vegetable sticks
- Cheese sticks
- Yoghurt tubs (need to be kept cold)
- Custard snack packs (need to be kept cold)
- Milk (long life milk packs can be frozen to keep foods cold)
- Scones/pikelets
- Fruit bread or buns
- Wholemeal crackers/crispbreads with spread/cheese
- Rice cakes
- Corn thins
- Sandwiches (triangles / pinwheels / ribbon) or dinner rolls

Snack ideas at home:

Any of the above ideas, PLUS:

- Start the day with breakfast to help prevent poor morning snack choices
- Try a platter of fruit or vegetables pieces prior to dinner when children are often hungry
- Freeze orange quarters or other fruits on hot days
- Whole wheat breakfast cereal
- Toast/toasted muffins/crumpets/toasted sandwich
- Fruit smoothie - use reduced fat milk
- Vegetable soup
- Discourage eating in front of the TV or computer, as this encourages 'non hungry' eating
- Have water readily available

DRINKS

Water

The human body can last weeks without food, but only days without water! We need to drink water everyday, as it can not be stored in the body. The amount we need depends on our metabolism, the weather, the food we eat and our activity levels.

Offer water as a drink - it really is the best thirst quencher!

Tips for encouraging children to drink more water:

- Pack a water bottle when going out
- Place a jug of water on the table during meal times – try adding a slice of lemon/orange
- Keep a jug of chilled water in the fridge
- Let your children see the whole family enjoy drinking water!

Milk

Milk is an excellent source of many nutrients, particularly calcium, protein, riboflavin and vitamin B12. Milk is very important for strong, healthy teeth and bones.

- Reduced fat milks such as 'Lite White™' should be encouraged for children over the age of two. Reduced fat milks contain the same nutrients as whole milk, except they are much lower in saturated fat and therefore energy content.
- Reduced fat milks should not be used for children under 2 years because children of this age have higher energy requirements. Skim milk should not be given until after the age of 5 years.
- It is preferable to provide plain milk, but flavoured milks are OK.
- Soymilk fortified with calcium can be an acceptable alternative to dairy milk.

Fruit Juice

It is easy to believe that fruit juice is a healthy drink, BUT Fruit juice contains sugars found naturally in fresh fruits, which become very concentrated when made into juice. Fruit juice lacks the fibre that is found in whole fruit. A piece of fruit is a better choice than juice.

Soft Drink & Cordial

Soft drinks and cordials contain large amounts of sugar and energy (kilojoules). These drinks fall into the 'extra' category of the 'Australian Guide to Healthy Eating', and therefore it is recommended that they are consumed only occasionally. Trends in beverage consumption over the past few

decades suggest that soft drinks and cordials are increasingly popular with children and may be replacing more nutritious drinks such as milk and water.

Excess consumption of soft drinks and cordials has been associated with poor dental health and tooth decay. Importantly, the rise in soft drink sales over time is consistent with the increase in childhood overweight and obesity.

INCLUDING MORE FRUIT AND VEGETABLES IN YOUR DAY

Making Fruit and Vegetables More Appealing

- Roast potatoes, sweet potatoes, carrot, pumpkin with a little olive oil in the oven and serve with hummus or tatzsiki dip.
- Chop up lots of different vegetables e.g. capsicum, mushroom, cherry tomatoes, carrots into fingers and eat in place of cooked vegetables.
- Try a platter of fruit or vegetables just prior to dinner when kids are hungry.
- Try rolling banana in orange juice and coconut.
- Freeze orange quarters or other fruits on hot days.
- Thread chopped and washed capsicum, pineapple, and mushroom chunks onto a skewer and BBQ/grill.

Try these easy recipes:

Baked Bananas

Combine 1/3 cup orange juice, 1 tablespoon honey and 1 teaspoon cinnamon; pour over 3 sliced bananas and bake in a moderate oven (180°C) for 20 minutes. Serve with low fat vanilla yoghurt.

Strawberry Smoothie

Combine 1 cup washed strawberries with 1 cup strawberry low fat yoghurt in a blender. Add 1-cup low fat milk and 1 teaspoon golden syrup or honey and blend until smooth.

Veggie Pizza

Buy a pre made pizza base / Lebanese bread from the supermarket. Spread with tomato paste and top with grated carrot, zucchini, pineapple and sliced red pepper. Sprinkle with grated reduced fat cheese and herbs and bake in hot (210°C) oven for 15 minutes.

Lavash Bread Rolls

Spread lavash bread with hummus dip and top with salsa, sliced tomato, grated carrot and reduced fat grated cheese. Roll up tightly and cut into pieces.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

What is physical activity?

Being active simply means MOVING your body every day!

How much physical activity should children do?

Children should accumulate 60 minutes or more of moderate intensity physical activity on most or preferably every day of the week.

Examples of some moderate intensity activity:

- Dancing
- Playing on play equipment
- Throwing a ball
- Walking briskly
- Gardening
- Raking leaves
- Bike riding
- Trampolining
- Playing volley ball

How to encourage your children to be more active

Parents are important role models for children, Children will copy what they see their parents do rather than what they hear their parents say. So lead by example and move your body daily. Try some of these ideas for being more active:

- Use stairs instead of the lift
- Develop active parking habits (park further away from your destination)
- Walk to local shops
- Sweep footpaths and driveways
- Get up to change the channel on the television
- Have a walk/play outside before or after dinner instead of watching TV
- Do some housework
- Fly a kite

QUICK MEALS FOR PARENTS IN A HURRY!

Souvlaki

Stir-fry or BBQ strips of lean lamb, slice and place onto warm pita bread with reduced fat natural yoghurt, chopped tomato, grated carrots, lettuce, cucumber and mild chilli sauce. Roll up and eat.

Cook up a soupy storm

Simply chop up any vegetables you have e.g. potatoes, pumpkin, carrot, broccoli – add stock to just cover the vegetables and then cook until tender. Puree and serve with toast /rolls. Alternatively, add some pasta / drained canned legumes (butter beans, kidney beans) and chopped tomatoes and cook a further 10-15 minutes for hearty soup.

Curried chicken

Stir- fry skinless chicken breast and chopped onion until cooked through. Add a big tin of puree tomato, 2 teaspoons of curry powder, 1/2 cup of low fat evaporated milk and a few drops of coconut essence. Cook for 20 minutes. Serve with rice and steamed vegetables.

Quick burger

Mix together finely chopped onion, grated carrot/zucchini, beaten egg and lean beef mince. Shape into patties and grill or barbecue until cooked through. Serve on a hamburger bun with salad and sauce.

READING FOOD LABELS PART 1: NUTRITION CLAIMS

Learning to read food labels when shopping is an easy way to make healthy food choices for your children. There are three areas where nutrition information is displayed on food labels:

1. Nutrition claims
2. Ingredients list
3. Nutrition information panel

This series of articles gives you some hints and tips to keep in mind when shopping.

Nutrition Claims

These are statements made on the packaging of foods by manufacturers to attract consumers. Although these claims can be helpful when looking for a healthy product, they can also be misleading. Have you come across any of these common nutrition claims?

Low joule	Food is artificially sweetened and so is lower in kilojoules (or energy).
No added sugar	There are no added sources of sugar like glucose, sucrose, honey, fruit juice or malt.
Reduced fat	Contains 25% less fat than the normal product.
Low fat	Contains less fat than a reduced fat product. By law must contain less than 3g of fat per 100g.
Cholesterol free	These products contain less than 3mg per 100g of cholesterol. This claim can be misleading as foods that are cholesterol free can still contain a lot of fat.
Light / Lite	Another confusing claim. This can mean the product is light in colour, flavour, texture, weight, salt, sugar or fat. Be aware!!

READING FOOD LABELS PART 2: THE INGREDIENTS LIST

The ingredient list is a good guide to how healthy a product is.

Ingredients are listed in order from most to least. If sources of fat, sugar or salt are listed closer to the top of the ingredients list, the product probably isn't such a healthy choice.

Remember there are many words for the same or similar ingredients. Be aware of these when choosing meals and snacks for your children. Some examples are:

Fat	Sugar	Salt
Vegetable fat/oil	Maltose	Sodium
Animal fat/oil	Glucose	Monosodium glutamate (MSG)
Shortening	Sucrose	Sea salt
Tallow	Fructose	Rock salt
Lard	Dextrose	Vegetable salt
Copha	Honey	Mineral salt
Milk solids	Molasses	Baking soda/powder
Coconut oil	Malt & malt extract	Stock
Palm oil	Raw & brown sugar	
	Syrups	

READING FOOD LABELS

PART 3: THE NUTRITION INFORMATION PANEL

We have used an example below of a breakfast cereal that is low in fat, sugar and salt and a good source of fibre. Use the handy hints below when reading labels of other products.

Nutrition Information			Hints
Servings per pack: 2 Serving size: 30g			The servings per pack is the average serving of the product – it may not be your serving size
	Per serve	Per 100g	The Per 100g column is useful to compare similar products
Energy	420kJ	1400kJ	
Protein	3g	10g	
Fat			Look for products with less than 10g fat/100g . If fat is more than 10g/100g, only choose foods that contain other nutrients. For example, dairy products, peanut butter or avocado.
Total	0.6g	2g	
Saturated	0g	0g	
Carbohydrate			Total carbohydrate = simple sugars & starch. Sugars tell you how much of the total carbohydrate is sugar. Choose foods with less than 15g sugar/100g . If sugars are greater than 15g/100g, look at the ingredients list to see the source of the sugar. If the sugar comes from fruit it will be a better choice as the fruit provides other nutrients like fibre, vitamins and minerals.
Total	24g	80g	
Sugars	3g	10g	
Sodium	75mg	250mg	Choose foods with less than 200mg sodium/100g .
Fibre	3g	11g	Choose foods with at least 4g fibre/100g