

## › Introduction

School canteens and other school food services are important educational resources. They have an important role in the provision of food to students and the school community as well as being an integral part of the school environment.

The school canteen should reflect the educational goals of the school and support and complement student learning. When consumed daily, the food provided through the school canteen may comprise a third of a student's total daily intake and have a significant influence on their health and nutrition.

It is important that parents, teachers and students work together to support a whole-school approach to building a school culture in which students actively choose nutritious foods and a healthy lifestyle.

The *'Go for your life' Healthy Canteen Kit* contains the following resources to assist schools to develop healthy canteens and other food services:

- *'Go for your life' Healthy Canteen Kit – School Canteens and Other School Food Services Policy* explains the guiding principles, including food selection, food categories, food safety, and the role of the school council in developing a school food service policy.
- *'Go for your life' Healthy Canteen Kit – Food Planner* assists schools and canteens to make appropriate healthy food choices.
- *'Go for your life' Healthy Canteen Kit – Getting Started* provides advice about how to establish a healthy school food service. It includes healthy fundraising ideas, frequently asked questions and a sample canteen policy.
- *'Go for your life' Healthy Canteen Kit – Student Learning Activities* provides a suite of learning activities for each of the six levels of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) for Years Prep to 10.
- *'Go for your life' Healthy Canteen Kit – Canteen Manual* provides practical information for canteen managers and school personnel to assist with the management and day-to-day running of the school canteen.
- *'Go for your life' Healthy Canteen Kit* CD-ROM provides an electronic copy of the entire kit.
- *At a glance planner* provides a quick reference in poster form to assist with healthy food choices.
- A poster to promote healthy food choices to students.

## A whole-school approach to healthy eating

A health promoting school is one that promotes and supports healthy practices. It regards the health of the students and the broader school community as a priority. This is reflected through the school's curriculum, environment and links with the local community.

The school food services and curriculum relating to healthy eating should complement each other. Ideally, positive peer pressure within the education setting will help create a culture in which nutritious foods and a healthy lifestyle are actively chosen and permeate the whole school environment and impact on the family.

***'A health promoting school is a place where all members of the school community work together to provide students with integrated and positive experiences and structures that promote and protect their health. This includes both the formal and informal curricula in health, the creation of a safe and healthy school environment, the provision of appropriate health services and the involvement of the family and wider community in efforts to promote health'. (World Health Organization, 1996)***

The Health Promoting Schools Framework provides a useful model for schools to promote and protect the health of students. The framework highlights the importance of the relationships between:

- curriculum, teaching and learning
- school organisation, ethos and environment
- community links and partnerships.

The *'Go for your life' Healthy Canteen Kit – Student Learning Activities* contains learning activities that are designed to support a whole-school commitment to move towards a healthier school environment.

The activities are based on a number of standards of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS). Fundamental to the Essential Learning Standards is the integrated focus on the three strands – Physical, Personal and Social Learning, Discipline-based Learning, and Interdisciplinary Learning – to develop deep understanding in learners that can be transferred to new and different circumstances.

While the learning activities are suitable for students at Levels 1–6 of the Essential Learning Standards, teachers may need to adapt the activities to suit their particular local circumstances and the needs of individual students.