

Healthy Meals in Schools Programme (HMSP)

Dear Parent / Guardian,

Health has always been an important aspect of a child's holistic development. To support the holistic development of our youths, the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Health Promotion Board (HPB) have been working closely with schools to implement the Healthy Meals in Schools Programme (HMSP) to promote healthy eating among the children and youth in all mainstream schools (i.e. Primary schools, Secondary Schools, Junior Colleges and the Centralised Institute).

The objective of the programme is to help schools build a supportive environment to promote healthier eating. The programme provides schools with a set of food service guidelines that aim to reduce the amount of fat, salt and sugar in food preparation, as well as encourage the consumption of fruit and vegetables, and wholegrains. For more information on the programme, please visit the HMSP webpage at <http://www.healthhub.sg/live-healthy/511/Healthy%20meals%20in%20school>.

In addition to the preparation and serving of healthier meals in schools, students are also educated on healthy eating, amongst other health topics, during their Physical and Health Education lessons.

Impact of HMSP

To grow optimally, children need the nutritious benefits from the consumption of healthier and balanced meals. The healthier eating habits inculcated from young in the school setting will help them make healthier choices outside of school and later in life. The programme supports increased consumption of wholegrains, fruits and vegetables while reducing saturated fat, sugar and salt in school meals.

Wholegrains, fruits and vegetables are rich in dietary fibre and important vitamins and minerals. An increased intake of these nutritious food is linked to reduced risks of many diseases (e.g. heart disease, stroke and certain cancers) for a child, both now and in the future.

Added sugar in drinks and snacks provide little nutrition value to a child's diet and too much sugar can lead to excessive weight gain and health problems. Most children have a sweet tooth and should be encouraged to consume less food and drinks containing added sugar. This will allow children to gradually adapt to the taste of reduced sugar food and drinks.

Fat is an essential nutrient in a child's diet as it provides energy and helps to absorb, transport and store other important nutrients in the body. However too much fat, especially saturated and trans-fat, can lead to excessive weight gain and health problems (e.g. heart disease).

3 Quick Tips on how you can also bring home the Healthy Meals in Schools Programme:



1. Look out for snacks/drinks with the Healthier Choice Symbol



2. Include at least 20% whole-grain in meals



3. Include more fruits and vegetables to obtain 2 servings of fruits and 2 servings of vegetables a day

HEALTHY AND TASTY MEALS IN SCHOOL

School* meals do not need to be bland in order to be healthier. With the Healthy Meals in Schools Programme, kids can have optimum nutrition and enjoy it too. Here's a peek of what your child is eating in school.



HEALTHIER SNACK

All snacks sold in schools have to be healthier choice certified.



WHOLE-GRAINS

School meals now have at least 20 percent of unpolished grains (e.g. brown rice, wild rice, red cargo rice and oats) or brown rice bee-hoon in the mix so it's easy to have your daily dose of healthy grains.



PROTEINS

Skinless poultry and lean meat are now served in schools.

VEGETABLES

Schools now serve two heaped dessertspoons† of vegetables with every school meal.



FRUIT

Schools now serve half a serving of fruit with every meal.



LOWER SUGAR BEVERAGES

All beverages served in schools are lower in sugar.

*Only for schools participating in the Healthy Meals in Schools Programme.

† Two heaped dessertspoons of vegetables are equivalent to three-quarters of a serving of vegetables.