



### FOOD AND HEALTHY EATING

#### RATIONALE

The Department of Education and Training works closely with the Department of Health to promote the Victorian Healthy Eating Enterprise to schools and their communities.

The Victorian Healthy Eating Enterprise priorities are:

- increased consumption of fruit and vegetables
- decreased consumption of sugar sweetened beverages
- improved access to nutritious food

A healthy lifestyle is vital to good health at all stages of life but especially in adolescence. It is important that young people develop healthy lifestyle habits that can last a lifetime. It is also at this stage that major growth and development occurs, to which nutrition and a well-balanced diet is fundamental.

Positive peer influence within the education setting can create a culture in which nutritious foods and a healthy lifestyle are actively chosen. This can have an impact on choices made by students about food consumption when they are not at school.

Adolescents should eat a wide range of foods so that they have the energy for learning and growing. A 'traffic light' system is used to plan menus full of healthy, nutritious and affordable food and drinks.

The standards require that foods in the:

	GREEN category foods are encouraged. Teenagers should be encouraged to choose freely from these healthy foods.
	AMBER foods should be selected carefully and eaten in moderation.
	RED food and drinks should only be consumed rarely and in small amounts.

Red Cliffs Secondary College endeavours to provide an environment that will have a positive impact on nutritional health and promote a healthy lifestyle in our students, staff and parents.

#### AIM

This policy aims to promote a healthy lifestyle and provide a learning environment that will have a positive impact on the nutritional health of the students, staff and parents.

#### DEFINITIONS

Healthy eating - Healthy eating means eating a variety of foods that give you the nutrients you need to maintain your health, feel good, and have energy. It includes the proportion of the five food groups recommended for consumption each day.

Nutrition - Nutrition is the process of providing or obtaining the food necessary for health and growth.

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Discretionary (or sometimes) food and drinks- Discretionary foods and drinks do not provide the nutrients the body needs, but that may add variety. However, many of these are high in saturated fats, sugars, salt and/or alcohol, and are therefore described as energy dense. They can be included sometimes in small amounts by those who are physically active but are not a necessary part of the diet. Special fundraising activities involving food may be considered under this discretionary category.

Oral health - Oral health is when we can eat, speak and socialise without discomfort or embarrassment. It is about the ability of individuals, groups and populations to make healthy oral choices

## IMPLEMENTATION

At Red Cliffs Secondary College, we will work closely with Victorian Prevention and Health Promotion Achievement Program (Healthy Together Mildura) to promote:

- positive attitudes towards healthy food choices.
- lifestyle practices which can help reduce the incidence of obesity, tooth decay and the number of related diseases.
- personal responsibility for decision making about healthy eating.

To achieve this:

- A committee with representation from staff, students and parents will meet regularly to review food and eating practices within the school.
- The curriculum will support healthy food choices and will increase the knowledge and skills of young people in the production, growing, buying and preparation of fresh, nutritious and affordable healthy food.
- All food cooked at school as part of class programmes will comply with the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*.
- The school will maintain consistent messages about healthy foods in all parts of the school operation.
- Healthy fundraising options will be encouraged. Discretionary foods will not be used in any school fundraising.
- Drinking water is available at numerous locations around the school, including refrigerated options.
- Students will be encouraged to have a water bottle accessible allowing them to drink water throughout the day.
- Healthy treats provided at school will comply with the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia* with the intention of eliminating extrinsic food incentives. (i.e.. no lollies as rewards)
- All food consumed on camps and on excursions will comply with the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*, reflecting a balance of everyday and sometimes foods.
- The Cafeteria and Breakfast Club menus will comply with the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*.
- All staff involved in food preparation will have a current Safe Food Handling Certificate.
- Students and staff are provided with inviting spaces and enough time to eat.
- A private area is available for individuals who are breastfeeding and wish to feed or express milk.

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- Food provided for staff events will include healthy options and discretionary options will be limited.
- Staff will be asked to model positive food choices.
- Regular information about healthy food choices will be provided to the school community via the school newsletter, displays in the Cafeteria area and on the school Face Book page.

## SCHOOL CAFETERIA

Schools and their Cafeteria or food service are well placed to support healthy eating and have a vital role to play in helping to reduce the worldwide epidemic of childhood obesity.

A healthy school Cafeteria:

- makes it easy for students to choose healthy snacks and meals
- offers a variety of nutritious foods
- promotes foods that are consistent with the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*
- can be an avenue for consistent and continual health education
- complements the diverse elements of the school curriculum
- involves students, parents and the wider school community
- is an integral part of the entire healthy school environment

At Red Cliffs Secondary College, the School Cafeteria will:

- comply with the guidelines for a healthy school Cafeteria.
- have the menu assessed by the Victorian Healthy Eating Advisory Service and will follow any recommendations from the assessment.
- offer a variety of nutritious foods at the school Cafeteria and regularly change the menu
- be creative with presentation and preparation of healthy foods

## BREAKFAST CLUB

Breakfast is an important meal of the day as it helps to ensure daily nutrient needs are being met. It also improves school performance and helps maintain a healthy weight.

Unfortunately for a variety of reasons, many teenagers do not eat breakfast on a regular basis. Students who eat breakfast show improved attendance, behaviour, and academic performance.

Whilst the main aim of the Breakfast Club is to make sure that all students have access to a healthy breakfast prior to school, the benefits extend beyond simply providing nutrition. The Breakfast Club provides an inviting venue for all students and sharing breakfast can assist to build social and wellbeing skills.

At Red Cliffs Secondary College, the Breakfast Club will:

- work in close association with Healthy Together Mildura.
- have the menu assessed by the Victorian Healthy Eating Advisory Service and will follow any recommendations from the assessment.
- offer a variety of nutritious foods.
- provide a welcoming venue for all students.

## ORAL HEALTH

Oral health is important throughout life, but there are extra implications for adolescents.

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- the rate of tooth decay is highest among teens
- a higher prevalence of periodontal disease among teens than prepubertal children or adults, which may be caused by an increase in sex hormones during puberty.
- an increased risk for traumatic injury that can contribute to dental and facial injuries.
- the potential use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs
- the complexity of orthodontic care for some students and the extra attention to dental hygiene this requires.
- an increased prevalence of eating disorders which may damage the teeth and mouth
- potential dental phobia

At Red Cliffs Secondary College, we will:

- ensure that the importance of dental hygiene is included in the health curriculum.
- promote and encourage students to brush their teeth after eating.
- promote the use of mouth guards when playing contact sports.
- utilise the school newsletter, displays in the Cafeteria area and on the school Face Book page to provide specific information about oral health.

## REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION

This policy was last updated on May 8<sup>th</sup> 2020 and is scheduled for review in September 2022. It was ratified at College Council on May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020.