

School:FERST

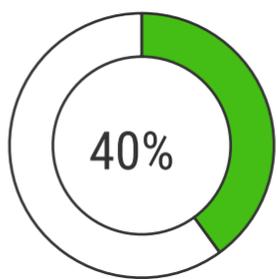
Primary Schools



The School Food Environment Review and Support Tool (School-FERST) national study was conducted between 3rd March 2016 until September 3rd 2016. Data was collected via an online survey and invitation was extended to all schools in New Zealand. Below is a brief snapshot of the preliminary feedback from School-FERST.

The total number of contributing and full primary schools that participated in this survey was **618**. The percentage of schools participating by decile is as follows: **Decile 1-3: 30%, Decile 4-7: 40%, Decile 8-10: 30%**

School Food and Nutrition Policy



of primary schools report having a written food and nutrition policy

Policy analysis was conducted on policies submitted by primary schools to the School-FERST study (n = 111).

A policy scorecard for New Zealand Schools was developed using guidance from the *School Wellness Policy Evaluation Tool (WellSAT 2.0)*.

The average scores for primary schools were:

Comprehensiveness of policy: 14/100
Strength of policy: 2/100

Resources for policy development and implementation:

[Developing a food and nutrition policy framework](http://health.tki.org.nz/Key-collections/Healthy-lifestyles/Food-and-nutrition-for-healthy-confident-kids#Developing) (Te Kete Ipurangi) - <http://health.tki.org.nz/Key-collections/Healthy-lifestyles/Food-and-nutrition-for-healthy-confident-kids#Developing>

[Steps to creating a school nutrition policy](#) (Alberta Health Services, Canada) - click on title to open external link

Why is a food and nutrition policy important?

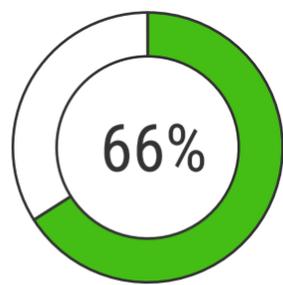
Research from USA suggests a strong association between school food policy and decreased consumption of sugar sweetened beverages at school. Additionally evidence shows a strong, positive association between school food policy in middle (intermediate) schools and the increase in consumption of milk, fruits and vegetables. Moreover policies prove to be a cost-effective method in having a large-scale impact on improving the well-being, especially mental health, of students and staff alike.

Tips for improving your food and nutrition policy

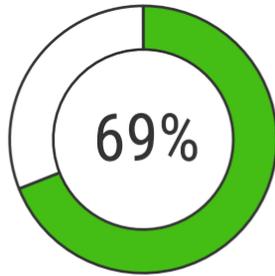
- Use strong (prohibit, restrict) rather than suggestive (encourage, recommend) language
- Involve parents and students in feedback and consultation
- Allocate a staff member operational responsibility to ensure the policy is implemented, monitored, evaluated and communicated across the school
- Ensure that your policy is reviewed annually

Food and Beverages Sold in Primary Schools

Food and Beverages Sold to students during the school day



of primary schools report selling food and beverages to students during the school day



of primary schools report being a milk (low fat or full fat) and/or water only school



Only 3 schools have 1 or more vending machines on school grounds

Food and Beverages Sold

Average score across all primary schools = 2

Averages score across deciles:

Decile 1-3: 2

Decile 4-7: 2

Decile 8-10: 2

Schools were given a score based on the healthiness of their school menu (inclusive of foods and beverages sold from canteens/lunch order systems and vending machines). Any discrepancies were verified by school office/staff.

A score of 1 = more than 80% of foods and beverages available are 'less healthy', and a score of 5 = more than 80% of foods available are 'healthy'.

Foods are classified as healthy or unhealthy based on the Food and Beverage Classification System.

'Healthy' - the proportion of foods classified as 'everyday'

'Less healthy' - the proportion of foods and beverages classified as 'sometimes' and/or 'occasional'

The most common sources of selling food are:

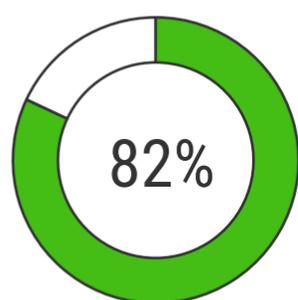
- Lunch order-in system
- Canteen run by school
- Canteen not run by school

Students are increasingly demanding healthier foods and beverages. By **engaging students in the planning and development of a healthier school canteen menu**, their ownership of the changes results in acceptance thus still allowing schools to make a profit and continue to promote a healthy school food environment. Trialling different menu options often is the key to success!

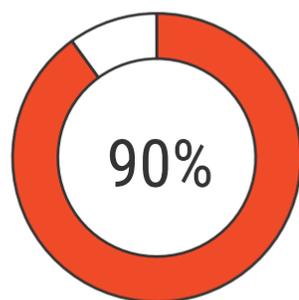
Planning ahead is key for a top-notch menu. Factors to consider include customers, resources and seasonal foods. The aim is to form a menu that offers some core items that rarely change, while providing variety through tasty seasonal and daily specials. This will help meet students' nutritional needs but also keep them happy and satisfied.

Understanding how to **modify recipes using healthier substitutes** will make things easier, and keep students satisfied. Many dishes can be easily developed to better meet food and nutrition guidelines. Choosing healthier food preparation and cooking methods can help maintain or enhance nutritional goodness.

Food and Beverages used for fundraising



of primary schools report using foods and beverages for fundraising activities



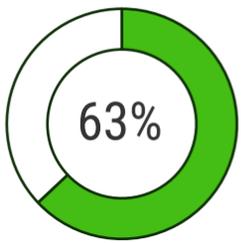
of these schools report using 'Occasional' or unhealthy foods and beverages for fundraising

For several schools, fundraisers are a vital source of income for resources, extracurricular and educational events, and other activities that enhance students learning opportunities. However, fundraising activities often rely on sales of food and drinks that do not contribute to the health of students and are opposite to other food and nutrition efforts in the school.

Fortunately, school leaders, parents, and students increasingly recognize that raising money and promoting good health can go hand in hand - and in New Zealand are often used in conjunction with food and beverage fundraisers. Internationally too, there is a growing wave of school fundraisers supporting students health.

Some examples of such initiatives taking place in schools participating in School-FERST are shared on page 4 of this report.

Other important areas of the school food environment

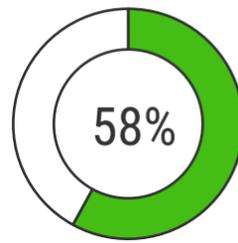


of primary schools report participating in a food provision programme

Food Programmes

Top 3 Food Programmes:

Fonterra Milk in School
Kick Start Breakfast
Fruit in Schools

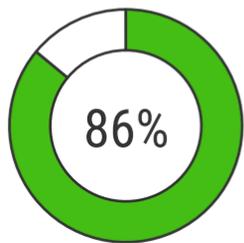


of primary schools report participating in a nutrition programme

Nutrition Programmes

Top 3 Nutrition Programmes:

Health Promoting Schools
Enviroschools
Life Education Trust

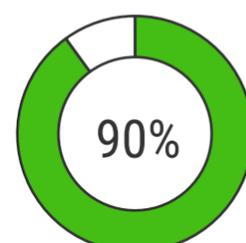


of primary schools report having a garden that is being actively used

School Gardens

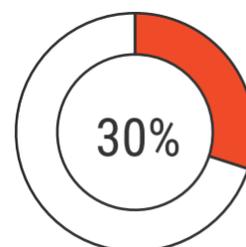
Most common ways uses of school gardens are: used in the teaching curriculum, students and staff take produce, and produce distributed to the community for free.

School gardening offers students opportunities for outdoor exercise while teaching them a life skill. Gardens with fruit and vegetables can also help improve attitudes about particular foods. There is mounting evidence that active learning in less structured, participatory spaces like gardens are more likely to transform students food attitudes and habits, and that school gardening, especially when combined with a healthy lunch program or nutritional education, encourages more healthful food choices. When students take their preferences back to their families, they can help to improve family consumption choices.



of primary schools report having nutrition education in the curriculum

Nutrition Education

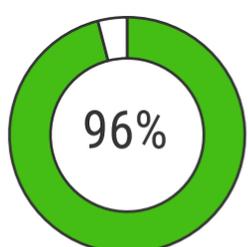


of primary schools report facing obstacles to improving their food and nutrition environment

Barriers to improving nutrition environment

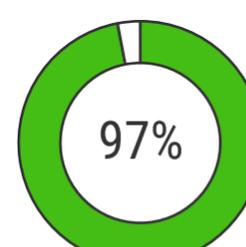
The most common barriers are:

- Resistance from parents
- Convenience/ease of preparing ready-to-eat foods and beverages
- Resistance from students



of primary schools report not using food and beverage companies for sponsorship

No Sponsorship by Food and Beverage Companies



of primary schools report having no commercial food and beverage promotions and advertising

No Commercial Promotions and Advertising

Positive Stories from other schools like yours:



Canteen/Lunch Orders: At Hobsonville School senior management actively monitor what foods and beverages are included in students lunch orders to make sure they cover a healthier range of foods.

At Nayland School, as a result of open and honest communication about the reasons for prohibiting the sale of sugary drinks at the canteen, there was no fuss when the change was made.

At Springston School, students are not allowed to leave the school to visit the local dairy.

Policy: Although the NAG5 changed in 2009, Irongate School continues to operate by the pre-2009 guidelines and only provides healthy food and beverage options to students.

Several schools are milk and water only, while restricting the consumption of foods high in sugar and highly processed foods. This is a great start towards development and implementation of a food and nutrition policy which can further re-emphasize these points. Many schools have acknowledged that students are generally supportive, and although face some criticism from parents in the beginning, eventually everyone gets on board.



School Gardens: Ardgowan School has a sustainable garden. The school sells the produce they grow and the revenue generated is used to maintain the garden. Students can see the process and it gives them a real sense of ownership and pride

Fundraising: Rather than using foods and beverages for fundraising, it can be replaced with several activities supporting positive health and well-being such as fun runs or walk-a-thons, car washes, read-a-thons, dance-a-thons, book fairs, students' art auctions, zumba classes, toothbrushes to promote oral health. Some other ideas include selling calendars, mufti days, first aid kits, and so on.



Consistent messages: At Haumoana School they campaign to be "sugar-free from 9 to 3". However this message also extends to fundraising initiatives to not send conflicting messages to students.

There are other schools that extend their water only policy to school events, such as the school disco.

Education: For one of their units of work, at Omakau School each class was given a food group (eg: cereals, beverages) to assess and make healthier recommendations to other students and parents. As a result parents provided school with the feedback that their children were recommending healthier food choices during the supermarket run, and feeling empowered enough to make health-based selections themselves.



At Totara Grove School the middle syndicate classes set a healthy eating goal each term and track their progress throughout the term while linking it into other curriculum areas and taking healthy eating messages home.

Some schools extend nutrition education to parents and the community by including nutrition tips on their website/school newsletter, and sometimes by hosting parent evenings and workshops.

Some helpful resources online:

Visit the following links on the [Te Kete Ipurangi](http://www.teketeipurangi.govt.nz) website:

Healthy Nutrition in Schools - <http://health.tki.org.nz/Key-collections/Healthy-lifestyles/Guidelines-for-school-food-programmes/Guideline-4-Healthy-nutrition-in-schools>

More example of success stories - <http://health.tki.org.nz/Key-collections/Healthy-lifestyles/Guidelines-for-school-food-programmes/Appendix-1-Examples-of-successful-school-programmes>

There are several agencies that work closely with schools to support and help improve their school food environment.

Click on the following agencies to get in touch with their team:

[The National Heart Foundation](#)

[Fuelled4Life](#)

[Garden to Table](#)

[Enviroschools](#)

[Health Promoting Schools - http://hps.tki.org.nz/HPS-Impact/Facilitators-in-your-region](http://hps.tki.org.nz/HPS-Impact/Facilitators-in-your-region)

Once again thank you for participating in School-FERST!