

HELP



**HELP  
Document**

Eating Lifestyle Plan



Healthy

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Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan

# HELP Document



Education Division  
Malta

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# Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan

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Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan  
Education Division

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Tel: (+356) 21231374/5; 21239965; 21232682

Fax: (+356) 21221634

eMail: [communications.moed@gov.mt](mailto:communications.moed@gov.mt)

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Dr Cecilia Borg, Director General  
Healthy Eating Lifestyle Committee

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## Background

1. In August 2006, the Director General appointed a working group to study the Task Force for Appropriate School Nutrition Environments (TASNE) report on healthy eating and what is being offered in school tuckshops.

The members of the Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan - HELP working group are:

Margaret M. Ellul (Chairperson),  
Philip Bonello,  
Carol Debono,  
Elizabeth Mallia,  
Anthony Xuereb MD.

2. The terms of reference of the group were to study the TASNE report and present a draft which will eventually help schools formulate a healthy eating policy in schools.
3. The working group is reporting back to the Director General with the following draft.

## Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan

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### **Acknowledgements**

We have to sincerely thank all those who have contributed in a valuable manner to this document for their time, patience and commitment.

This document was developed from the TASNE report and enriched by contributions from various entities, particularly the Education Health Service, the Health and Safety Unit and the Home Economics Seminar Centre.

Acknowledgements are also due to Dr Mario Spiteri, Director-Health Promotion Department and his staff: Ms Maria Ellul, Principal Scientific Officer (Nutrition) and Ms Marianne Massa, Principal Health Promotion Officer; and Dr Victoria Sant'Angelo, the Co Ordinator of the School Medical Services, for their support and guidance.

We wish to express our appreciation for the dedication of Ms Fiona Vella Muscat who was entrusted with the typing and layout of this project and Mr Joseph Gerardi for proof reading.



## Foreword by the Minister of Education, Youth and Employment

I would like to commend the Director General of Education Dr Cecilia Borg and the National Curriculum Council for the important initiative they have taken to ensure our schools have clear and strong guidelines in shaping policies to promote and improve the healthy eating habits of our children and youths.

The Working Group appointed by the DGE and chaired by the Assistant Director of Education, Margaret M Ellul is to be congratulated for the sterling work they have done and for the quality of the guidelines which the Division of Education is now publishing. My appreciation also goes to the Education Health Services, the Health and Safety Unit and the Home Economics Seminar Centre of the Division of Education and to the Health Promotion Department of the Division of Health.

I belong to the post-World War baby boom generation born in a society with vivid recollections of the horrors and hardship that the war brought with it. At table, stories by our parents of the pains of hunger they had to suffer during and immediately after the war abounded. In those days of want, schools played a crucial part in ensuring that the post-war baby boom generation's diet was supplemented with a cocktail of vitamins and health and dental screening. This has had an immensely beneficial effect on the health status of my generation and of those that followed.

Today's society cannot be more different. The health status of the Maltese people improved by leaps and bounds but is today besieged by a consumerist and instant gratification approach to the way we shape our eating habits and life styles. A visit to many of the wards of our hospitals will immediately strike us with the many health conditions treated there that could easily have been prevented had better eating habits and healthy life styles been consistently followed.

Once again, our schools are being called to intervene proactively, in synergy with the Health Promotion Department and other agencies, to embark on a strong and effective strategy to educate our children and young people in the beauty of healthy eating and drinking habits and healthy life styles. *The Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan* is yet another important tool in the hands of College Principals and Heads of School to help correct and redirect the creeping bad eating habits which are having an increasingly negative effect on our health.

Tell me what you eat and I will tell you who you are. This old adage is still very valid today. We have to commit ourselves to a culture where healthy eating habits and other healthy life styles and environment will make of our children and young Maltese and Gozitans the finest and most healthy citizens in this region.

LOUIS GALEA

Minister of Education, Youth and Employment





### Message by the Director General

Eating is important and essential, however excess or lack of eating is dangerous. How much, what and when to eat are not natural instincts but skills that need to be taught and change according to the age, and body mass of the individual as well as to other external factors including weather and physical exertion.

The Education Division, aware of its role to instruct and its ability to influence change, has embarked on these publications to ensure that schools have adequate guidelines in this regard. The TASNE study commissioned by the National Curriculum Council had recommended appropriate school nutrition environments and it was for this reason that, in August 2006, I set up this working group made up of different stakeholders within the Education Division under the chairmanship of Ms. Margaret Ellul, Assistant Director to lay down guidelines so that schools would be in a position to formulate their own policy regarding Healthy Eating.

The terms of reference clearly indicated that the TASNE report was to serve as the basis of the eventual guidelines. The subject matter was to be incorporated in the existing syllabus and to form an integral part of what was being taught in class.

Healthy eating is a way of life and its importance cannot be isolated from every day reality. At the same time, school Tuck Shops have to serve as the practical expression of this philosophy. In this way, schools would be encouraging the desired eating patterns not only in the schools themselves but, hopefully, influencing the National pattern, present and future.

I would like to thank all the members of the Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan (HELP) Working Group who have worked assiduously in formulating this policy. It is now up to the schools to take the matter in hand. Schools are the ones who influence most as they are nearest to the child. They have also contributed directly to this Study through their experience, their contributions and their encouragement.

I have no doubt that once the Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan is in their hands they will own it thus ensuring that healthy eating for a healthy lifestyle not only continues to occupy high priority on the School Development Plan but will work hand in hand with parents and other stake holders to ensure a Healthy Nation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cecilia Borg".

**Dr Cecilia Borg**  
*Director General*



## Executive Summary

Interventions targeted at healthy eating need to occur early in childhood and adolescence in order to prevent or reverse the adverse effects of overweight and poor eating habits (Onge, Keller, Heynsfield 2003). Schools can function as an important opportunity for prevention (Carter 2002) as they provide the most effective way of reaching large numbers of people including youths, school staff, families and community members (WHO 1998).

The improvement of children's lifestyle relies on action carried out in school settings. This document is designed primarily for schools and aims at encouraging schools to:

- give high priority to healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle on their school agenda;
- design, implement and monitor school healthy eating lifestyle plans.

This Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan (HELP) outlines the goals and highlights the school environment, school curriculum and school nutrition as the three key objectives for this initiative. Each objective has been developed to include Strategies, which need to be implemented, so that schools are turned into healthy schools. They will need to consider to what extent their current practice reflects these objectives, to identify opportunities for improvement and to get started.

The section entitled **Our Contribution** focuses on key areas of improvement. It highlights the Food & Nutrient Based Standards, which have been established to cover food and drink provision across the school day, and outlines clear time frames for action.

Monitoring and enforcing of these set nutrition standards and conditions is another key area for improvement. The roles of the Healthy School Audit Board have been clearly identified to ensure regulation and enforcement.

The booklet *Our Resources* provides material and ideas to support schools in providing and developing a Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan. Schools might have different starting points and therefore, they are to focus on their priorities and then select the most appropriate material.

This booklet comprises:

- A step-by-step guide on how to develop a Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan. This process aims at facilitating staff discussion and at providing a clear audit of the role and profile of food and drink in schools.
- A Food and Beverage audit pack which is aimed at helping schools review current practice. The water and milk guidance will support schools in improving current provision and promote consumption of milk and water.
- The Food and Beverage Guidelines and the Recipes highlight simple and sustainable ways in which schools can promote healthier food and drink for packed lunches. This guidance will help secondary schools establish healthier and effective tuck shops and promote balance and variety in food and drink offered.
- Guidelines in relation to the school environment.
- Answers to frequently asked questions.

Schools have already started taking initiatives to create an environment which supports a healthier lifestyle. There is growing support for measures that encourage children and adults to make healthier life choices. The debate about this initiative involves working in partnership across society towards the development of a whole approach to a healthy lifestyle. This is a challenge. Practical and valid targets have been set. Working together across society, the Education Division aims at making significant progress in fulfilling the goals of turning our schools into healthier schools.

*Flimkien ...  
intejbu l-ghixien*



## Introduction

The well being of each and every child is of utmost importance and is an essential aspect of effective education for all. We believe that a healthy young generation contributes to a more productive population, a better quality of life in adulthood and lower health care and social costs.

In Malta, over the last century, there have been great improvements in health and life expectancy<sup>1</sup>. We all however, share a common concern about nutritional related disorders, childhood obesity and the fact that the percentage of Maltese individuals who are considered as overweight is among the highest in the world. The incidence of diabetes in children and the high incidence of cardiovascular disease and diet-related cancers are other challenges to health in the Maltese scenario.

We recognize that the Maltese society is changing. The economic and social climate together with the influence of the media have led to new patterns of eating, playing and working which might adversely affect healthy lifestyles for children.

It is an accepted fact that people's behavioural patterns are often set early in life and influence their health throughout their lives. Infancy, childhood and adolescence are critical stages in the development of people's health in later years.

We are convinced that good eating habits and regular physical activities contribute to lower rates of childhood obesity and a lower incidence of diet-related chronic diseases. If we want our young generation to optimize its physical, social, emotional and mental health, we need to empower our generation with the skills it needs to lead a healthy lifestyle.

We share the responsibility of promoting the health and well being of our young generation with several stakeholders including parents, the community at large and other entities. It is in partnership that we are working towards the development of a whole approach to health.

This is not an easy task: indeed it is a challenge to us all. We believe, however, that there is a growing support for measures that will encourage children and adults to make healthier life choices. We are encouraged by initiatives which schools are taking to create an environment which supports a healthy lifestyle.

This is the start and not the end of the journey. We have set practical and valid targets and we are confident that by working together across society, we would fulfill our goals of turning our schools into healthy schools and of contributing towards a holistic education to future generations.

### The Team

**Margaret M Ellul**

Chairperson

*Assistant Director of Education*

**Philip Bonello**

*Education Officer Health and Safety*

**Carol Debono**

*President Association of School Councils*

**Elizabeth Mallia**

*Education Officer Home Economics*

**Anthony Xuereb MD**

*Head, Education Health Services*

<sup>1</sup> Health vision 2000 Chapter 2 Health Status



*Flimkien ...  
intejbu l-ghixien*



## Goals and Objectives

Schools have constantly worked to improve the levels of education and have over the years given importance to investing in health aspects. The ultimate aim has been to assist in the process of raising students' achievement, improving standards and in giving our young generation the confidence to learn.

Today, more than ever, we believe that schools can provide students with the skills they need to be confident about leading a healthy lifestyle. The core themes which schools need to address are healthy eating, physical activity, emotional health and well being, and personal, social and health education. For the purpose of this document, we will limit ourselves to healthy eating as the main theme for discussion.

In line with the recommendations of Malta's National Health Policy and the WHO Action Plan for Food and Nutrition Policy, we need to ensure that people across our society have adopted healthier patterns of living. In expressing the ethos and philosophy of its schools, the Education

Division is reconsidering the role of all aspects of food in schools. In this sense, the Education Division is outlining the following as its main goals for its Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan:

- to ensure that Maltese schools deliver a holistic education;
- to make provision for the setting up of the necessary frameworks, resources and support needed by Maltese schools to help students adopt healthier patterns of living.

Schools can influence attitudes to food, sports and physical activity through the Curriculum and the wider environment. They can encourage students to make informed choices by offering healthy drinks and food options that reflect what is taught in the classroom.

Our message must be consistent, co ordinated and related, to the way people actually live.



## Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan

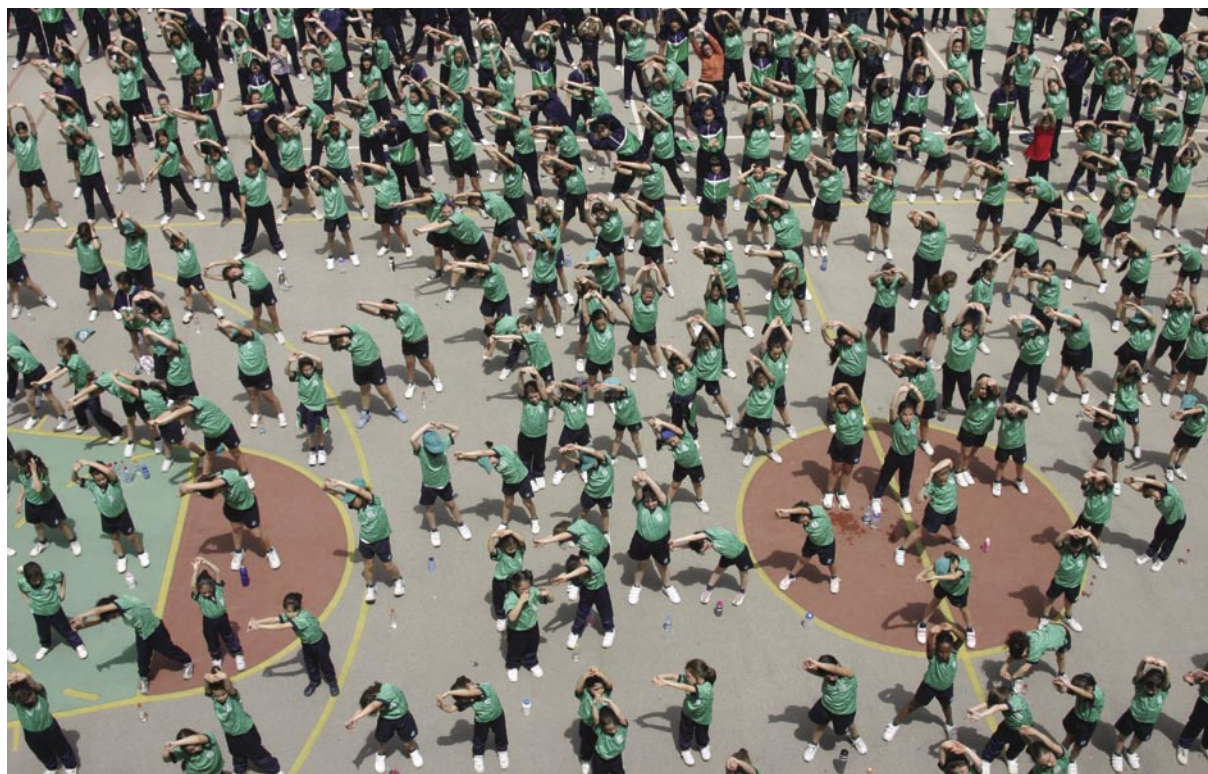
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The Education Division is proposing a multi-faceted approach which touches different aspects of school life, through the following three objectives:

1. To provide a supportive school environment which encourages a healthy lifestyle and promotes healthy choices early in life;
2. To make provision for a flexible curriculum which highlights health, diet, nutrition, food, safety and hygiene, food preparation and cooking and which promotes physical exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle;
3. To ensure that clear and consistent messages about food, drink and healthy eating are being delivered across the school day so as to reinforce the healthy lifestyle message.



Schools will need to consider to what extent their current practice reflects these objectives. As part of this document, we are providing support material (**Our Resources**) to enable schools to identify opportunities which help them meet these objectives and therefore, improve the health and well being of all.





## Our Contribution

In outlining this Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan, the Education Division is upholding the principle that students' dietary habits should be safeguarded and is committed to support schools in their efforts to ensure healthy eating school environments.

The key area for improvement in schools is food provision across the school day. It is time to move from debating the issue and determining the solutions, to investing in ways of ensuring the provision of healthy food in schools.

The General Guidelines for Healthy Food Consumption issued in April 2006 by the Department of Curriculum Management<sup>2</sup>, have been introduced in order to reduce their intake of foods high in fat, salt and sugar and to increase the daily intake of students' whole grain food, fruit and vegetables.

The Education Division has now established Food and Beverage Standards to cover food and drink across the school day<sup>3</sup>. These Food and Beverage Standards have been based on those recommended by the Task Force for Appropriate School Nutrition Environments (TASNE) and which have been revised by the staff at the Home Economics Seminar Centre. They aim at enhancing the provision of food with high nutritional value and prohibit food with minimal nutritional value.

The Education Division has also worked on Nutrient Based Standards<sup>4</sup> which specify the nutrient levels that schools should strive towards so that school food provision is of high nutritional value.

**KUNTRATT**  
**GHAL SAHHTI**

*Jiena, \_\_\_\_\_ li nattendi*  
*l-iskola \_\_\_\_\_*

*mil-lum 'il quddiem inwiegħed li:*

*Niekol inqas ikel li fih iż-żokkor*       *Niekol aktar kaxix u frott*  
 *Nieku 'breakfast' tajjeb kuljum*       *Nagħmel aktar eżerċizzju fiżiku*

*Firma \_\_\_\_\_ Data \_\_\_\_\_*

Sponsorjat minn WEETABIX

<sup>2</sup> DCM Circular No.38/2006

<sup>3</sup> **Appendix 1 Document 1** Food & Beverage Standards List of Permissible Foods  
**Document 2** Food & Beverage Standards List of Permissible Drinks  
**Document 3** Food & Beverage Standards List of Prohibited Foods  
**Document 4** Food & Beverage Standards List of Prohibited Drinks

<sup>4</sup> **Appendix 2 Document 5** Nutrient Based Guidelines for Food & Drink Providers



As advised by TASNE, the Education Division is adopting nutrient standards for key nutrients which have critical significance for health outcomes. These standards have been revised and indicate the maximum amount of fats, saturated fats, total sugars and salt sodium levels per 100gr/ml that a product may contain, for it to be considered healthy.

These new standards will apply to all food and drink provision, including food and drink sold in tuck shops. These standards also apply to the celebration of special events. The time frames for implementation are as follows:

Launch of food and beverage standards in schools	<b>With immediate effect</b>
Implementation of food and beverage standards for tuck shops	<b>September 2007</b>
Compliance date for all primary and secondary schools	<b>Jan 2008</b>

Another key area for improvement is the monitoring and enforcing of these set nutrition standards and conditions. The Education Division will establish within the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education, a Healthy School Nutrition Audit Board. This Board will be composed as follows:

- A Chairperson in the grade of Principal Education Officer
- A Nutritionist
- A Subject Co Ordinator/Assistant Head with experience in Health and Safety
- A Subject Co Ordinator/Assistant Head with experience in Home Economics

This Audit Group will need to be supplemented from time to time with the participation of the following:

- Head of the Education Health Services
- A Health Inspector
- An officer responsible for Finance from the Department of Corporate Services
- An officer from the Consumer Protection Department
- The President of the Association of School Councils
- Any other expert from other fields who may be deemed necessary.





The duties of the Healthy School Nutrition Audit Board will be as follows:

- Keep nutrition standards updated and formulate additional ones;
- Regulate all health, safety and nutrition-related activities and events in schools. For this purpose, Heads of School are requested to organise these activities through this Healthy School Nutrition Audit Board;
- Ensure compliance with the set national food and beverage standards and regulations by carrying out regular periodic audits;
- Liaise with the Health Inspectorate Unit to ensure that food and drink provision on school premises is compliant with Maltese food safety legislation;
- Take any necessary enforcement action to ensure that school food and drink provision is in accordance with the standards set by the Education Division and food safety legislation;
- Ensure that guidelines and action plans concerning students having special diet-related conditions, such as diabetes and food allergies, are in place;
- Liaise and work in co ordination with the Education Health Services, the Home Economics Seminar Centre, the Health and Safety Unit, the Malta Standards Authority and other relevant public and private entities, so as to maintain a healthy nutrition environment in schools;
- Ensure that the tuckshop contracts are in compliance with standards;
- Issue certificates of approval to local food manufacturers/importers/distributors whose products fall within the parameters established in the food and nutrient standards;
- Carry out any other duty as directed by the Director General for the Directorate of Quality and Standards in Education, so as to enable schools to provide healthy nutrition and environment.



The Education Division has assigned the roles of support and guidance of this Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan to the:

- **Education Health Service [EHS]**
- **Health and Safety Unit [Hands]**
- **Home Economics Seminar Centre [HESC]<sup>5</sup>**

To improve students' nutritional behavioural patterns and knowledge, these centres have to be involved in health promotion through collaboration with different sectors and stakeholders. Shared collaboration between our Ministry, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry for Rural Affairs and Environment, the Ministry for Family and Social Solidarity and the Ministry for Competitiveness, is central for strategic planning.



Besides this, we also believe in partnerships that include students, parents, staff, the Faculty of Education, members of the Local Councils and non governmental organizations e.g. Federation of Industry and the Chamber of Commerce. This collaboration is important to create a social and physical environment conducive to healthy eating and to reflect the diverse range of needs.



<sup>5</sup> **Appendix 3**    **Document 6**    Education Health Services  
                  **Document 7**    Home Economics Seminar Centre  
                  **Document 8**    Health and Safety Unit



## Strategies

The Education Division commits itself to provide the following additional measures to facilitate progress towards healthier living:



- Provide guidelines for schools on how to draft their own school healthy eating lifestyle plan<sup>6</sup>;
- Start work on the formulation of Nutrition Related Quality Indicators for inclusion with key areas of the School Development Plan;
- Embark on establishing a regulatory legal framework for School Nutrition to support a healthy lifestyle. These regulations must also apply to shops/hawkers who operate in the vicinity of the school premises;
- Work on a new plan to give every student an entitlement to learn about nutrition and cooking from 2008;
- Inspect every school tuck shop at least once a year;
- Set up a working committee to study physical activity;
- Ensure that physical activity will not be limited to PE lessons but will be integral to the school experience;
- Ensure that the Senior Management Team of schools is also involved at the planning stage of new schools being built, so as to facilitate the provision of a healthy eating environment which is conducive to healthy eating;
- Ensure that schools allot money for the daily provision of 200ml of milk for every student;
- Provide additional resources in relation to portion-servings sizes for food in schools <sup>7</sup>;
- Propose the regulation of advertising so that the messages conveyed in the media will be consistent with nutrition messages in schools;
- Ensure that products sold are certified by the Healthy Eating Nutrition Audit Board;
- Forward to all school providers the Food Preparation Guidelines<sup>8</sup> and ensure adherence;
- Work with other stakeholders to train and support parents, staff and tuckshop operators involved in catering in schools, e.g. ITS to train tuckshop operators;
- Provide additional support and guidance to Heads of School when drawing up and monitoring contracts of school tuck shops;
- Collaborate with the Health Division in undertaking surveys of students' diet-related behaviour, so as to identify trends and determine which action needs to be taken at school and at a national level;
- Make provision for the Education Health Unit in collaboration with the School Health Services to measure students' height and weight on an annual basis and keep a database.

<sup>6</sup> **Our Resources** Instructions on how to develop a Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan

<sup>7</sup> **Appendix 4 Document 9** Portion Sizes and Servings

<sup>8</sup> **Appendix 5 Document 10** Food Preparation Guidelines

### Objective 1

TO PROVIDE A SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT WHICH ENVISAGES A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE AND PROMOTES HEALTHY CHOICES EARLY IN LIFE

Children spend on average a third of their waking lives in school. The school environment, attitudes of students and staff, as well as what students learn in the classroom have a major influence on the development of their knowledge and understanding of health.

The school ethos and environment must, therefore, set the tone for the behaviour and attitudes which are expected of both staff and students in relation to healthy eating.

We want schools to take a holistic view of health and focus not only on the acquisition of knowledge and understanding but also on the development of complementary attitudes and skills. Schools, however, also need to provide the culture and environment needed to support the taught curriculum.

Schools need to develop different strategies if they want to foster a positive attitude to diet, nutrition and physical exercise. The informal curriculum and the school's own nutrition practices must complement and reinforce classroom teaching on nutrition and exercise.

A whole school approach to a healthy lifestyle needs to be developed, followed and maintained. Democratic decision-making is integral to effective whole school approaches to improving health. A whole school approach engages students, teachers, parents, school administrators and other partners in a co-operative effort to encourage healthy lifestyle habits among the school community. This approach develops an ethos and environment that supports learning, adopts a democratic approach to nutrition-related decision making and, in so doing, promotes the well being of all. The whole school community has to be invited to take part in policy development and in its implementation. In partnership, we need to engage in a range of strategies to achieve standards.

Using a holistic approach, we need to create a supportive setting which influences the perception and actions of all those involved within the school.<sup>9</sup> This concept emphasises the needs of the individual at the centre of the entire organization.



<sup>9</sup> European Network of Health Promoting Schools 2006 – WHO Initiative



For us all to succeed in this, we need to consider the following key aspects of performance which are important for the support of the whole school approach:

- shared aims;
- informed and committed leadership;
- a supportive ethos;
- a systematic approach to self evaluation;
- a good development planning process;
- careful curriculum planning;
- a focus on learning and teaching;
- giving students a voice;
- provision of support services;
- focused staff development;
- partnership with parents and community;
- environment.

Schools need to employ these strategies if they want to make a significant contribution to improve the quality of life of their students, staff and the wider community. A positive school ethos which promotes a healthy lifestyle will not only influence health but attainment, achievements and expectations.



### Strategies

To achieve this objective, schools are to:

- look at health issues as contributing factors to school improvement and therefore, should be part of an ongoing discussion on policy and practice of the school at staff meetings;
- ensure that a healthy eating lifestyle has been listed as a priority in the School Development Plan;
- identify a member of the Senior Management Team to oversee all aspects of food in school and to spearhead the process of developing a school healthy eating plan;
- identify healthy eating school activities in their Development Plan which can be delivered through other priorities;
- ensure that these healthy school activities are set out in the school parent handbook/newsletter;
- establish mechanisms for involving parents, the whole school community and other stakeholders in this policy development;
- give pupils a voice by establishing mechanisms for involving pupils in policy development of healthy eating, e.g. through school councils, healthy school task group, etc.;
- work together with the Education Health Services, the Health and Safety Unit, the Home Economics Seminar Centre and other stakeholders, in the provision of support services for students and parents;
- encourage students to take some responsibility of aspects of a school healthy life;
- provide a welcoming and secure eating environment that encourages positive interaction of students;
- give staff opportunity to share information, learning and experience with other schools and to visit them to gain support and knowledge of good practice;
- identify and organise healthy eating activities/events;
- carry out an internal audit of the nutrition environment;
- ensure that professional staff development plans include training in nutrition and other related issues;
- develop and implement home-school agreements in consultation with parents;
- consult staff on their training needs through a regular consultation process;
- define the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders;
- carry out students' needs assessment because this will influence teaching, learning and curriculum planning;
- invite the wider community partners to take part in aspects of school life, e.g. open days, prize days, school bazaars.





## Objective 2

TO MAKE PROVISION FOR A FLEXIBLE CURRICULUM WHICH HIGHLIGHTS HEALTH, DIET, NUTRITION, FOOD SAFETY AND HYGIENE, FOOD PREPARATION AND COOKING AND WHICH PROMOTES PHYSICAL EXERCISE AS PART OF A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE.

The National Minimum Curriculum emphasizes and promotes not only the physical well being of children and young teenagers but also their emotional and social well being. Children are introduced to the benefits of being healthy and active from the age of three. The primary stage builds on children's experience during the early years and the secondary stage builds on the experience gained at primary level. Children practise good health habits by learning what makes a good breakfast, the benefits of a healthy diet and exercise, the nutritional needs of our body, the importance of eating fresh fruit and vegetables, personal hygiene and keeping our surroundings clean. The importance of self esteem and good social behaviour are emphasized throughout the school life.

Broadly speaking, at primary and secondary level, the core curriculum provides for a healthy lifestyle of our youngsters through the following subjects:

Physical Education provides our students with the opportunities to develop physically and to understand the practical impact of exercise and any other physical activity such as dance, gymnastics, cycling or walking. Today one fifth of the PE curriculum in Secondary Schools specifically focuses on Health Related Fitness.

Schools need to encourage students in favour of competitive sport because it teaches teamwork, discipline, self respect and how to cope with winning and losing. Students' Physical Education experience within the curriculum is to link with opportunities at local clubs so that they can pursue their interest after school hours and when they have completed their formal education.

Personal and Social Development encourages students to take responsibility of their health and well being. Students discuss how to develop a healthy lifestyle and address topics such as body changes and health issues.

Science provides an opportunity to learn about the types of food available, digestion, the function of nutrients and the way the body responds to exercise. This subject also provides a focus on the natural world and the changing environment. Technology provides for the opportunity for students to learn how food is processed and marketed.

Social studies provide opportunity to debate environmental issues, advertising and issues of sustainable development. It also encourages youngsters to build healthy relationships and utilize skills of collaboration, compromise and develop competences related to negotiation and debate. History provides an insight on how changes occurred in our diet due to influence of the different nations who ruled or visited Malta.





## Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan

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Languages such as French, Italian, German and Spanish provide students with the chance to discuss the role of food in the major countries in Europe. Literacy offers opportunities to write stories/poems about what they have cooked or thank you letters to producers who have supplied the food.



There are also other opportunities to be created with other subjects such as Mathematics in relation to measuring, weighing and costing.

Home Economics provides practical and theoretical opportunities for students to learn about healthy eating. The cooking challenge falls within this subject area. This subject is an ideal vehicle to promote healthy eating through practical work about correct food choices, recipe engineering, nutrition content of food and quantities required for a healthy living. Class debate is also a powerful way to engage students during Home Economics. Class debate on what makes a healthy diet offers the opportunity to research material about healthy eating, to question others, to listen to different views and to make an informed decision.

Education in nutrition and personal health is crucial to developing healthy, responsible and sustainable lifestyle habits in children and adolescents. The core curriculum still needs to emphasize in greater depth the following broad categories:

- Nutrition and personal health;
- Food preparation, preservation and storage;
- Consumer awareness and rights and media literacy;
- Food production, processing and distribution, sustainability and ecology;
- Eating habits.

Our youngsters need to develop knowledge and understanding of the skills needed to make informed choices about food, to understand where it comes from, how it should be prepared and cooked safely and how it can be combined in healthy meals.

Nutrition education should also encourage children and adolescents to read nutrient content tables on packaging to develop an understanding of nutrient content of food, as well as, their own daily requirements. e.g. adolescents should be able to interpret terms such as *low in sugar*, *low in fat* on food labels.

Throughout Europe, as in Malta, efforts to integrate food and nutrition into different school subjects have been attempted. However, teaching modern food skills and healthy eating requires appropriately qualified teachers and adequate resources. WHO recommends that efforts to improve the quality of food available in schools should be supported with compulsory nutrition education and cooking classes for boys and girls, taught by specialized teachers<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> WHO Programme for Nutrition and Food Security – WHO Regional Office for Europe (2006)



Knowing how to cook nutritious healthy food is an essential life skill that is as important as learning how to use the computer. WHO defines these life skills as psycho-social and interpersonal competences that enable informed decisions, problem-solving, critical, and creative thinking, effective communication, healthy relationships, empathy, general health and productivity<sup>11</sup>.

But this is not enough, students need to acquire the following healthy life skills related to nutrition:

- Communication skills to influence parents and friends make healthy food choices;
- Refusal skills to resist social pressures to adopt unhealthy eating practices and in so doing choose nutritious food and snacks;
- Advocacy skills to present messages of healthy nutrition to others and to gain support of influential adults;
- Critical thinking skills to recognise aggressive marketing and evaluate nutritional claims in advertising. (WHO 2003 b)

It is important that consistency and progression are ensured by the integrated curriculum planning and the creation of links with the different curriculum areas. This is essential so that teachers can plan how and what children will learn in different subjects and different phases.

The National Minimum Curriculum highlights the fact that integration of knowledge centering round themes is the pedagogical approach that is closest to the idea of holistic education. This methodology should be the dominant feature of our schools. It is expected that teachers of different subjects should combine their efforts to plan projects round particular themes to emphasise and promote a healthy lifestyle.



<sup>11</sup> WHO 2003 b

### Strategies

To achieve this objective, schools are to:

- create links with other curriculum areas such as science and technology, languages, maths and art;
- develop schemes of work, which focus on food-related items and identify students' learning outcomes;
- adopt a varied range of teaching styles, for example, debating fora appropriate to students' age, ability and level of maturity;
- recognise the importance of a safe and supportive teaching/learning environment where students and teachers work together to promote health;
- develop their own school grounds to create an outside classroom;
- explore their own environments as places to learn about food and sports;
- network within the college set up, to put together a directory of information about food, farming and physical activity to include organizations, programmes and initiatives;



- benefit from the expertise of the food specialist within the college network to train colleagues in practical food education;
- ensure that pupils have opportunity to learn about types of food in the context of a balanced diet;
- help pupils on how to plan, budget and prepare and cook a meal;
- use extra curricular activities such as breakfast clubs, sports and gardening to offer wider opportunities to learn about food and physical exercise;
- create initiatives to increase the consumption of healthy food and drink including the consumption of fruit and vegetables<sup>12</sup>;
- have mechanisms in place to ensure that students' views are reflected in curriculum planning, teaching and learning and the whole school environment;
- provide opportunities for all students, staff and parents to participate in a broad range of extra curricular activities that promote physical activity and healthy eating.



<sup>12</sup> **Our Resources** - Food and Beverage Selection Guidelines



## Objective 3

TO ENSURE THAT CLEAR AND CONSISTENT MESSAGES ABOUT FOOD AND DRINK AND HEALTHY LIVING ARE BEING DELIVERED ACROSS THE SCHOOL DAY SO AS TO REINFORCE THE HEALTHY EATING LIFESTYLE

Food and drink provided on the school premises includes not only food and drink brought to school by students but also all the food and drink sold in tuck shops, vending machines or offered on the school premises. Food in school also includes food and drink provided during school events and extra curricular activities and samples of food and drink distributed in school by commercial companies.

The challenge is to ensure that all this food and drink reinforces and reflects the healthy eating messages outlined in the curriculum. Schools are to promote healthy food and healthy lunches throughout the school day as part of a balanced diet and prohibit the promotion of other options<sup>13</sup>. The clear and specific Food and Beverage Guidelines<sup>14</sup> will help students and parents make informed choices and decisions regarding food and nutrition issues to help ensure that clear and constant messages are being delivered in schools.



<sup>13</sup> **Food and Beverage Standards** - Appendix 1

<sup>14</sup> **Our Resources** - Food and Beverage Selection Guidelines



Food eaten at school provides a significant proportion of our youngsters' nutritional intake and may be high in fat, sugar and salt. Tuck shops and vending machines add to food choices available in school and they are key areas for improvement. Research conducted by TASNE concluded that the most common items sold in tuck shops are the ones which go against the daily recommended allowance made by the World Health Organisation.

Many parents opt for their children to take a packed lunch to school. It is the parents and students themselves who determine the nutritive value of the food and drink in the students' packed lunch. Schools are in a position to influence the content of packed lunches. Parents should be informed about the benefits and practicalities of providing healthy packed lunches.

A practical tool useful in the design of students' diets is the Countrywide Integrated Noncommunicable Disease Intervention (CINDI) food pyramid, developed to assist in managing nutrient intake and food habits. It can be used as a reference guide for all individuals responsible for the nutritional quality of students' diets, parents, teachers and tuck shop operators. The CINDI FOOD PYRAMID featured in Fig.1, provides guidance on the number of servings children should eat from each group.

The pyramid uses a coloured 'traffic light' scheme to aid the selection of food groups. It clearly illustrates the range of foods from different food groups required by individuals of all ages, including children and adolescents. The group indicated in the red section at the top of the pyramid includes foods high in fat, sugar and salt, which should be minimized.

The following four main food groups should contribute to the daily diet with the following amounts:

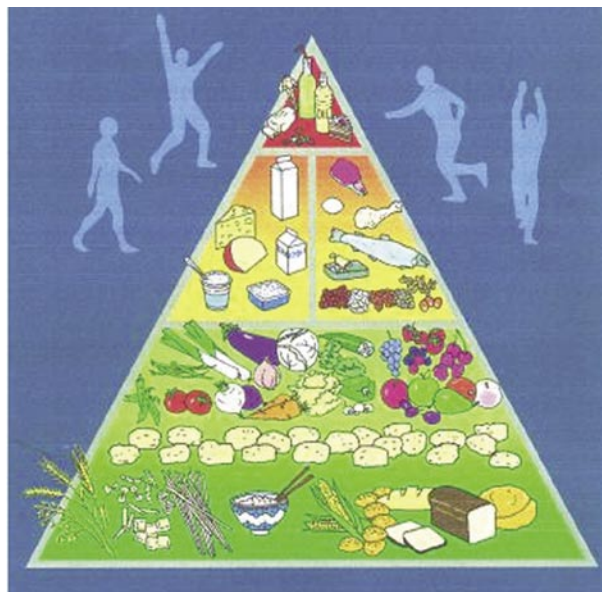


Fig.1 The CYNDI Food Pyramid

Bread and cereals	4-6 servings <sup>15</sup>	
Fruit and vegetables	4-5 servings	
Meat, fish and poultry including alternatives – peas, beans and lentils	2 servings	
Low fat milk and milk products	(up to 11 years old) 2 - 3 servings	(over 11 years) 3 - 4 servings

Source WHO2006

Providing children with a wide variety of food products throughout the week and offering portion sizes and servings<sup>16</sup> to match their energy needs will ensure all the required nutrients are obtained. But it is not enough for healthy school lunches to be based on dietary guidelines. It is also important that healthy school lunches are eaten in a friendly atmosphere. This will give children an opportunity:

- to practise healthy eating behaviour and experiment with the food and;
- to practise social skills.

The challenge for schools is to encourage our youngsters to develop a taste for food that is low in salt, sugar and fat and to promote an increase in the intake of fruit and vegetables. Schools are to consider the provision and the availability of a varied selection of healthy foods in tuckshops.

A number of schools are already taking specific measures to provide healthy food in their school in different settings. Some schools are providing breakfast because many students do not eat breakfast before leaving for school and this was having an impact on their ability to settle down in the morning and begin their work.

<sup>15</sup> A serving is a standard amount that gives guidance about how much to eat or identifies how many calories and nutrients are in a food.

<sup>16</sup> **Portion Sizes and Servings** (Document 9)



No research has been carried out about this initiative in Malta, however, in other countries many benefits have been recorded. These include improved concentration of students in morning classes, faster integration in the school day, improved social skills and improved social interaction with school staff.

Eating breakfast at school can be used as an opportunity for children to experience tranquillity, communication and pleasure and to acquire social skills. Student and parental involvement in breakfast clubs increases success.



Access to water is a fundamental human right and reason for good health. All students should have access to drinking water at all times at a number of points around the school away from toilet areas. An adequate intake of fluids is necessary for the body to function properly. Thirst signals the first signs of dehydration. This can have serious negative effects on the academic performance at school. It is important to raise awareness among teachers of the need for adequate fluid intake and to encourage students to drink water<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> **Our Resources** – Water Consumption in Schools

Schools may get financial support from promotional activity including sponsorships and advertising, however, it is important that this marketing activity does not interfere with the whole school approach to healthy eating.

On the other hand, in agricultural areas, collaboration between farmers and schools is to be encouraged. This has multiple benefits for the provision of nutritious, seasonal produce for school children, to field trips that allow children to learn about food production, sustainability and ecological issues.

A good school policy brings together all aspects of food clearly, adherently and consistently. It ensures long term change and provides a framework to guide healthy living initiatives and school nutrition programmes.



### Strategies

To achieve this objective, schools are to:

- identify a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT) to spearhead the process of developing a school healthy eating policy;
- implement a whole school food policy which has been developed through wide consultation and monitored and evaluated for impact;
- enable students and parents to contribute to healthy eating and act on their feedback;
- promote healthy food and drink options and make provision for their promotion in breakfast clubs, at break time and during parents' meeting;
- prohibit the promotion of other options in accordance with Education Division Food and Nutrient Standards<sup>18</sup>;
- ensure that tuck shop facilities meet standards;
- monitor students' food choices to form policy development and provision;
- engage parents in the debate about healthy food options;
- set up cookery clubs run by specialised staff to increase student and family awareness and underline the importance of a balanced diet, food hygiene and safety.
- ensure that sponsorship in money or in kind is in accordance with the Education Division's Standards and Conditions;
- monitor that prices charged in tuck shops are reasonable;
- have access to free, clean drinking water and encourage frequent consumption<sup>19</sup>;
- promote the consumption of fruit and vegetables;
- create whenever possible welcoming dining facilities which are clean, bright and safe;
- ensure that students take responsibility for some aspects of school life such as keeping the site litter free, serving break time snacks etc;
- invite parents and community partners, including local businessmen, to participate in aspects of school life, e.g. open days, prize days, school bazaars etc;
- ensure that food and drink, equipment, materials and publications and food and drink advertisements displayed on school premises, are in accordance to the Education Standards and Conditions
- seek advice of the Healthy Eating Nutrition Audit Board prior to holding a nutrition-related activity.



<sup>18</sup> **Food and Beverage Standards** – Appendix 1

<sup>19</sup> **Our Resources** – Water consumption in schools



## Appendix 1

- **Food and Beverage Standards**

Adapted from TASNE report (2006) and revised by the HESC staff

**List of Permissible Foods** Document 1

**List of Permissible Drinks** Document 2

**List of Prohibited Foods** Document 3

**List of Prohibited Drinks** Document 4



### **ALLERGIES**

Common allergenic foods include eggs, milk, fish, shellfish, peanuts, soya, wheat, nuts and seeds. Allergies to certain foods such as peanuts and peanut products, other nuts, seeds and their derivatives and shellfish can be acute. People suffering from a severe food allergy need to know the exact ingredients in their food since even a small amount of the allergenic food could harm them.



## Document 1

# FOOD AND BEVERAGE STANDARDS

## List of Permissible Foods

### SAVOURY ITEMS

- A selection of fresh and toasted sliced sandwiched bread, rolls, baguettes, ftira, buns, ciabatta, pocket bread, pittas with healthy fillings<sup>1</sup>, preferably using wholegrain breads.<sup>2</sup>
- *Hobż biż-żejt* - Maltese bread with tuna, tomatoes, onions, lettuce and beans.
- A selection of pizzas with healthy toppings, preferably using a wholegrain dough base.
- Hot dishes, such as baked rice and pasta and vegetable lasagne.
- Cold rice, couscous and pasta dishes.
- Pies and quiches with healthy fillings.
- Baked potatoes, plain or with healthy fillings such as ricotta, low fat cheese, tuna, vegetables, corn and pulses.
- Home-made soups low in fat and salt, made with fresh or frozen ingredients.

### SALADS AND DIPS

- A selection of salads.
- A selection of dips – vegetable, tuna, ricotta, bean, *bigilla*, hummus.

Refer to the Food and Beverage Selection Guidelines (FBSG) in **Our Resources**

<sup>1</sup> Healthy fillings or toppings are defined as those which are in keeping with Malta's National Dietary Guidelines and CINDI's twelve steps to healthy eating for Children & Adolescents (WHO 2006); they can include one or more of the following: a variety of fresh or frozen vegetables, tuna, sardines, mackerel, salmon, chicken, ricotta, baked omelettes and patties, skimmed mozzarella, low fat cheese, hard boiled eggs, traditional Maltese bigilla, beans and lentils, kunserva, low fat spread, low fat and low salt dressings.

<sup>2</sup> Wholegrain products include those made with wholegrain flour, wholewheat flour, cracked or bulgur wheat, graham flour, wholegrain corn flour or corn meal, whole oatmeal, whole rye, spelt, triticale, quinoa, wholegrain brown rice flour. The terms 'multigrain', 'stone ground' and 'pumpnickel' do not necessarily mean that the product is wholegrain.



## SAVOURY SNACKS

- *Galletti*, water crackers, crackers, rice cakes and crispbreads, preferably wholegrain and low fat, low salt varieties.
- Nuts and seeds, not fried, without added salt or added sugars<sup>3</sup>.
- Dried beans and chickpeas, natural or roasted, without added salt or added sugars.
- Soya nuts, without added salt or added sugars.
- Air-popped popcorn, without added butter,

## SWEET SNACKS

- *Qagħaq tal-ħmira*
- *Biskuttelli*
- Chelsea Buns.<sup>4</sup>
- Plain cakes, muffins and biscuits, low in fat and sugar and high in fibre.<sup>4</sup>
- Fruit breads and currant buns, low in fat and sugar.<sup>4</sup>
- Breakfast cereals and cereal bars, low in fat and sugar, high in fibre.<sup>5</sup>

## FRUITS AND DESSERTS

- Individual fresh fruits and fresh fruit salads
- Canned fruit in its own juice, unsweetened
- Dried fruit, plain, with no added fats
- Fresh or frozen yoghurts<sup>6</sup>
- Soya desserts<sup>6</sup>
- Fruit granitas or iced lollies<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Ideally total carbohydrates would not include too many 'added sugars'. This can be determined by reading the ingredients list. Added sugars include white sugar, brown sugar, raw sugar, sucrose (referred also as table sugar), glucose, glucose syrup, corn syrup, high-fructose corn syrup, corn-syrup solids, malt syrup, maple syrup, pancake syrup, fructose sweetener, liquid fructose, honey, molasses, invert sugar, anhydrous dextrose, crystal dextrose, hydrolysed starch. The higher up in the list these ingredients occur, the higher in 'added sugars' the product would be.

<sup>4</sup> containing not more than: 20% total fats; 5% saturated fat; 20% total sugars.

<sup>5</sup> containing not more than: 25% total sugars if dried fruits are included.

<sup>6</sup> containing not more than: 4% total fats; 15% total carbohydrates

<sup>7</sup> containing not more than 10% added sugars

### Document 2

## FOOD AND BEVERAGE STANDARDS

### List of Permissible Drinks

- Water, still or sparkling
- 100% pure fruit/vegetable juices
- Fresh milk or UHT, preferably fresh:  
For **Primary school pupils** – containing:  
4% or less total fats and less than 15% total carbohydrates<sup>8</sup>  
For **Secondary school students** –  
containing: 2.5% or less total fats and less  
than 15% total carbohydrates<sup>8</sup>
- Hot tea, using plain leaves
- Cold or hot milk drinks
- Drinks made from fruits, vegetables,  
yoghurt or milk, or from a combination of  
these, including smoothies<sup>9</sup>
- Oat, Soya or rice drinks<sup>9</sup>
- Low fat chocolate drinks<sup>9</sup>

Refer to the Food and Beverage Selection  
Guidelines (FBSG) in **Our Resources**

<sup>8</sup> Ideally total carbohydrates would not include too many 'added sugars'. This can be determined by reading the ingredients list. Added sugars include white sugar, brown sugar, raw sugar, sucrose (referred also as table sugar), glucose, glucose syrup, corn syrup, high-fructose corn syrup, corn-syrup solids, malt syrup, maple syrup, pancake syrup, fructose sweetener, liquid fructose, honey, molasses, invert sugar, anhydrous dextrose, crystal dextrose, hydrolysed starch. The higher up in the list these ingredients occur, the higher in 'added sugars' the product would be.

<sup>9</sup> Containing not more than: 4% total fats; 15 % total carbohydrates



## Document 3

## FOOD AND BEVERAGE STANDARDS

## List of Prohibited Foods

- Fried foods
- Potato chips
- High fat, high salt processed foods, such as sausages, hot dogs, burgers, fish cakes, battered and crumb-coated fried products, salami, mortadella, luncheon meat, processed cheese.
- Pizzas with high fat and high salt toppings, such as sausages, salami, peperoni, high fat cheese.
- *Pastizzi*, sausage rolls, hot dogs, savoury pastries.
- Doughnuts, cream and jam cakes, iced cakes, sweet pastries.
- Chocolates, sweets and confectionery.<sup>10</sup>
- Ice-creams
- Yoghurts and desserts<sup>11</sup>
- Breakfast cereals and cereal bars<sup>12</sup>
- Bagged savoury snacks, potato, maize, wheat and rice-based snacks<sup>13</sup>

## Document 4

## FOOD AND BEVERAGE STANDARDS

## List of Prohibited Drinks

- Flavoured water
- Soft drinks (regular and diet)
- Iced teas
- Energy drinks
- Coffee
- Beverages containing caffeine including caffeinated water.
- Juices which are not 100% fruit/vegetable juice and/or have added sugar or additional sweeteners.
- Fresh or UHT milk, and cold or hot milk drinks:
  - For **Primary school pupils**  
– containing: more than 4% fat content, and/or more than 15% total carbohydrates.
  - For **Secondary school students**  
- containing more than 2.5% fat content, and/or more than 15% total carbohydrates.
- Fruit nectars and fruit or juice drinks.<sup>14</sup>
- Oat, soya or rice drinks.<sup>14</sup>
- Drinks made from fruit, yoghurt or milk, or from a combination of these (including smoothies).<sup>14</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Milk chocolate, plain chocolate, white chocolate bars; chocolate flakes; chocolate buttons; chocolate eggs; filled chocolate, chocolate coated confectionery bars or biscuits; boiled, chewy, gum, liquorice, mint and other sweets; sherbet; sugared dried fruit; fudge; toffee; marshmallows; nougat; Turkish delight; cereal chewy bars; cereal crunchy bars; processed fruit bars; chewing gum.

<sup>11</sup> Containing more than: 4% total fats 15% total carbohydrates.

<sup>12</sup> Containing more than: 20% total fats; 5% saturated fats; 25% total sugars if dried fruits are added.

<sup>13</sup> Containing more than: 20% total fats; 5% saturated fats; 1.25g salt.

<sup>14</sup> Containing more than: 4% total fats; 15% total carbohydrates.

## Appendix 2

- **Nutrient Based Guidelines for Food and Drink Providers**  
Document 5





## Document 5

### Nutrient Based Guidelines for Food and Drink Providers

It is advisable that tuck shop operators keep to the minimum nutrient levels suggested for each nutrient.

**Artificial sweeteners** (aspartame and saccharine) can only be used in yoghurt and milk drinks or combinations containing yoghurt or milk.

**Artificial flavours** and **Artificial enhancers** (monosodium glutamate MSG) should be avoided.

Foods should be free from **Genetically Modified (GM)** ingredients.

Nutrient	Nutrient level per 100g / ml of food
Fats <sup>15</sup>	3g - 20g
Saturated Fats	1g - 5g
Total Sugars <sup>16</sup>	2g - 20g
Salt	0.25g - 1.25g
Sodium	0.1g - 0.5g

Adapted from: Food Standards Agency Guidelines, UK and TASNE Report (2006).  
Revised by the Home Economics Seminar Centre staff.

<sup>15</sup> Food containing hydrogenated fats should be avoided. Total fats may discriminate against foods high in natural fats such as nuts and seeds. Values for total fats may be higher than the suggested levels for these foods.

<sup>16</sup> Total sugars may discriminate against foods high in natural sugars such as: fresh fruits, dried fruit, 100% fruit juices and some vegetables. Values for total sugars may be higher than the suggested levels for the above mentioned foods and drinks. Breakfast cereals and cereal bars that are low in added sugars and contain dried fruits should not exceed 25% total sugar.

## Appendix 3

- **Education Health Services**  
Document 6
- **Health and Safety Unit**  
Document 7
- **Home Economics Seminar Centre**  
Document 8





## Document 6

### Education Health Services

The primary objective of the Education Health Services, formally the Education Medical Services (EMS) Unit, is to promote “an efficient, health promoting lifestyle and environment in the education system”. Its services include carrying out regular surveys and reporting on clinics, first-aid facilities and tuckshops in the educational institutions.

In relation to health and safety nutritional related aspects, the Education Health Service:

- ensures adherence to contract conditions of tuckshop operators;
- expands its services by visiting non state schools for this aim;
- participates comprehensively in policies related to the prevention of childhood eating disorders;
- propagates good practice that arise from these initiatives;
- liaises with sectors and other organisations to give rise to inter-sectorial collaboration as outlined in the Ottawa charter for health promotion;
- gives attention to aspects of health and its determinants in the widest sense of its definition and tries to encompass all its dimensions;
- organises community needs assessment in relation to healthy lifestyle adoption and lobbying for implementation of identified necessary public policy;
- co-ordinates a Body Mass Index survey in secondary schools given the necessary resources are made available;
- organises and co-ordinates an ongoing inset training to all sectors at all levels involved;
- formulates guidelines and personalised action plans to help school children with special dietary needs;
- participates actively in the Healthy School Nutrition Audit Board and in the audit exercise conducted as recommended.



### Document 7



## Health and Safety Unit

The Health and Safety Unit strives to enhance the quality of education by exercising a directional influence for the prevention of hazards. The Unit has resident Health and Safety teachers in secondary schools and peripatetic teachers in primary schools. All state secondary schools have at least one Health and Safety teacher. These are regularly trained in the various aspects of Health and Safety law and other related matters.

In relation to health and safety and food strategies, the Health and Safety Unit (HandS):

- conducts an annual Risk Analysis of school tuck shops, draws up a report and formulates recommendations.
- checks for safety equipment and precautions in accordance with Maltese and European H&S legislation.
- provides advice and support on how a healthier eating environment can be provided for, within the school campus, including the safety equipment required in such premises.
- reports regularly to the Head of School about compliance of Health and Safety Environment.
- publishes information pamphlets for students, school staff and parents, in collaboration with the Students Health Services, on healthy eating environments.
- provides advice and support to schools regarding the purchase of equipment to enhance the healthy environment.



## Document 8

# Home Economics Seminar Centre



The Home Economics Seminar Centre (HESC) forms part of the peripatetic service within the Curriculum Management Department of the Education Division.

The ultimate goal of the Centre is:

to improve the quality of everyday life for pupils/students, their families and the community, through the efficient, effective and sustainable management of their resources;

to address the determinants of health in order to enable pupils/students and other community members to make informed healthy life choices.

In relation to health, food and nutrition strategies, the HESC Team:

- develops and facilitates various nutrition programmes and activities at the HESC, in state and non-state schools and other community entities;
- produces, publishes and distributes nutrition education resources;
- plans interventions to promote healthy lifestyles;
- supports educational entities and tuck shop operators in promoting and implementing nutrition guidelines, policies and regulations;
- contributes to the design and implementation of nutrition-related objectives and action plans in schools;
- advises and supports teachers, school administrators, college co-ordinators and other Education Division entities in organising nutrition activities;
- builds networks with food manufacturers, importers and distributors which sponsor healthy events;
- conducts food product analysis to advise on the distribution of food and beverage items in educational entities;
- collaborates and builds alliances with the different sectors and stakeholders to ensure that school food and nutrition policies are implemented and sustained;
- advocates for health in order to achieve health outcomes in the school setting and in the community at large.

## Appendix 4

- **Portion Sizes and Servings**

Document 9



Document 9

## Portion Sizes and Servings

### What is a serving?

A serving size is a standard amount that gives guidance about how much to eat or identifies how many calories and nutrients are in a food.

may contribute to the current epidemic of overweight and obesity.

### What is a portion?

A portion size is defined as the amount of food one chooses to eat. Portion sizes can be bigger or smaller than the recommended Pyramid serving sizes. Research shows that children/adolescents are eating large portions which

The following tables are provided as a reference guide to show the contribution of the different food groups to the daily diet. Each table provides serving suggestions and portion sizes for children and adolescents for each of the four major food groups illustrated in the CINDI Food Pyramid.

**Table 1:** Recommended number of daily servings and portion sizes:

### Breads and Cereals

Breads and Cereals <i>(Example of 1 serving)</i>	Age portion size (grams)	
	3-6 years	7-18 years
<b>Rice</b>	65-80 (cooked weight)	80-120 (cooked weight)
<b>Potatoes</b> (including sweet potatoes and yams)		
Mashed, boiled, croquettes	80-95	84-98
Jacket	100-120	112-170
Chips, roast, other potatoes cooked in fat	70-80	70-84
<b>Bread and cereal</b>		
Sliced bread, rolls, baguettes	40-60	56-70
Pizza	60-80	84-98
Cracker biscuits	40-60	42-63
<b>Pasta</b>		
Macaroni, spaghetti or noodles	75-95 (cooked weight)	100-180 (cooked weight)

Source: Programme for Nutrition and Food Security – WHO Regional Office for Europe (2006)

**Table 2:** Recommended number of daily servings and portion sizes:

### Vegetables and Fruits

Vegetables and Fruits <i>(Example of 1 serving)</i>	Age portion size (grams)	
	3-6 years	7-18 years
<b>Vegetables</b>		
Peas, green beans, sweet corn, carrots, cauliflower, broccoli	35-50	56-70
Cabbage, spinach, spring greens and other leafy vegetables	40-50	42-56
Baked beans, tinned tomatoes	60-80	70-84
Coleslaw	25-35	28-42
Salad vegetables	40-50	42-56
Vegetable soup	150-170 ml (1 cup)	200-300
<b>Fruits</b>		
Apples, pears, orange, large bananas	50-100 (½ -1 fruit)	50-100 (½ -1 fruit)
Nectarines, mandarins, etc.	50-100 (½ -1 fruit)	100-200 (½ -1 fruit)
Soft fruit, plums, strawberries	50-70 (½ -1 fruit)	56-70
Stewed fruit: apples, rhubarb, gooseberries	50-100 (½ -1 fruit)	56-100
Fruit salad	40-70	40-70
Fruit tinned in juice	55-65	70-115
Fruit juice	100 ml	100 ml
Dried fruit	15-20 (½ -1 tablespoon)	28-42

Source: Programme for Nutrition and Food Security – WHO Regional Office for Europe (2006)

**Table 3:** Recommended number of daily servings and portion sizes:

**Milk and Milk Products**

Milk and milk products <i>(Example of 1 serving)</i>	Age portion size (grams)	
	3-6 years	7-18 years
Low-fat milk	100 ml (½ cup)	200 ml (1 cup)
Custard	40-50	84-98
Low-fat yoghurt	100 ml (½ cup)	175 ml (¾ cup)
Cheese	20	45

Source: Programme for Nutrition and Food Security – WHO Regional Office for Europe (2006)

**Table 4:** Recommended number of daily servings and portion sizes:

**Meat, Fish, Poultry and alternatives**

Meat, Fish, Poultry and alternatives <i>(Example of 1 serving)</i>	Age portion size (grams)	
	3-6 years	7-18 years
Red meat (roasted): lamb, beef, pork and vegetarian meat substitute	40-50*	42-56*
Liver	60	70
Cooked fish	50-70	90-160
Cooked dried peas, beans or lentils	200 ml (1 cup)	250 ml (1 cup)
Nuts or seeds	75g-100 ml (½ cup)	125 ml (½ cup)

\*Weight of meat can be reduced proportionally if adding another protein based food such as beans.

Source: Programme for Nutrition and Food Security – WHO Regional Office for Europe (2006)

## Appendix 5

- **Food Preparation Guidelines (TASNE)**  
Document 10





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**Document 10**

## **Food Preparation Guidelines for School Food Providers (TASNE)**

In the course of selecting, storing, preparing and serving food, school food providers are advised:

- to opt for wholegrain ingredients where appropriate (e.g. wholemeal flour, wholemeal pizza dough, wholemeal pasta, brown rice, wholegrain breakfast cereals);
- to offer minimally processed foods, ideally with no artificial flavourings, sweeteners or colourings;
- to choose foods free from genetically modified ingredients;
- to avoid and minimize the use of ingredients or products containing saturated, trans, partially hydrogenated and hydrogenated fats and oils;
- not to make excessive use of oils and fat-based spreads, dressings and condiments in food preparation;
- to source local, seasonal produce and products where possible;
- to avoid ingredients and products with excess packaging;
- to present foods for sale using packaging and containers which have minimal impact on the environment;
- to abide by food safety legislation;
- to ensure **artificial sweeteners** (e.g. aspartame and saccharin) are only used in yoghurt and milk drinks or combinations containing yoghurt or milk;
- to avoid **artificial flavours** and **artificial enhancers** (e.g. monosodium glutamate MSG);
- to ensure foods are free from **Genetically Modified (GM)** ingredients.





Healthy Eating Lifestyle Plan

HELP



Education Division