

Promotion of Healthy Eating in School

Healthy eating promotes students' growth and prevents chronic diseases such as obesity, heart disease, diabetes and cancers. However, the principles of healthy eating are not commonly practiced among local students due to various reasons. Information from the Department of Health (DH) revealed that the prevalence of being overweight (including obesity) among primary students was 16.4% in the 2023/24 school year. Therefore, it is necessary to develop and maintain good eating habits among students.

To help our children grow healthily and enhance their learning abilities, it is a pleasure to inform you that our school has already joined the **"EatSmart Accreditation Scheme"** organised by the DH. Through adopting various measures to implement the **"School Healthy Eating Policy"** set out earlier and cultivate a healthy eating environment, we hope that our students could develop good eating habits. To encourage students to put healthy eating into practice in daily life, we would like parents to go hand in hand and cooperate with us. Details are as follows:

1. Parents who prepare lunch boxes for their children should refer to the *Nutritional Guidelines on Lunch for Students*. Lunch boxes **should provide at least one serving of vegetables** (i.e. half bowl of cooked vegetables), **should not contain "Strongly Discouraged Food Items"** (for example deep-fried food or food with very high salt content) and **should not provide desserts**. The ratio of grains, vegetables and meat, fish, egg and alternatives to the **volume** of lunch box should be **3:2:1**, which implies that grains should consist of the largest amount, followed by vegetables and meat, fish, egg and alternatives.
2. Parents should make reference to the *Nutritional Guidelines on Snacks for Students* regarding snacks arrangement. **Do not provide "Snacks to Choose Less", including food and drinks high in fat, salt or sugar, as well as those contain caffeine or sweeteners (sugar substitutes)**, such as potato chips, chocolates, butter cookies, candies, soft drinks, fruit juices with added sugars, tea, coffee. Parents can prepare healthy snacks, including fresh fruits, boiled eggs, dry-roasted plain nuts, low-fat milk without added sugar, high-calcium low-sugar soy drinks. You can also look at the **"Database of Prepackaged Snacks"** on the website of the Hong Kong Nutrition Association for the snacks available in the market that fulfill the definition of **"Snacks of Choice"** and **"Snacks to Choose in Moderation"**. In addition, you can make use of the **"Healthy Snack Checker"** on the "EatSmart@school.hk" Campaign thematic website of the DH to conduct nutrition classification for prepackaged snacks with nutrition labels. Please note that students should take moderate amount of snacks only if it shall not affect the appetite for the next main meal.
3. Besides the fruits provided by the school (once in every week for students who order school lunch), we hope that parents can **encourage and ensure students to take one to two servings of fruit every day**.

To learn more about healthy eating, please visit the thematic website of the "EatSmart@school.hk" Campaign of the DH (<https://school.eatsmart.gov.hk>)

Thank you for your kind attention.

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1. Please visit the "EatSmart@school.hk" Campaign thematic website (<https://school.eatsmart.gov.hk>) for details of the "EatSmart School Accreditation Scheme".
 2. For *Nutritional Guidelines on Lunch for Students* and *Nutritional Guidelines on Snacks for Students*, please visit the "EatSmart@school.hk" Campaign thematic website.
 3. "Database of Prepackaged Snacks" (https://school.eatsmart.gov.hk/en/content_esas.aspx?id=6135)
 4. "Healthy Snack Checker" (https://school.eatsmart.gov.hk/en/content_esas.aspx?id=6131)