



Red sneakers

an update on those sneaky RED foods

One of the many benefits of being a member of the Healthy Kids Association is that you can have your canteen menu assessed for free. Healthy Kids can colour code your menu items as GREEN, AMBER and RED. By doing this, we help you make sure children are offered the right balance of foods from your school canteen. We can also offer suggestions to help your menu meet the Fresh Tastes @ School Strategy and give you some ideas on boosting the green foods on your menu.

Lately as we've been assessing a variety of menus, we've been noticing some product trends. It seems that some common "Red" foods are sneaking their way onto the canteen menu.

The Fresh Tastes @ School Canteen Menu Planning Guide recommends that **RED foods are limited to two occasions per term**. This is important for our children's health because red foods:

- Lack adequate nutritional value
- Are high in saturated fat, added sugar and/or salt
- Can contribute excess energy

Here are the top 5 RED foods found:

- 1 Fruit shaped jelly cups and jelly sticks
- 2 Yoghurt frogs
- 3 Eucalyptus drops
- 4 Ovalteenies
- 5 Fruit Juice drinks (>300kj/serve – banned entirely)

Replace sneaky red items with veggie sticks and dip, crackers with reduced fat cheese or pineapple slices.



what makes them red?

1 Jelly sticks

Jelly Joy sticks and Wobbli Stix are two of the most common RED products we see. Both are considered to be confectionery. While the kids might think they're fun, they contain nothing more than energy from added sugars. They don't contribute any positive nutrition at all.

Instead of selling jelly sticks, try some of these alternatives that provide some positive nutrition instead:

- Small jelly cup with added fruit pieces (use 150ml cups)
- Tub of fruit yoghurt, small frozen yoghurt cups or popsicles
- Frozen pureed fruit – use your over ripened fruit at the end of the week, cook down, puree and freeze in small cup

2 Ovalteenies

These guys show up year after year. They may be popular with the kids for a chocolate hit, but they are classified as confectionery. With next to no positive nutrition, there are other foods that we'd much prefer to see kids eat so they can get some valuable nutrients.

Some more nutritious snacking choices for your canteen could be:

- Small boxes (40g) of sultanas or mixed dried fruit
- Frozen grapes or pineapple pieces
- Frozen flavoured milk cups
- Veggie sticks with dip
- Wholegrain crackers and reduced fat cheese

3 Fruit drinks

Many people mistakenly believe fruit drinks are healthy because they're made with fruit juice. But be warned: many fruit drinks contain added sugars. So how do we know which ones to choose?

Juice that contains less than 99% fruit juice often contains added sugars and may contain as little as 5% fruit juice! These products need to be assessed against the 'sugar sweetened drinks' criteria under Fresh Tastes. Those that measure in at more than 300kJ per serve are banned entirely under the sugar sweetened drinks policy.

Drink choices that are classified under the strategy include:

- 99% fruit juices <300mL/serve (AMBER)
- 99% fruit juice <200mL/serve (GREEN)

Note: while these drinks don't contain added sugars, they still provide a large number of kilojoules (energy) in a concentrated form. The Fresh Tastes strategy recommends that if you are serving juice, only provide small serves that contain no added sugar. Make sure you always check the label.

Check the Healthy Kids School Canteen Buyers' Guide for a wide range of fruit juices that are classified GREEN or AMBER within the strategy.

Would you like an assessment?

If you would like Healthy Kids to assess your canteen menu, give us a call on 02 9876 1300. Or you can head to our website at www.healthy-kids.com.au/school-canteens where you can find a wealth of resources including recipes, tips on developing a healthy canteen menu, and our Occasional Food Calculator.

