Your address

 Your suburb and postcode

The Hon. Sarah Mitchell/Brad Hazzard

Minister for Education/Minister for Health

PO Box 5341

SYDNEY NSW 2000

**OR**

Your local MP

Today’s date

Dear INSERT NAME

I am writing to ask for your support to improve the food in schools and the food literacy of Australian children.

Currently, there is no monitoring and reporting of the food available in schools. Unhealthy food and drink that is nutritionally poor and is freely available at canteens, fundraisers and athletics carnivals.

The food literacy of many Australians is frighteningly inadequate for our current food environment. It can be argued that this has contributed to our epidemic of overweightness and obesity. Unless food literacy is improved and knowledge about food, cooking and healthy food choices are boosted, a poor diet will continue to contribute to the poor health of Australians and the spiraling burden of diet-related disease.

School is the ideal time and place in which to teach and practice the essential life skill of healthy eating. Feeding oneself is a non-negotiable essential task of everyday life. It needs to be given higher priority in school.

Healthy Kids Association has more than 30 years of experience in children’s nutrition and working with school canteens. It has identified four key strategies to help improve both food in schools and food literacy of children. These are:

* A higher priority placed on healthy food and drink in schools
* Mandatory monitoring and reporting of food in school canteens
* More funding to support canteens
* New national guidelines for canteens

Please consider putting these four key strategies on your list of priorities this year. It is only tighter regulation and practical assistance for schools that will radically improve both food in schools and food literacy.

Help Healthy Kids raise the profile of this essential matter with the government in order to effect change.

Yours sincerely,