



## WHY SWITCH UP THE SNACKS?

A great education starts with kids having the energy and focus to learn at school. Boosting healthy and delicious food and drinks options at school can improve kids' concentration, mood, memory, learning, academic performance and mental wellbeing and give them the fuel they need to thrive.

Providing healthier food and drinks also helps to meet the Department of Education and Training's [School Canteens and Other School Food Services Policy](#).

Making changes to your school canteen or tuckshop might seem overwhelming but there are small changes you can do to get started. You can 'Switch up the snacks' with the following 'bite' sized actions:

- **Kick the confectionary** – remove all confectionary (including chocolate bars and chocolate coated/premium ice-creams).
- **Rethink cakes and muffins** – reduce the portion size, remove any confectionary and/or replace with fruit-based options.
- **Switch to healthier snacks** – replace packaged chips with healthier snacks (including plain/lightly salted popcorn, rice crackers lightly flavoured, cheese and crackers, seasonal fruit, frozen fruit, vegetable sticks and dip, trail mixes).

The process is the same for each of the bites. You can try one 'bite' at a time or do them all at once. It's up to you. Whichever approach you take, this guide will support you through each step of the way.

## SWITCH TO HEALTHIER SNACKS – WHAT'S INVOLVED?

This bite involves replacing all packaged chips with healthier snacks like plain/lightly-salted popcorn, lightly-flavoured rice crackers, cheese and crackers, vegetable sticks and dip and trail mixes. Foods that are considered a packaged chip product include:

- potato chips, crisps, puffs or snaps
- corn chips
- vegetable chips, crisps, straws or sticks
- soy crisps or twists
- cheese balls, twists or puffs.

This includes chips offered in your canteen, your vending machine if you have one or your external food service if you don't have an on-site canteen.

To **switch to healthier snacks**, follow our three simple steps:





## STEP ONE: REVIEW

Start by reviewing the chips currently available at your school.

Take note of the different varieties as well as their serving size. This will help identify which items should be replaced.



### TIP:

You can use the free product assessment tool, **FoodChecker**, to check how your snacks are classified.

Just search or assess products in the category 'savoury snacks'. All snacks classified as **RED** in **FoodChecker** are considered unhealthy options.



## STEP TWO: PLAN

The next step involves planning how you will make the changes.

There are many healthier snacks that kids love, including:

- trail mixes i.e. dried fruit and nut/seed mixes
- fresh fruit snacks, such as seasonal fruit, apple slinkies, mixed fruit salad (serve in cups or ice cream cones) or fruit kebabs served with reduced-fat yoghurt
- yoghurt tubs, plain or flavoured (preferably reduced fat)
- plain, lightly-salted or lightly-flavoured popcorn
- dip and veggie sticks or dip and cracker packs
- plain and lightly-flavoured rice crackers
- cheese and cracker packs.

### TIP:

You can use the free product assessment tool, **FoodChecker**, to find healthier packaged chips/crisps.

Just select the 'quick product check' button, then search or assess products in the category 'savoury snacks'. All packaged chips/crisps classified as **AMBER** in **FoodChecker** are considered healthier options and are suitable for supply in school food services.



Find out where your school food service purchases its packaged chips. It could be a local distributor, wholesaler, vending machine supplier or supermarket. If it is a local distributor, wholesaler or vending machine supplier, contact them to discuss and determine healthier options the school can purchase.

- If there is a contract or agreement in place, discuss with the supplier what flexibility there is and how healthier snacks could be included in the existing contract.
- If a vending machine supplier is being used, the good news is they are generally open to modifying the types of snack items in their vending machines to offer healthier alternatives, as well as **removing unhealthy food branding and promoting their healthier options**.
- If the contract is set, you might need to wait to influence the contract when it comes time for renewal. Or consider using a different supplier that can offer the healthier snack options you want.

## PREPARING FOR CHANGE

Look for ways to engage your school community in making changes. Take opportunities to talk to families, staff, students, canteen staff and volunteers to get a sense of the 'appetite' for change and the best way to introduce changes. Involve the Parents and Friends Association, School Council, Sustainability Club or Wellbeing Committee if there is one. You can make changes all at once or use a gradual approach:

**All at once** involves making the changes overnight or all in one go. An ideal time to do this is at the beginning of a new school year or term. This is the quickest approach and usually works best if you are only introducing a few changes and when you know there is good support for change.

**A gradual approach** gives students more time to get used to the changes and an opportunity to try alternative options. It is often the more readily accepted option if you need to make lots of changes. There are two ways you could take a gradual approach:

1. Replace the least popular packaged chips first, then work on replacing the best sellers second.
2. Sell down the stock of packaged chips and don't order more once sold out. As they sell out replace with healthier products or canteen made options.



**Some healthier snack options will require preparation. Find some passionate parents (or involve the older students on a roster) to help with cutting fruit or vegetables. If extra hands aren't available, see if you can source pre-cut veggie sticks and fruit, or consider swapping to healthier packaged alternatives such as plain, lightly salted or lightly flavoured popcorn or cheese and cracker packs to keep preparation time at a minimum.**





## STEP THREE: ACT

Now you've done all the groundwork, it's time to put it into action.

### Here's a great example of switching up the snacks.

Vic Kids' College (P-12) reviewed the packaged chips on their menu and found that they had five different packaged chips available (see menu below, packaged chips that are not allowed are highlighted in red). Next, they identified healthier options they could make available on their canteen menu. Vic Kids' College decided to make a number of changes to the snacks on their canteen menu as follows:

Snacks Menu BEFORE	Price (\$)
Savoury snacks	
Corn chips – original and nacho cheese, 90g packet	2.20
Potato chips – plain or salt and vinegar, 90g packet	1.50
Pretzels, 50g packet	2.00
Trail mix, 50g packet	2.50
Dip and cracker pack – tzatziki with rice crackers, 125g pack	1.50

Snacks Menu AFTER	Price (\$)
Savoury snacks	
Popcorn – lightly salted, 30g packet	1.20
Potato chips – plain, 25g packet (AMBER variety)	1.50
Veggie sticks and dip – carrot or celery with hommus	1.50
Cheese and crackers, 120g pack	1.50
Trail mix, 50g packet	2.50
Dip and cracker pack – tzatziki with rice crackers, 125g pack	1.50

## SUPPORTING SUCCESS

Think about the ways you can promote your new healthy options through the way they are placed, priced and promoted. You are more likely to have success by:

- **placing the healthier options at students' eye level** on the counters
- **promoting the healthier snacks in meal deals together with healthier drinks options** e.g. veggie sticks with dip and a bottled water for \$2.50
- **creating posters showing the new healthier snack options** available at the canteen
- **pricing these options competitively so they are the cheaper choice** e.g. consider lowering the price of healthier options or increasing the price of less healthy options
- **promoting the benefits of healthier options through newsletters** and other regular communication channels
- **getting students involved in promoting the changes** by designing posters, menus, promotions, competitions and labelling.



Remember, this is just one of the 'bites' you can do to switch up the snacks. Check out ['Kick the confectionary'](#) and ['Switch to healthier snacks'](#).





## CELEBRATE

Great job! You've finished the 'Switch to healthier snacks' bite for Vic Kids Eat Well. Make sure you share the good news with the whole school community and communicate how you will continue your great work in the other action areas of Vic Kids Eat Well.

## FOR FURTHER HELP

### Vic Kids Eat Well tech team

For advice or assistance regarding program support and delivery, setting engagement and website database issues

- 1300 18 57 25
- [vickidseatwell@cancervic.org.au](mailto:vickidseatwell@cancervic.org.au)

### Your local Health Promotion Officer

For on the ground support

Full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Job title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact no. \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_



If you are having trouble accessing this document, please email [vickidseatwell@cancervic.org.au](mailto:vickidseatwell@cancervic.org.au) or call **1300 185 725**

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