

DONVALE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE **NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY**

PREAMBLE

DCC recognises the impact of physical health to our students. Two major influences on our health status are nutrition and physical activity. These areas, particularly the balance of one in relation to the other, impact us in areas related to body weight, self-esteem, concentration and learning, and general health and well-being.

Appropriate nutrition improves cognitive development, attention span, work capacity, classroom behaviour, and attendance at school. Establishing healthy eating patterns at a young age provides an important foundation for good eating patterns in adult life with health, social and financial benefits to individuals, families and society. Every child has the right to an optimal learning environment. Some food choices affect a student's behaviour and can impede other students' ability to learn. Food choices causing irritability, restlessness, poor self-control, lethargy and inability to concentrate are those high in sugar, high GI or providing poor hydration.

Adequate physical activity also has an impact on a child's life both now and in the future. Physical activity is important for healthy growth and development of the cardiorespiratory system and the musculoskeletal system of children. It provides mental and social health benefits, as well as improved sleep. It also has longer term effects in relation to weight management and disease prevention.

We recognise that education is a partnership between the home and the school. As such, it is the responsibility first and foremost of the home to establish sound practices regarding food choices and the use of leisure time. However, we are aware of the impact of learning in the school setting. We therefore believe that the College's role in respect of nutrition and physical activity is pivotal, and we aim to work in partnership with families to educate and facilitate appropriate eating and exercise patterns in the students we serve. Schools can play a large role in ensuring that health-enhancing eating behaviours are learned, practiced and supported. Therefore, it is vital that parents, teachers and students work together to support a health promoting whole-school approach to building a culture in which students choose nutritious foods and a healthy lifestyle.

Although Donvale Christian College has a relatively healthy group of students, there is a national concern for the increasing incidence of heart disease, obesity and diabetes in our community. These problems are being directly attributed to lifestyle changes such as an increase in sedentary alternatives to physical activity, and changes to our everyday diet including a higher intake of food of lower nutritional value (high fat, sugar and / or salt). We therefore feel as a school community it is vital to acknowledge these problems in society and our important place in educating future generations in healthy life skills.

We do recognise that at times a student may have a medical condition with dietary requirements that differ from the recommended guidelines, and understand these students must comply with the diet appropriate to their condition at all times.

GENERAL APPROACH:

- ✿ All nutritional recommendations are in accordance with the NHMRC Dietary Guidelines for Australian Adults and Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia
- ✿ All physical activity recommendations are in accordance with Australia's Physical Activity Recommendations (ACHPER) for children and young people (2005).
- ✿ To ensure that any foods provided by the school are consistent with a healthy eating philosophy.
- ✿ We do not recommend the complete banning of low nutritional value foods, recognising their place within a balanced lifestyle (diet and exercise); however we support the limited use of these foods within the school environment.

POLICY GUIDELINES:

Curriculum:

- Ensure healthy eating, nutrition and food issues are addressed developmentally within the curriculum across Year Levels Prep to 9, in all learning areas as appropriate.
- Each year level will have timetabled the appropriate amount of physical education and sport as recommended by ACHPER and Government agencies.
- Provide access and funds within the Professional Development budget for appropriate staff to ensure their knowledge is adequate in teaching these areas.

Hydration:

- Encourage students to regularly hydrate with fresh water throughout the day.
- Provide many outlets of fresh, clean tap water at appropriate places throughout the school grounds.
- Encourage students to maintain hydration by drinking water during recess and lunch breaks and, in appropriate ways, during class time.
- Encourage students to bring only water-filled drink bottles to school.

Physical Activity during school breaks:

- Provide well maintained and adequate facilities for students to utilise during class breaks.
- Provide some sporting equipment to encourage and enhance physical activity during breaks.
- Students will be encouraged to engage in non-competitive activities during breaks which can be inclusive of all students of any sporting ability.
- Implement over time appropriate recommendations from the draft Recreation Plan.

Class rewards:

- Staff will avoid using food with little or no nutritional value as rewards in class, and will be encouraged to consider options other than food.

Canteen:

- Food provided by the school canteen will reflect the general approach of the College.
- Foods generally available at the canteen should comply with the NHMRC Dietary Guidelines for Australian Adults and Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia. The canteen will generally comply with the State

Government guidelines for Government schools whereby soft drinks, energy / sports drinks and confectionery are not to be sold on a daily basis.

- However, there will be restricted provision of some low nutritional value foods for the first two years of the implementation of this policy. It is proposed that some low nutritional value foods will be made available on one day per week. This interim position will be reviewed after two years.

School Community Education:

- The College will seek to provide up to date and relevant information to assist parents in making nutritious food choices for their children and to encourage appropriate levels of physical activity.
- Information will be provided in various and accessible ways, such as the College newsletter, parent information sessions, information provided to new families and the College website.
- Parents will be encouraged to provide nutritional food that is consistent with the NHMRC Dietary Guidelines and the College's Nutrition and Physical Activity Policy.

After School Care:

- The food provided by this service must comply with the NHMRC Dietary Guidelines for Australian Adults and Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia.
- This service will provide foods daily that are classified as "healthy" or "recommended".
- Supervised physical activity will be encouraged at After School Care.

Class parties, celebrations and get-togethers:

- In recognising the importance of celebration events, and that food is an integral and important part of these occasions, we do not suggest banning "extra foods". However, the amount at each occasion and the frequency of these occasions should be considered when planning the menu. Most food supplied should support the view that nutritious and healthy foods are enjoyable and are the basis of our diet, even in celebration.
- In regular extra-curricular events where food is supplied we suggest that the guidelines in respect of Class rewards be followed.

Fundraising:

- In support of the College's policy of healthy eating and to provide consistent messages about nutrition, fundraising activities involving food and beverage products high in sugar, fat and kilojoules should be limited to two occasions per term.
- Fundraising groups will be encouraged to consider ways of fundraising that do not include food.

Food provided at school functions, productions, etc

- Occasional events external to the school are not subject to this policy (e.g school productions).
- A range of food choices will be available at these events.