



WHY CHANGE UP THE MENU?

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 'Change up the menu' with the following smaller 'bite' sized actions:

- **Boost veggies and salad** – add salad and vegetables to at least half of canteen lunch menu options (hot and cold)
- **Skip the deep fryer** – swap fried foods for oven baked/air fried/toasted options (e.g. hot chips, crumbed chicken or fish).
- **Offer healthier pies and pastries** – offer healthier pies and pastries (where supply is available), limit the options (not more than 3), and/or swap pies for quiches, frittatas and products with increased vegetable content.

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.

OFFER HEALTHIER PIES AND PASTRIES – WHAT'S INVOLVED?

This bite is about limiting the number of pies and pastries to no more than three, and/or swapping pies for quiches, frittatas and products with increased vegetable content. When we talk about 'pies and pastries' we mean any of the following:

- regular meat pies, potato/shepherds pies, party pies, etc.
- pasties
- sausage rolls
- filo pastry triangles or rolls
- vegetarian alternatives such as samosas.

To **offer healthier pies and pastries**, follow our three simple steps:





STEP ONE: REVIEW

Start by reviewing how many (and the type of) pies and pastry options currently on offer in your canteen (or your external food service if you don't have an on-site canteen).

Take note of how many are being sold, their serving size as well as the different varieties available. This will help identify what foods should be limited or swapped.



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 'single hot food item'. All pies and pastries classified as **AMBER** are considered healthier options.



STEP TWO: PLAN

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

- Offer healthier pies and pastries (where supply is available).
- Limit the options to no more than three items.
- Swap pies and pastries for quiches, frittatas and products with increased vegetable content.

There are many healthier pies and savoury pastries that kids love. Try some of these popular alternatives:

- frittata or quiche with lean ham and vegetables or lean chicken and mushroom
- filo pastry triangles with roast pumpkin and feta or spinach and ricotta
- cottage pie with lean mince and vegetables.



TIP:

You can use the free product assessment tool, **FoodChecker**, to find healthier pies and pastries.

Just select the 'quick product check' button, then search or assess products in the category 'single hot food item'. All pies and pastries classified as **AMBER** in **FoodChecker** are considered healthier options and are suitable for supply in school food services.

Find out where your school buys its pies and pastries. It could be a local distributor, wholesaler or supermarket. If it is a local distributor or wholesaler 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 options could be included in the existing contract.
- 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 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 three ways you could take a gradual approach:

1. Replace the least popular pies and pastries first, then work on replacing the best sellers second.
2. Sell down your stock of pies and pastries and don't order more once you sell out. As they sell out, replace with healthier options.
3. Start to make some healthier pies and pastries on site as a first step, then negotiate with suppliers about stocking healthier pre-packaged items (or vice versa).





STEP THREE: ACT

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

Here's a great example of offering healthier pies and pastries.

Vic Kids' College (P-12) reviewed the pies and pastries on their canteen menu and found that they had six different options available (see menu below, pies and pastries are highlighted in red). Next, they identified healthier options they could make available on their canteen menu, to offer healthier options, reduce the pastry options available to a maximum of three and introduce a vegetable-containing homemade option. Vic Kids' College decided to remove or replace the pies and pastries items as follows.

Pies and Pastries Menu BEFORE	Price (\$)
Hot Bites	
Sausage roll, 120g	3.00
Meat pie, 175g	3.50
Potato pie, 180g	4.00
Vege pastie, 180g	3.50
Cheese and spinach roll, 140g	3.50
Vege samosas	3.50

Pies and Pastries Menu AFTER	Price (\$)
Hot Bites	
Lite sausage roll, 120g	3.00
Lean meat pie snack, 110g	2.50
Cheese and spinach roll, 90g	2.00
Homemade potato and vegetable frittata	2.50

Note: Vic Kids' College chose to make all of the changes in this bite. They could have chosen to only reduce the pie and pastry options to a maximum of three OR include healthier alternatives OR swap pies for quiches, frittatas and products with increased vegetable content.

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 pies and pastries at students' eye level** in the pie warmers
- **promoting the healthier hot foods in meal deals with healthier drink options** e.g. potato and vegetable frittata and flavoured milk (reduced fat) for \$5
- **pricing healthier hot food 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 make your menu healthier. Check out '[Boost veggies and salad](#)' and '[Skip the deep fryer](#)'.





CELEBRATE

Great job! You've finished the 'Offer healthier pies and pastries' 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

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 or call **1300 185 725**

Vic Kids Eat Well is supported by the Victorian Government, and is delivered by Cancer Council Victoria's Achievement Program, in partnership with Nutrition Australia's Healthy Eating Advisory Service

