

Section 5 Getting on with the job

Managing a Smart Choices tuckshop

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Getting on with the job

Managing a Smart Choices tuckshop

In Section 4 the committee developed an action plan for moving towards a Smart Choices tuckshop. This section provides information on a range of key practice areas in the tuckshop — the management of staff, food, stock, organisation and workflow, money and promotion. Attention to all these areas will support changes made to the menu and enhance the success of the tuckshop.

A Smart Choices tuckshop is primarily an educational resource that offers the school community a consistent, quality food service. Making healthy choices easy choices in the tuckshop involves sound management and good organisation.

The information on the opposite page provides an overview of practices in the school tuckshop that must be managed well in the successful implementation of a Smart Choices tuckshop. Each of these practices is explored in more detail throughout this section.

Key elements of success

- Healthier food and drink choices are well promoted to customers.
- Tuckshop tasks are organised in the most efficient way.
- Food safety is a key part of the tuckshop's operation.
- There are enough staff (paid or volunteer) to run the tuckshop efficiently when it is open.
- The tuckshop has adequate equipment to prepare and serve foods and drinks in line with the strategy.



Tuckshop practices



Tuckshop management

The tuckshop manager plans, organises, coordinates and monitors all the tuckshop's activities.

Hygiene/food temperature

All foods and drinks are served at the appropriate temperature. This involves careful timing and appropriate heating and storage of all foods and drinks in the tuckshop.

Managing money

The tuckshop is financially viable through efficient management of all resources. This involves accounting for all the tuckshop's money and stock. Selling prices are set to cover all costs and make a profit.

Presentation and positioning

All customers can clearly see the options when standing at the counter.

Managing stock

An ordering and receiving system is in place.

Student involvement

Students provide input into and support for the tuckshop.

Managing food

The menu has healthy nutritious foods on offer that meet the requirements of the Smart Choices strategy.

Foods on offer are appealing and flavoursome. This is achieved through attention to appearance, colour, taste, aroma and texture of foods.

A Smart Choices menu provides a core of food items that seldom change to enable the tuckshop to operate in a manageable and profitable manner.

Recipes are modified to make them more nutritious (for example, muffins, pikelets, salads).

Managing promotion

New foods are well promoted. The menu is clearly displayed in the tuckshop. Parents are informed about the menu through the school newsletter and on the school website.

Workflow and organisation

Tasks are planned and organised in the most efficient way.

Managing equipment

All equipment is well maintained and appropriate for the tuckshop's needs.

Tuckshop management

How the tuckshop is managed can be as important as the foods and drinks it buys and sells in the successful implementation of a Smart Choices tuckshop.

The tuckshop convenor, whether paid or voluntary, plays an important role in the management of a successful tuckshop. Convenors lead by example as they guide and influence the work of volunteers or other paid staff. They can help establish team spirit in the tuckshop and provide a friendly, welcoming work environment.

Careful attention to the following can improve the ability of a tuckshop to implement menu changes successfully.

Planning

This involves looking ahead, working out what needs to be achieved, determining the best sequence for the jobs at hand and communicating this to the staff.

Organising and coordinating

This includes organising and coordinating all of the following resources within the tuckshop.

People — preparing volunteer rosters, breaks for morning tea and lunch during the day, attracting, thanking and rewarding volunteers and working as an effective team member.

Food — ensuring safe, good quality food is prepared and served each day in a consistent manner.

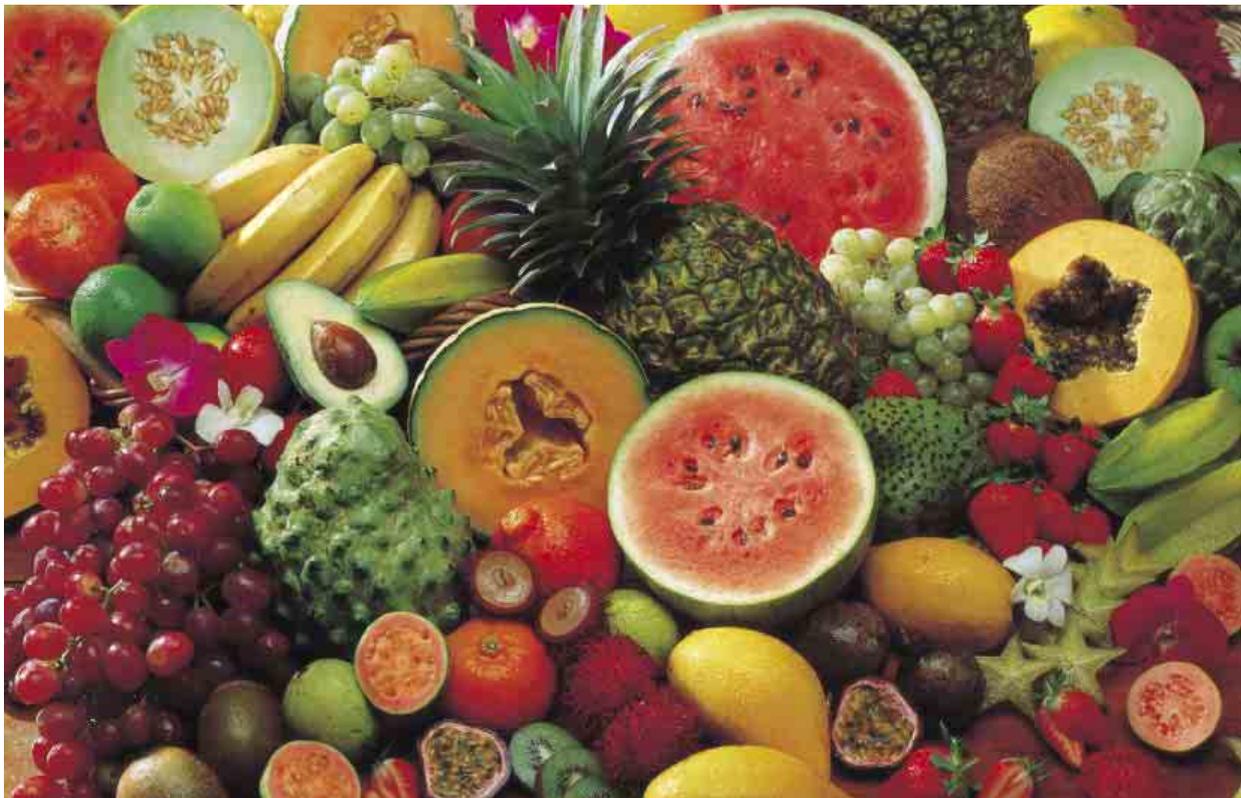
Equipment — maintaining well-functioning equipment and submitting requests for additional or replacement equipment where required.

Time — ensuring food is ready for service at particular times. If a lunch order system is used, all orders need to be ready just before the bell to simplify pick-up.

Money — keeping track of the money at all times. If the tuckshop uses cash registers, ensuring that the totals are rung off at the end of each trading period during the day, maintaining a standard float, ensuring that the banking is done each day and money is not accumulated in the tuckshop.

Monitoring

This requires an awareness of everything that is happening in the tuckshop. Examples include monitoring stock, food handling practices, the quality of foods and drinks delivered and served in the tuckshop, volunteer rosters (for example, are there still enough volunteers halfway through the year?), the success of special days, meal deals and other promotions run through the tuckshop. Monitoring also means being well informed about what is happening in the school, for example, camps, excursions and sports days.



Attracting volunteers

Volunteers are a valuable resource in the school tuckshop and should be appreciated and made to feel welcome.

There are many benefits volunteers gain from working in the tuckshop. These include:

- contributing to the school community and the health of the students in the school
- making new friends
- learning new skills
- gaining the opportunity to strengthen their knowledge of English if it is currently their second language
- gaining skills that may be used in other employment.

These benefits can be promoted to parents in a variety of ways to encourage them to become tuckshop volunteers. These include:

- presentations at orientation days
- holding a tuckshop open day
- sending out personalised letters requesting help.

It is important that volunteers know what is expected of them and have been shown the requirements of each task they carry out in the tuckshop. The tuckshop convenor or a committee member should take the time to orientate new volunteers. Written instructions and information posted on the wall can be helpful reminders for volunteers.

Keeping volunteers

Volunteers are more likely to continue to work in the tuckshop when they enjoy themselves and feel valued. This can be achieved by:

- regularly listing the tuckshop roster in the school's newsletter
- holding end-of-year parties
- developing a buddy system
- occasional visits from the principal to the tuckshop
- thankyou afternoon teas provided by the students
- providing incentives/rewards for volunteers.

Managing hygiene and food safety

Whatever changes are implemented, attention must always be paid to hygiene and food safety. Under the national food safety standards, tuckshops have to meet basic requirements to ensure that food is prepared and handled safely. This obligation applies to both volunteers and paid tuckshop staff.

Everyone working in the tuckshop should have the appropriate skills and knowledge for their duties to



handle food safely and prevent contamination that can lead to food poisoning. Food handlers also have the obligation to inform the tuckshop convenors when they are ill, which may exclude them from food handling duties. See the Resources section on page 54 for further information about food safety.

There are three main types of food contamination:

- Physical — includes hair, dirt, insects and pieces of plastic or glass in food.
- Chemical — includes insect sprays, detergents or sanitisers getting into food.
- Microbiological — bacteria and viruses found on hands, on vegetables, in raw meat and on our clothes that get into food.

TIP To stop bacteria multiplying on food
Keep it COLD — below 5°C
Keep it HOT — above 60°C

Bacteria need time, temperature, moisture and food to multiply. The types of bacteria that can cause food poisoning multiply quickly on potentially hazardous food.

Safe food handling

This applies to receiving, cooking, serving and holding food. It also applies to packaging and cleaning procedures.

Receiving food

Always check the date marked on goods that are delivered (where applicable).

Food prepared at home and provided for sale in the tuckshop

The tuckshop is responsible for the sale of safe food. Depending on the organisation of the school tuckshop, this responsibility may rest with the school principal, the parent body or the tuckshop manager. Any food sold through the tuckshop or food that is intended for sale elsewhere must fully comply with the Food Safety Standards legislation.

The following are examples of potentially hazardous foods if incorrectly prepared and stored.

- Raw meats, cooked meats and foods containing them such as meat pies, lasagne, spaghetti bolognese.
- Dairy products and foods containing them such as milk, custard and dairy-based desserts.
- Processed fruits and vegetables such as prepared salads, ready-to-eat vegetable packs.
- Cooked rice and pasta.
- Processed foods containing eggs, beans, nuts and soya bean products.
- Seafood e.g. cooked prawns and crabmeat.
- Other foods containing foods listed above e.g. sandwiches.

In the temperature danger zone, that is, between 5°C and 60°C some bacteria can double on these foods every 20 minutes.

Storing food

Keep food covered to protect it from contamination. Label and date all foods in the refrigerator and freezer. Raw foods should be stored at the bottom of fridges and ready-to-eat foods at the top. Frozen foods should be hard when tapped. There should be no condensation on the outside of packages as this indicates they are starting to melt.

Preparing food

Hands should be washed thoroughly. Try not to touch foods with bare hands — use tongs, utensils or gloves. Long hair should be tied back.

Thaw foods in the refrigerator or microwave on defrost. Once thawed, use foods as soon as possible. Do not refreeze thawed foods.

Wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly before use.

Prepare food fresh each day. Apply the FIFO (First In First Out) principle if food has been prepared in advance. Never mix old and new food. Take food ingredients out as required and use the principles of good workflow to complete jobs quickly and put ingredients and finished food items in the refrigerator.

Hands should be washed and chopping boards and knives changed or cleaned thoroughly when the type of food being chopped changes, for example, from cooked meats to washed vegetables. Some tuckshops have different coloured boards for different purposes, for example, red for raw meat, green for vegetables.

Cooking

Raw meats naturally contain bacteria. Meat needs to be cooked thoroughly to kill bacteria. An internal temperature of 75°C is needed in foods such as chicken nuggets to kill bacteria.

Heating

Many tuckshop foods arrive in the tuckshop precooked and require heating. The most common piece of equipment is a food warmer. Foods placed in food warmers need to rapidly heat to a temperature of 60°C or above within two hours. The food can then be held in the food warmer for a further two hours at a lower temperature. After a total of four hours it should be thrown away.

TIP Use a probe thermometer to check the temperature of foods or the storage space you are keeping them in and record the temperatures.

Food display

There are many different ways foods are displayed and served in school tuckshops. Cover or wrap all food on display in clear plastic wrap or paper. Display any potentially hazardous foods under temperature control, for example, hot foods such as pastas, pies, pizzas above 60°C and sandwiches, salads and milk drinks below 5°C.

Serving food

Use tongs to serve bulk items directly to students. This can also help eliminate packaging.

Cleaning

Frequent regular cleaning of the tuckshop will minimise the risk of contamination and food poisoning. Some points to consider include:

- clean and sanitise benches before starting food preparation
- clean work-benches, sinks and floors daily
- replace dishcloths and tea towels daily
- clean refrigerators and stoves weekly and storage cupboards regularly.

Managing and ordering stock

The main aim when managing stock is to maintain the lowest level of stock while having sufficient stock to use or sell.

Effective purchasing to meet the requirements of the Smart Choices strategy means buying products:

- of the right quality
- in the right quantity
- for the right price
- at the right time.

There should be one person in the tuckshop responsible for ordering stock including foods, drinks, packaging and cleaning materials. This helps to prevent over-ordering or double ordering and maintains consistency. To work out when to order stock, look at the food and drink requirements and

how long it takes for the supplier to deliver the order. If possible try to order frequently so more perishable stock does not have to be stored for long periods of time. If the school is in an area where it is difficult to access stock frequently, it is better to access products with a longer shelf life.

Suppliers

When selecting a supplier, look for suppliers who:

- are local, if possible
- keep the tuckshop manager informed of product availability and price increases
- provide competitively priced products
- allow reasonable payment terms
- are able to deliver to the school tuckshop at appropriate times
- handle food safely (use refrigerated vehicles for chilled and frozen products and deliver fresh products in a covered vehicle)
- offer specials or deals that meet the requirements of the Smart Choices strategy including free promotional material, discounts and equipment.

Ordering

When ordering stock:

- check the stock currently in the tuckshop — a supplier product list can be used. This is a list developed by the tuckshop manager containing information on each supplier and the products that the tuckshop orders from them. A convenor can take a quick look at the stock on hand and decide how much of each item is needed in the next order
- assess how well foods and drinks are selling. Ordering will depend on the tuckshop menu and sales
- consider seasonal changes
- keep a record of exactly what was ordered.

Hints and tips

- Storage space in tuckshops is often limited. Aim to have only the stock that is needed on hand. Order frequently as this reduces the risk of stock spoiling.
- Regular stocktakes should be done as the tuckshop needs to account for all stock. Aim to have as little stock as possible left over at the end



of a term to avoid losing stock due to refrigeration breakdown, power failure or other unforeseen circumstances over the holidays.

- Apply the FIFO (First In First Out) principle. Always use the oldest stock in storage before the newer stock. Do this by moving old stock to the front of shelves in the refrigeration unit and on storage shelves and place the new stock behind it.
- Reduce the price of slow moving stock. As long as it is within the use by date stated on the package, it is better to sell the stock at cost and recoup some money than throw it away.

Receiving

When the stock arrives in the tuckshop check the delivery docket and supplier's invoice against the order. Check the date marked on goods where appropriate. Check for price increases and adjust the tuckshop selling price on items if required.

Once the committee has designed a Smart Choices menu, use the school calendar to:

- plan ahead for any holidays, sporting or cultural events, open days or excursions that may affect sales or change the types of foods being sold
- identify special days or theme days that promote healthy food choices.

If the tuckshop orders stock for an event organised by the school or parent body, keep the orders separate from stock ordered for tuckshop sales. If not, the mark-up schedule for the tuckshop will be incorrect as products ordered have not actually been sold through the tuckshop.

Workflow in the tuckshop

Good workflow in the tuckshop is crucial. It ensures that food is fresh and attractive, reduces wastage and maximises the amount of food that can be prepared in the time available. Workflow planning means organising tasks in a logical order to make the work easier. To do this, simplify the tasks that need to be done.

Consider:

- timing — when do different foods need to be ready?
- equipment availability — what equipment is needed to prepare, cook, or heat and serve foods?
- task allocation — who is doing each job?
- preparation and cooking times to ensure all foods will be ready to serve at the same time
- preparing food on slow days (for example, Mondays).



Good workflow involves:

- minimum movement and backtracking
- efficient use of space
- appropriate use of equipment
- the application of safe food handling techniques
- minimum expenditure of time and effort by all tuckshop staff, for maximum output.

The principles of good workflow should be applied to the following tasks in the tuckshop:

- receiving products
- storing foods and drinks
- preparing foods
- packaging
- holding — both hot and cold foods
- serving foods and drinks
- cleaning.

TIP Standard instructions for the cut and quantity of each salad vegetable to be prepared for sandwiches, rolls and wraps should be pinned on the wall near the bench where these items are made. This means all staff know what needs to be prepared and how it should be stored ready for use.

Suggested workflow for preparing sandwiches, rolls, focaccias, wraps and burgers

Making sandwiches, rolls, wraps, toasted sandwiches, focaccias and burgers can be a quick, simple operation when efficient methods are used, as outlined below.

Prepare all the filling ingredients for the sandwiches, rolls, wraps and salads first:

- Wash all vegetables well.
- Shred lettuce, peel carrots, slice tomatoes, grate carrot and cheese, drain beetroot etc.
- Put all ingredients in resealable, stackable containers. (Rectangular takeaway food containers seal and stack well and are easy to label.)
- Prepare moist fillings which can be spooned onto the breads quickly.
- For sandwich preparation, arrange the containers of filling ingredients behind the bread board within easy reach.
- Make up one type of sandwich or roll at a time. Only lay out enough bread for 10 sandwiches at a time (approx. one loaf of bread). Crusts can be used for bread cases or breadcrumbs.
- Pair the bread slices — top slice above the bottom slice.
- Use a spreader or spatula rather than a knife to spread margarine thinly — it provides a barrier on the bread and prevents the sandwich from becoming soggy. For toasted jaffles, only spread margarine on the outside of the bread to reduce the total fat content of the sandwich. There is adequate oil in focaccias to prevent sticking in the sandwich maker.
- Place the filling on the bottom layer of bread.
- Cut using a sandwich guide and serrated bread knife. Wrap straightaway to prevent drying out. Some canteens use sandwich packaging for better display.

For wraps (made from Lebanese bread)

- Roll these carefully and firmly.
- Cut the wrap diagonally to show the contents and wrap in plastic wrap — not too tightly as the contents will be affected.

For burgers

- Prepare all the buns with salad in advance and add the meat, fish, chicken or vegetable patty last (to maintain the correct temperature). The burgers can then be wrapped in paper or put into plastic containers for easy stacking and distribution. Develop a system for labelling the burgers to prevent confusion, for example 'CH' for a burger with cheese.



Courtesy NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy



TIP When making large numbers of sandwiches keep bread from drying out by covering it with plastic or a clean damp tea towel.

Managing food

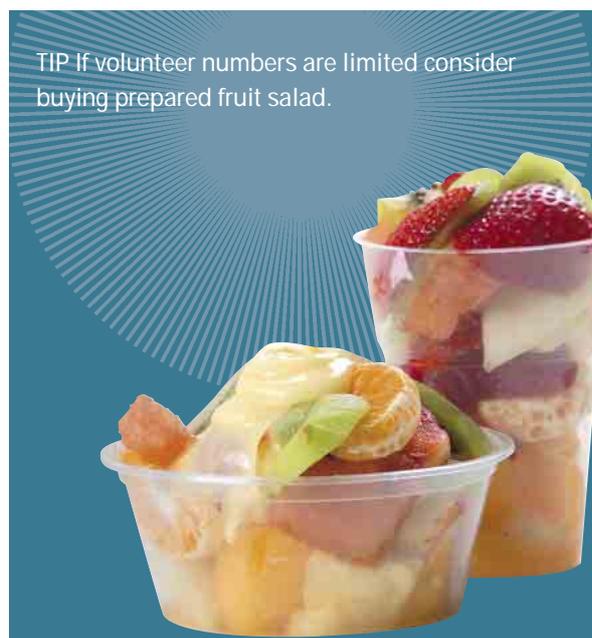
How foods are presented can be as important as what foods are presented. Tuckshops can support the development of positive attitudes and behaviour towards food among students.

The foods and drinks offered in the tuckshop need to be nutritious, varied, quick and easy to prepare, appetising and well presented to appeal to students. The following information provides practical ways to work with food to achieve these aims.

Ideas for new food and drink items can be found in the Ready Reckoner on pages 19–23 in *Smart Choices*, through food distributors, the Queensland Association of School Tuckshops (QAST) and Nutrition Australia. See Promotion pages 43–4 for ideas on ways to add variety to the tuckshop menu.

Variety

A Smart Choices menu provides a core of items that seldom change to enable the tuckshop to operate in a manageable and profitable way. 'Old favourites' will always have a place, however, add variety and interest to the menu through daily or weekly specials suited to the season. Some tuckshops offer certain items for sale on a particular day of the week, for example, burgers on a Friday — this means all the preparation for that item is done on one day. Offer different serve sizes of foods where possible to meet the varied needs of the students.



Food appeal

Interesting contrasts in colour, flavour and texture can be achieved with the addition of fresh, crunchy vegetables in salads, burgers, rolls and wraps. Serve a variety of quality fruits in season. Fruit that is cut up and served in chunks or as a fruit salad is popular with students and gives them the opportunity to try new fruits and vegetables.

Presentation and positioning

How are foods presented? Look at the tuckshop from the customers' perspective — what can students see when they are at the counter? Attractively displayed foods and drinks, with choices positioned at the front of the counter and in prominent positions in the fridges, sell well. Take care with presentation of individual foods, for example, wrap sandwiches and rolls in clear plastic so the contents can be easily seen. Foods should look like, and be, good value for money.

Sandwiches, rolls and wraps

Well-priced sandwiches, rolls and wraps are filling and nutritious and have proved to be very popular in many schools. When presented well they have great visual appeal. Students like anything rolled or in rolls. Add variety by using a range of breads on the menu. Fresh salad vegetables add flavour, colour and texture.

See organisation and workflow page 39, for more information on sandwich making.

Go to appendix 1 on page 50 for ideas for sandwich fillings and a quantity guide for fillings.

Salads

Salads can be made more nutritious and filling by combining salad vegetables and fruits, for example, add sultanas and pineapple. Add to the salad with canned salads, for example, mixed beans. Cheese, cold lean meats, canned tuna or salmon, egg or legumes can be added as a protein source.

A slice or two of bread is also a good accompaniment. Be careful not to price salads too high.

Meal and snack deals

These are standardised lunches and snacks that are bought as a package. Meal and snack deals support the implementation of the Smart Choices strategy because they can:

- encourage students to eat a nutritional balance of foods
- streamline lunch and snack production
- make ordering easy

- promote healthier choices and new foods on the tuckshop menu
- offer students value for money
- provide an opportunity to team up choices from AMBER and GREEN and in some instances improve the nutritional balance when a GREEN choice is added.

Meal deal ideas

- Soup with a bread roll and a piece of fruit.
- Cheese and salad sandwich and a fruit juice.
- Salad roll, small milk drink and a piece of fruit.
- Burger (lean meat patty and salad), small carton of flavoured reduced fat milk and a piece of fruit.

Snack meal deals

- Fruit bun, cheese stick and a small mandarin.
- Popcorn and a small bag of unsalted nuts.
- Hot cheese melt and a small fruit juice.
- Cheese and crackers and a pear.
- Ham, cheese and pineapple muffin melt and a small apple.
- Muesli bars and yoghurt.
- Cereal and fruit.

Hot food choices

The type and number of hot food choices available will depend on the season and the equipment available to cook the food, to heat it and keep it hot. Many commercial hot foods fit into the AMBER category of the Food and Drink Spectrum. Some schools do not offer these choices every day. They are offered on different days of the week so the heating and service is more manageable and so they don't dominate the menu. There are many hot food choices that may be included on the tuckshop menu. These include:

- baked stuffed potatoes
- flat bread pizzas
- burgers served with salad
- reduced fat hot dogs
- reduced fat meat pies and sausage rolls
- burritos
- noodles
- pastas — spaghetti bolognese, lasagne
- chicken drumsticks served with salad
- jaffles
- hot cheese rolls
- soups.

See the Ready Reckoner, pages 19–23 of *Smart Choices*.

Snack deal ideas

Snacks can provide a big part of children's and adolescents' daily intake, and so should be nutritious.

There is a variety of snack foods that can be provided as part of a healthy tuckshop menu.

See appendix 2 page 51.

Breakfasts

Many tuckshops serve breakfast before school. Nutritious choices should be on offer in the morning. These include:

- breakfast cereals served with milk
- fruit juice
- fruit toast
- toasted sandwiches
- yoghurts
- fresh fruit
- fruit salad
- milk drinks (warm and cold)
- toast
- muffins.

Drinks

There are many choices of nutritious drinks available for the tuckshop. Milks are a rich source of calcium and many other nutrients important for children and adolescents. Choices include: milks, full fat and reduced fat (plain and flavoured), milkshakes, soy milks, soyshakes. In the winter months offer warm milk drinks as an option. Water is a good thirst quencher and should be encouraged. Juices in small serve sizes chilled or frozen provide variety. Plain water and milk are the best drinks for teeth between meals.



Managing money

Operating a financially successful tuckshop

It is not just the food that is sold that determines profit. There are many tuckshop management issues that also play a part. Operating a financially successful tuckshop involves managing the tuckshop's resources efficiently to meet the goals of Smart Choices *and the school community's expectations regarding profit.*

This includes:

- knowing what the tuckshop spends and earns
- accounting for all the tuckshop's money and stock. Some tuckshops now use cash registers to help with this process
- working out the cost price of all items (that is, how much it costs the tuckshop to make or buy the product)
- setting selling prices to cover all costs and make a profit.

For a tuckshop to operate as a profitable business, income must be greater than the costs involved in running the tuckshop. Costing foods accurately is an important part of making sure all costs in the tuckshop can be met.

The cost of a food or drink can be calculated by:

- using the wholesale price of the food or drink
- adding up the cost of all the ingredients that make up a food or drink
- including the cost of packaging of the food or drink where appropriate.

Many tuckshops also have the following costs:

- the cost of employees including wages, workers compensation insurance, superannuation and long service leave
- electricity, gas and water
- equipment, including ongoing maintenance.

Costing

In the next column are three examples of costing products — a sandwich and wrap made in the tuckshop and a commercially made lasagne.

A salad sandwich

Ingredients	Cost
Tomato	0.16
Grated carrot	0.07
Shredded lettuce	0.03
Sliced cucumber	0.16
Beetroot	0.05
2 slices bread	0.31
Packaging – plastic wrap	0.02
Total cost	0.80

A chicken wrap

Ingredients	Cost
Tomato	0.16
Grated carrot	0.07
Shredded lettuce	0.03
Sliced cucumber	0.18
Grated cheese	0.20
Chicken (50 g)	0.65
Lebanese bread	0.32
Packaging – plastic wrap	0.02
Total cost	1.63

A frozen serve of lasagne

	Cost
1 x 220 g serve frozen lasagne	1.54



Setting selling prices

The tuckshop sets selling prices to cover costs. The mark-up is the difference between the wholesale price of the food (cost) and the selling price.

When setting the selling prices for foods and drinks the tuckshop committee should consider:

- What is the cost of the food to the tuckshop?
- What are the other costs involved in running the tuckshop?
- What would be a reasonable price to pay in order to gain sales?
- Is there competition from other shops nearby?
- Does the tuckshop have a policy of lower prices on foods and drinks in the GREEN segment and higher prices on less healthy foods?

The tuckshop mark-up schedule shows the percentage mark-up on each item and the sales volume of each food and drink item. The mark-up schedule can help the tuckshop determine the average mark-up to use. Some school tuckshops use a standard gross profit for all items, that is, they apply a standard mark-up of approximately 33 percent to all items.

The selling price can also be set using the supplier's recommended retail price. If the tuckshop does not choose to sell at this price, it is important to regularly check for price increases using supplier invoices.

For further information on mark-up schedules and other areas of tuckshop financial management contact your parent organisation.

How to minimise tuckshop costs

There are several ways to minimise costs in the tuckshop.

- Provide clear instructions for all tuckshop staff to ensure that all foods and drinks are prepared and sold in standard serve sizes, for example, the same quantity of filling each time for sandwiches and rolls.
- Use portion control equipment so serves of foods and drinks are the same each time the product is made.
- Avoid unnecessary packaging and wrapping.
- Put procedures in place to provide accountability for all products and money in the tuckshop.
- Sell foods and drinks nearing their use by date at a reduced price to avoid a total loss.

Managing promotion

Once a healthy Smart Choices tuckshop menu has been planned, it is important to make sure students, teachers and parents know what is available for sale and are encouraged to buy it. Marketing and promotion of the new menu will assist in this process. Both are very important aspects of running a successful Smart Choices tuckshop. Marketing has been defined as a planned process that brings together buyers and sellers at a profit.

Marketing is getting the right product in the right place at the right time at the right price using the right promotion to attract customers who will buy.

Student surveys

To market the tuckshop and the foods for sale, an understanding of the lifestyles, ideas, interests and the fads of students is important. The student council is well placed to carry out surveys of students to find out this kind of information for the committee.

They could find out about some or all of the following:

- How well are certain products being received by the tuckshop's customers?
- Do students believe the products are good value for money?
- Do the students know about the product?
- Are the students satisfied with the tuckshop service?

This information can be used to select products and put pricing and promotional strategies in place.

Product

Products for sale in school tuckshops should meet the Smart Choices strategy requirements. There are many examples of the types of foods and drinks that can be made available for sale in the school tuckshop in Managing food on page 40.

TIP Review the costs on all items regularly. Use the school newsletter to let customers know about price changes. Don't wait until the menu is updated.

Place

Place can mean many things. A helpful way of thinking about it is to consider the tuckshop's image. Image is a combination of factors: what the tuckshop looks like, the food it serves, how food is promoted and how well connected the tuckshop is to the school and its community. Involve the students in creating a positive image for the tuckshop. Some ideas for creating an image include naming the tuckshop. This could be done by holding a competition for the students. Examples of names include the *Fuel Tank*, the *Food Factory* and *Tuck In*.

Improving the tuckshop environment

- Artistic students could design eye-catching murals and easy-to-read menu boards to let students know what is available while they queue.
- Repaint and refurbish the tuckshop environment — give it a new look. Use some of the tuckshop profits to improve tuckshop equipment and the work environment for the tuckshop staff.
- Create a space outside that is pleasant for eating. Some schools have space to put tables with umbrellas.
- Aprons for tuckshop workers give a professional look to the tuckshop area and are an important hygiene measure.
- Promote the tuckshop as a positive part of the school community in the school newsletter.
- Put the tuckshop menu and other relevant information on the school intranet or Internet sites.
- Provide a tuckshop service to support school activities, for example, staff lunches and sports days.
- Be supportive of classroom activities.

Price

Students want variety at a price they can afford. They want value for money. Price products to sell. Keep pricing simple, as this is easier for staff and customers (for example, \$1.50 is preferable to \$1.49). Always check the selling price with the students. They will compare the cost with what they pay outside school.

Refer to Setting selling prices on page 43 for more information.

Promotion

Active product promotion is essential when changing the tuckshop menu to healthier products as it generates sales. Products sell best when they sound interesting to the customer and the customer feels they are going to get an immediate benefit by choosing that food. Keep this in mind when creating an image for foods and drinks. Apply the ideas in the promotion checklist as these ideas can often increase the popularity of the food or drink. Put this into practice on the printed tuckshop menu or menu board, as well as for individual foods. See the Resources on page 54 for websites with more ideas for successful promotions.

Promotion checklist

- Know the audience.
- Use their language, terms, symbols and icons.
- Sell a benefit, lifestyle and image.
- Use motivating, descriptive, sensory words, for example, 'delicious', 'mouthwatering', 'scrumptious'.
- Use branding for the foods and drinks, not generic terms, for example, name a burger after your school, or give a meal deal a special name.
- Use theme foods/days, specials, sampling, meal and snack deals, and giveaways. Rotate foods through the menu.

Check your progress

- Promotions for healthier food and drink options in the tuckshop are being done.
- Organisation of tuckshop tasks has been streamlined.
- Food safety and hygiene practices are being implemented.
- Enough staff members (paid or volunteer) are available for efficient operation of the tuckshop.
- There is adequate equipment to prepare and serve foods and drinks.

TIP Some primary schools have a 'What can I buy for this?' poster that shows 10c, 20c, 50c coins and a list of foods that can be bought with each one.