

Media Release



THE HEALTHY
EATING HUB



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Do parents care about healthy food options for their kids at restaurants?

A joint collaboration of the Canberra Southern Cross Club (CSCC), The Healthy Eating Hub (The Hub) and the University of Canberra (UC) aims to answer this question as part of the **Kids Menu Refresh Project**. This Canberra-wide research will gather information via an online survey about parents' attitudes and beliefs towards healthy eating at restaurants. The results will then help overhaul the kids menus at the CSCC's three Henry's Family Restaurant locations across Canberra.

Preliminary research via social media by Kate Freeman, a Registered Nutritionist from The Hub, shows that the majority (73%) of parents do care about the availability of healthy food options on a kids menu. This has sparked confidence that the project will successfully deliver a popular and commercially viable menu in Canberra. Some feedback from this research includes comments such as:

Cassie: "It's very important! I have children who really enjoy veggies and salads and quite often they can't actually order something healthy or even get veggies or salad on the side."

Sarah: "Would love healthier choices or at least meals with healthy sides. I hate reading the menu and thinking there is nothing suitable."

Ms Freeman is heading up the research on behalf of the CSCC, enlisting the assistance of Dr Tanya Lawlis from UC. Ms Freeman says that these initial responses show a changing attitude toward food with most parents wanting to make healthy choices for their kids:

"The healthy eating messages are starting to take effect. Parents want healthy eating to be included both inside and outside the home. We'd like to investigate whether this attitude is shared by parents Canberra wide. We consume food away from home more than ever before. Research shows that food eaten out is more likely to contain excess energy, fat, sugar and salt and minimal nutrients. Dining out and takeaway has been associated with weight gain by numerous studies, so it's an important aspect of population health."

The CSCC initiated the refresh of their kids' menus and have partnered with The Hub for the project. Ms Freeman will be working closely with the CSCC Tuggeranong's executive chef Anurag Gautam to design the new kids menu, planned for launch this summer.

"I'm very proud to be partnering with the CSCC to refresh their kids' menu". Said Ms Freeman. "They want to move beyond a 'standard' menu and offer unique, engaging and nutritious options that shows they've thought about kids and their families."

CSCC CEO Ian Mackay added "Families are our key market and we need to ensure we are offering a good range of healthy meals that kids want to eat, and their parents are happy to purchase."

Canberra parents of children aged between 2-16 years of age are invited to take part in the research by completing a 10-minute online survey by following the link below. They will receive a voucher for a free kids meal with every adult meal purchased at Henry's Family Restaurants in Woden, Tuggeranong or Jamison.

Survey opens Monday 7th November: http://canberrahealth.az1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_0V47t9N1BpWyzbf

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