



2020 School Lunch Pilot Evaluation Super Summary

The Tasmanian School Canteen Association (using Healthy Tasmania funding) gave three Tasmanian schools financial and practical support to provide healthy cooked lunches for 20 days to selected classes.

Students, parents, canteen managers and volunteers, principals, teachers and support staff gave feedback on the School Lunch Pilot through interviews, discussion groups and surveys.

Key findings

- » 201 students received the lunches.
- » On average the lunches cost \$4.72 (\$1.91 ingredients and \$2.81 labour). The cost per lunch would decrease if more students were involved in the lunch program.
- » Most parents (89%) were willing to pay \$3-5 per lunch, with discount for families with multiple children.
- » Most parents (90%) would like a cooked lunch available every day.

Likes

- » Variety of the lunches and the opportunity to try new foods
- » Convenience / less pressure on parents to prepare school lunches
- » Children were more settled after lunch and after school
- » Healthy lunches
- » Lunches tasted good
- » Children had time to sit down and eat / social eating
- » Not having to pay for lunch
- » Warm lunches
- » Children learnt manners and other personal skills
- » Seeing the children's responses to the lunches
- » Less rubbish in the playground

Dislikes

Many said there was nothing they disliked. Some stakeholders did not like:

- » That there was only one option each day
- » Inconsistent serving sizes
- » When the meals were served late (one school only)
- » A few menu options

Benefits

- » Equality – food for all students
- » Increased school attendance
- » Increased school engagement
- » Built a strong sense of community
- » Promoted healthy eating

Challenges

- » Insufficient infrastructure (eg. need commercial dishwasher, larger ovens, bigger sink, additional fridge/freezer, electric frypans, more cutlery and crockery, more trolleys).
- » Allocating extra time to eat the lunches.
- » Canteen staff unfamiliar with new recipes (easier second time around).
- » Securing ongoing funding.

Recommendations

A larger study is needed to determine if the School Lunch Pilot can be upscaled. This would involve providing cooked lunches for all students, at a larger number of schools, for a longer duration of time. Please see the full report for specific recommendations for the larger study.

