Every parent wants their child to grow up to be happy and healthy, with eating the right foods, participating in regular physical activity and establishing positive habits early on having a vital role to play.

Victorian government schools are doing their bit, with mandated sport and physical education, new and upgraded sporting facilities and healthy canteen food.

**Fast facts:**

- Chocolates, lollies and other sugar-rich foods are off the menu in Victorian government school canteens and banned from vending machines under sweeping new changes in effect this year.

- High-sugar content drinks have been banned from school canteens since 2007.

- Comprehensive information has been issued to all Victorian government schools including the ‘Go for your life’ Healthy Canteen Kit. The kit includes a food planner, student learning activities focusing on healthy food choices and additional information and resources.

- Schools across the state are sowing the seeds of a healthy lifestyle through the successful ‘Go for your life’ Kitchen Garden Project with celebrated chef Stephanie Alexander. Under this program students grow, harvest, prepare and share delicious and healthy food at primary schools. The program currently operates in 24 metropolitan and regional Victorian schools, with an additional 22 schools receiving grants worth $62,500 under the expansion of the highly successful program.

- Healthy Start in Schools grants for schools to buy new sporting equipment, revamp canteens and provide more play areas for students to get fit and active during their time at school. A total of 321 schools have benefited to date with a further 137 grants of up to $6,000 to schools.
• Schools can take advantage of the ‘Go for your life’ Healthy Canteens Advisory Service by calling 1300 73 98 99 or visiting www.goforyourlife.vic.gov.au or www.education.vic.gov.au/goforyourlife

• Under the Government’s healthy food services policy, food and drink is classified into three categories:

  Everyday - healthy foods that are the most suitable for canteens and should be promoted, including fruits, vegetables, breads, cereals, rice, pasta, lean meat, reduced fat milk, yogurt and cheese;

  Select Carefully – foods in this category contain some valuable nutrients but may also include unhealthy ingredients. Servings should be smaller and have limited availability; and

  Occasionally - foods high in saturated fat, kilojoules and sodium, that can only be made available twice each term.

• Victoria leads the way as the first state or territory to mandate sport and physical education in primary and secondary schools. Victorian government schools must provide a minimum of:

  Prep to Year 3: 20–30 minutes of physical education every day;

  Years 4 to 6: three hours per week of physical and sport education, with at least 50 per cent being the physical education component; and,

  Years 7 to 10: a minimum of 100 minutes each week of physical education and a minimum of 100 minutes each week of timetabled sport.