Islamic College of South Australia

Healthy Eating Canteen

An eat well be active -Primary Schools project school

Our thanks go to ACHPER for this article from ewba Newsletter 2011

At the Islamic College of South Australia our canteen offers an array of healthy, delicious and halal foods, such as, stir fry noodles, baked potatoes, a wide range of freshly made burgers and sandwiches, curries, yiros and homemade pizzas. Our canteen has only recently adopted a healthier, fresher menu due to the leadership of the new Canteen Manager and the eat well be active Primary School team. Since the introduction of new menu there has not only been a marked improvement in student’s diet but also their attitude towards healthy food. Liza Mina, the school canteen manager, says, “The students are actually choosing the healthier options over the unhealthy options. The students love the different varieties of burgers and biryani the most.”

As our school is an independent school and not part of DECD we have had the freedom to introduce and test what we sell in the canteen. Liza decided that, “Every food offered in the canteen should have at least some fresh vegetables and some source of protein to offer the students a more balanced diet.”

Another great feature of our canteen is that a majority of the food is homemade which makes sure that the students aren’t consuming processed, chemical filled foods and are instead eating fresh healthier foods. When Liza first started becoming involved in the canteen this year she decided to phase out the old menu and bring in a new, fresher menu, “Of course the students didn’t like the fact that the junk food was gone at first but after a while they started to like the new menu even more than the last.”
Not only do the students like the new menu more, but the staff members love the new, delicious, greener menus in the canteen such as the fruit and yoghurt combos. When asked if having a healthier menu is easier to cater for then the previous menu, Liza says, “It takes time to phase out the old menu but it makes it easier for the students to eat more healthily because instead of the students buying lollies they buy a piece of fruit which costs only 20 cents making it affordable and popular with the students.”

An unexpected side effect of the changes is the financial improvement in the canteen’s ‘bottom line’. Whereas previously the canteen operated at a loss, the new menu has allowed the canteen to return a profit each week. Everyone, the staff, parents and most importantly the students are enjoying the new and improved canteen menu and are reaping the benefit of having healthier, delicious food available.

Written by Islamic College SRC Students

admin@icosa.sa.edu.au

**eat well be active** - Primary Schools Project, a joint SA Health and Department for Education and Child Development project from 2008-2013.