



**SCHOOL
FOOD**
matters

Annual Report

2023 - 2024



Supporting school communities to thrive



OUR VISION

CHILDREN EATING WELL AND AS A RESULT, THRIVING IN ALL THAT THEY DO

OUR ROLE

SUPPORTING SCHOOL COMMUNITIES TO THRIVE

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

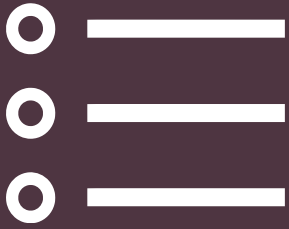
AT SCHOOL FOOD MATTERS WE STAND FOR BEING:

COLLABORATIVE AND SUPPORTIVE

CREATIVE AND ENTHUSIASTIC

FLEXIBLE AND FAMILY FRIENDLY

EVIDENCE BASED AND EQUITABLE



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YEAR IN FOCUS

President and Executive Officer Report



The 2023-24 year has been a time of rapid growth, development and challenges culminating in a rewarding year for School Food Matters (SFM). This has been reflected in the recognition by both Government sectors and the broader community of the valuable outcomes resulting from the work of SFM. We would like to take the time now to acknowledge our key stakeholders, members, school food service staff, schools, dietitians, and Board who have supported us along the way, thank you.

Our operations continue to be strong due to the funding provided by the Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP), Department of Health (DoH) and Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC). During the last 12 months we have continued to support schools to provide a best-practice model for food service management and affordable food choices through our SmartFood Program. We really appreciate the time schools have put in to support their food service operators to do this.

Schools Food Matters are incredibly excited by the election announcement of the government commitment of \$14.6 million to expand the School Lunch Project from 30 to 60 schools statewide over the next 2 years. The School Lunch Project provides students with a nutritious hot lunch using local seasonal produce. It is a collaboration between School Food Matters and Loaves and Fishes Tasmania while working closely with the Department for Education, Children and Young People, the Department of Health, and the Department of Premier and Cabinet. The funding to expand this program ensures the moving from its pilot phase into a sustainable, ongoing program and is a significant investment in the future of Tasmanian children.

We have forged some strong and formative partnerships through this project and could not be delivering the now 7000 meals per week without them. Julie Dunbabin continues in her role as Project Manager for the School Lunch Project. She continues to pursue our shared Tasmanian vision, providing valuable expertise and insight to lead the team of hard working staff to pull the elements of this project together as it moves into a sustainable program. We are very fortunate to have Julie bring her knowledge to the School Lunch Project and we are excited to see how it continues to grow into the future.



Above: Students from Mole Creek Primary School enjoying lunch through the School Lunch Project.

A significant focus in the last 12 months has been the development of the business case to move the School Lunch Project into an ongoing Program. We were grateful to have been successful in receiving a grant from the Tasmanian Community Fund to undertake this work. This grant allowed us to engage a consulting firm to provide their extensive expertise to formalise a robust Business Case designed to embed the School Lunch Program into the Tasmanian Community for years to come. The official launch for this was in May, 2024.

Our Strategic Plan and the annual joint operational plan developed with our funding partners, community dietitians (DoH) and curriculum/policy officers in the Child and Student Wellbeing Unit (DECYP)) continue to shape both our work and goals for the organisation. We believe in food equity for all children, the provision of fresh, local and seasonal produce, focusing on the five food groups, and the connection between nutritious food and positive learning.

This has been an incredible year of growth and challenges for us as an organisation and we would not have been successful without the dedicated School Food Matters team, the Board and all our partnering organisations. We thank you for your ongoing interest and support in the work of our organisation.

Kirsty Grierson
Executive Officer

Diana McShane
President





WHO WE ARE

Board Committee Members

The past twelve months have involved considerable time and involvement from all members of the Board. A small but very dedicated group of skilled individuals have helped lead the organisation through new and exciting times. It does not go unnoticed the passion and support that all members of the Board provide to the team of School Food Matters and we are extremely thankful. Here's to another year of valuable leadership.



Diana McShane
President



Maree Taylor
Vice President
resigned Feb 2024



Dionie Lippis
Treasurer



Scott Hutchison
Secretary



Reuben Parker-Greer



Nikki Mann



Carl Harris
joined March 2024



"If you are working on something that you really care about, you don't have to be pushed. The vision pulls you."
-Steve Jobs



School Food Matters Staff



Based across Tasmania, our staff are busy supporting schools with the SmartFood program and the School Lunch Project. We have welcomed a few new faces this past year and said good bye to others.



Sam Rathmell
Project Officer
North



Alison Holmstrom
Project Officer
North West



Bronte Hughes
Project Officer
North West
resigned Sept 2023



Kate Carlin
Project Officer
South
resigned Dec 2023



Kirsty Grierson
Executive Officer



Alicia Hansen
Administrator



Julie Dunbabin
Project Manager-
School Lunch Project



Pietta Jackson
Project Officer
South



Elly Rigney
Lead Consultant
School Lunch Project



Jen Lea
Project Officer
South



Nietta Lynch
Project Officer
South



Sophie Damen
Project Officer
South



PROGRAMS & PROJECTS

School Food Matters works with schools across Tasmania to build on practices that promote and support a whole school approach to eating well, in line with the Australian Dietary Guidelines. This is not just about providing nutritious food, but creating an environment that enables all children to have time to enjoy eating in a relaxed social setting. Our programs and projects reflect this desire to see all Tasmanian children eating well and therefore thriving in all that they do.

The School Lunch Project has continued in 30 schools statewide. The number of schools participating in the SmartFood accreditation program has increased in the past 12 months to 198 out of a total of 239 schools with a food service. The Well Fed Tasmania van is now fully owned by School Food Matters and ready to be active around the state. Schools have taken up the School Food Plan resource toolkit and begun the process of documenting the agreed 'Whole School Approach' that a school community has for food provision and eating at their school. We have also are continuing to develop three training modules as part of the SkillIT project funded through Healthy Tasmania Grants. This will develop a blended learning format of both online and face to face modules on allergies, oral health and eating seasonally.

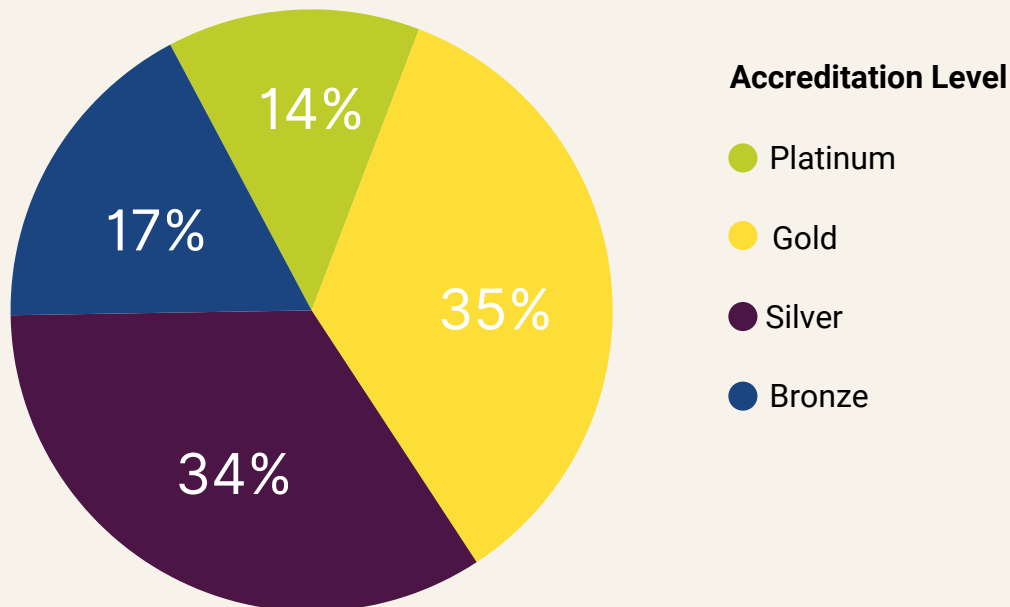


SMARTFOOD PROGRAM



The SmartFood Program continues to be valuable and well received within Tasmanian schools. We want every child to have access to nutritious and delicious food while at school, which is essential to their overall health, wellbeing, and learning. The program supports schools in providing a best practice model for food service management around policy, menu, food safety and a whole school approach to eating well. Currently there are four levels of accreditation for schools through the SmartFood Program; Platinum, Gold Silver and Bronze.

SmartFood Schools



War on Waste Workshop

In August 2023 we were lucky enough to be able to offer school food service operators a professional learning day at Utas Inveresk Campus around food waste. We had guest speakers Michael Attard (Launceston City Council), Trish Haeusler (Plastic Free Launceston) and Geoff McClintock (UTAS Community Garden) who were able to share their knowledge and inspire the participants.



Right: Participants at the “War on Waste: School Food” Workshop held in Launceston.



SMARTFOOD

Accredited Schools



Albuera St Primary School
Bellerive Primary School
Clarendon Vale Primary School
East Launceston Primary School
Kingston Primary School
Margate Primary School
Mole Creek Primary School
Richmond Primary School
Rokeby Primary School
Stella Maris Catholic Primary School
St Mary's College Junior
Triabunna District School
Warrane Primary School
Waverly Primary School



Austins Ferry Primary School
Bagdad Primary School
Blackmans Bay Primary School
Bowen Rd Primary School
Cambridge Primary School
Exeter Primary School
Gagebrook Primary School
Hillcrest Primary School
Howrah Primary School
Huonville Primary School
King Island District High School
Lindisfarne Primary School
Lindisfarne North Primary School
Mowbray Heights Primary School
New Norfolk Primary School
Perth Primary School
Princes St Primary School
Risdon Vale Primary School
Romaine Park Primary School
Rosebery District High School
Rosetta Primary School
Sacred Heart Geeveston
Scotch Oakburn College (Junior)
Snug Primary School
Springfield Gardens PS
St Johns Catholic Primary School
St Peter Chanel
The Friends' School
The Hutchins Junior School
Waimea Primary School
Woodbridge School
Wynyard High School
Yolla District School



Andrews Creek Primary School
Beaconsfield Primary School
Brighton Primary School
Campania District School
Collinsvale Primary School
East Devonport Primary School
East Ulverstone Primary School
Fahan School
Fairview Primary School
Goulburn St Primary School
Herdmans Cove Primary School
Hobart High School - Ogilvie
Hobart High School - New Town
Holy Rosary Catholic School
Huonville High School
Jordan River Learning Federation -
Senior School
Kingston High School
Lauderdale Primary School
Lenah Valley Primary School
Moonah Primary School
Montello Primary School
Montagu Bay Primary School
Mount Stuart Primary School
Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic PS
Ridgley Primary School
Sacred Heart New Town
Somerset Primary School
St Josephs Catholic School
Queenstown
Swansea Primary School
Taroona High School
West Launceston Primary School
Westbury Primary School
Windermere Primary School
Winnaleah District School



Bayview Secondary College
Bridport Primary School
Campbell Town District High School
Clarence High School
Deloraine Primary School
Deloraine High School
East Derwent Primary School
Hobart College
Invermay Primary School
Montrose Bay High School
Oatlands District High School
Port Dalrymple School
Prospect High School
Riverside High School
Rose Bay High School
Scottsdale Primary School
Smithton High School

SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE CHAMPIONS



School: Mole Creek Primary School
Position: School Lunch Program Lead
What do you love about your job?
 Love seeing kids grow in confidence to try new foods. ❤️
Favourite Canteen Recipe:
 Vegetable Curry
Favourite Veg:



School: Huonville Primary School
**Position: Mel - Food Service staff member
 Dan- Assistant Principal**
What do you love about your job?
 Mel- The kids
 Dan- Loves that everyone comes together and are able to have conversations over really good food. ❤️
Favourite Canteen Recipe:
 Mel- Mexican Mince
 Dan- Butter Chicken
Favourite Veg:



School: New Norfolk High School
Position: School Lunch Program Lead
What do you love about your job?
 Supporting students and seeing kids everyday with smiles on their faces. ❤️
Favourite Canteen Recipe:
 Cottage Pie and Chow Mein
Favourite Veg:



School: Stella Maris Primary School
Position: Canteen Manager
What do you love about your job?
 Love being able to provide tasty, healthy and quality food to the children and creating excitement around having a lunch order. ❤️
Favourite Canteen Recipe: Jacket potatoes - great winter warmer with so many varieties of toppings.



School: Sorell School
Position:
What do you love about your job?
 I love working with a great team, helping the students learn lifelong skills while providing nutritious lunches for so many children who may not have them at home. ❤️
Favourite Canteen Recipe:
 Butter Chicken



School: Rokeby Primary School
Position: School Lunch Program Lead
What do you love about your job?
 Seeing smiling faces and hearing chatter while students eat their lunch. ❤️
Favourite Canteen Recipe:
 Vegetable Curry
Favourite Veg: Mushrooms



School: Campbell Town District High
Position: Kitchen Assistant
What do you love about your job?
 Seeing the kids enjoying their meal and trying new foods. ❤️
Favourite Canteen Recipe:
 Sweet and Sour Chicken
Favourite Veg:



School: Huonville Primary School
Position: School Lunch Program Helpers
What do you love about your job?
 Elaine (on the right) - I really like serving the kids food. ❤️
 Grace (on the left) - You get to eat the food too!
Favourite Canteen Recipe:
 Elaine - There's so many good ones! Pasta Bolognaise and Butter Chicken
 Grace - I know mine ... Butter Chicken!
Favourite Veg:
 Elaine - Carrot and Potato



School: East Devonport Primary School
Position: Food Service Manager
What do you love about your job?
 Being part of positive changes in school food delivery, which impacts the children's health and wellbeing. ❤️
Favourite Canteen Recipe:
 Butter Chicken
Favourite Veg:
 Baked Pumpkin



School: Exeter Primary School
Position: School Lunch Program and Breakfast Club Volunteer
What do you love about your job?
 Interactions with the children. ❤️
Favourite Canteen Recipe:
 School Lunch Program Chow Mein
Favourite Veg: Asparagus



School: Winnaleah District High
Position: Food Service Manager
What do you love about your job?
 Seeing the children enjoying the food I've prepared. ❤️
Favourite Canteen Recipe:
 Noodle Cakes
Favourite Veg: Broccoli



School: New Norfolk High School
Position: School Lunch Program Lead
What do you love about your job?
 Supporting students and seeing kids everyday with smiles on their faces. ❤️
Favourite Canteen Recipe:
 Cottage Pie and Chow Mein
Favourite Veg:



School: Smithton High school
Position: Canteen Assistants
What do you love about your job?
 Rose - Everything!
 Karen - the interactions with the kids who help out in the canteen. ❤️
Favourite Canteen Recipe:
 Satay Chicken
Favourite Veg:
 Rose - Carrots and parsnips together
 Karen - Brussel sprouts



School: Bridport Primary School
Position: School Lunch Program Volunteer
What do you love about your job?
 Makes me feel good to help out and feed the children lunch. ❤️
Favourite Recipe: Coronation Chicken
Favourite Veg: Eggplant



School: Rokeby Primary School
Position: School Lunch Program Lead
What do you love about your job?
 Seeing smiling faces and hearing chatter while students eat their lunch. ❤️
Favourite Canteen Recipe:
 Vegetable Curry
Favourite Veg: Mushrooms



School: Sorell School
Position: Food Service Manager
What do you love about your job?
 Feeding kids healthy food. ❤️
Favourite Canteen Recipe:
 Chow-Mein and Moroccan Chicken
Favourite Veg:
 Cabbage



School: Waverley Primary School
Position: Food Service Manager
What do you love about your job?
 Making a difference to the children by feeding them, this makes me happy. ❤️
 Empty tummies don't learn.
Favourite Canteen Recipe:
 Chicken Casserole
Favourite Veg: Broccoli



School: Exeter Primary School
Position: Food Service Manager
What do you love about your job?
 I love knowing the children are getting a hot lunch each week. ❤️
Favourite Canteen Recipe:
 School Lunch Program Butter Chicken
Favourite Veg: Pumpkin



OUR PROJECTS

School Food Plans

School Food Matters, along with DECYP, continue to work with schools on developing their School Food Plan. The School Food Plan toolkit includes a number of resource documents, designed to assist schools to document a School Food Plan which will meet the needs of students and the school community. Project Officers are meeting with Principals and key staff, including those involved in the School Lunch Project.

What is the purpose of a School Food Plan?

- To consider all the different ways food is served and eaten in the school setting and provide consistent messaging about food and eating to students, staff and families.
- To document the agreed 'Whole School Approach' that a school community has to food provision and eating at their school.
- To document the relationship between nutritious food and the wellbeing of children.
- To assist in creating a positive school culture, which can improve students' academic performance, health and wellbeing through curriculum links and classroom activities.

SkillIT

School Food Matters have received funding from a Healthy Tasmania Grant to develop three training modules as part of the SkillIT project. This will be a co-design process with a small group of school food service staff, to build a blended learning format of both online and face to face modules on allergies, oral health and eating seasonally. These will be primarily for food service operators, staff, kitchen garden coordinators and volunteers in schools. All learning modules will be developed through a health literacy lens, and we will be working in partnership with school food service staff, Oral Health Tasmania and Eat Well Tasmania to develop these. This project has included a website redevelopment to house the new learning management system which has now been completed.



Above: The School Food Matters website recently redeveloped as part of SkillIT.

School Lunch Project



Our Achievements

The School Lunch Project consolidated its presence in the 30 participating schools across the state. At the start of term 3 2023, 4104 students were fed each week (ranging from 1 to 4 times per week). On average, 7,079 meals were served every week.

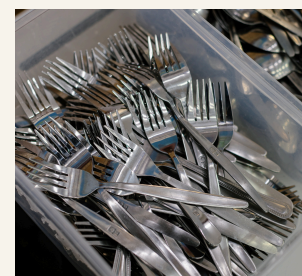
The term menus developed by the Community Dietitians (DoH), Loaves and Fishes Tasmania chefs and our SFM team were well received by the students. The favourite dishes were Butter Chicken with rice and fruit; Pasta Bolognese and salad; and Cottage Pie (lentil and beef) with salad or seasonal vegies.



189,540 meals were served from term 3 2023 through term 2 2024 resulting in 398,354 meals served since the project started. Schools could choose to prepare the meals from scratch using supplied recipes and ingredients (ingredients procured by Loaves and Fishes Tasmania) or have meals prepared at the Loaves and Fishes Tasmania central kitchen and delivered to the school.

Our goal to be able to feed all students was challenged with the need to provide appropriate meals for students with food allergies and intolerances. A trial was established at Dodges Ferry PS to determine the feasibility of providing adapted meals for students with intolerances and allergens. Meal preparation as well as procedures and protocols were established and tested and 5 additional schools joined the trial. The School Lunch Allergy Coordinator, Dietitians, Food Safety Specialist (both from DoH), School Lunch Project Coordinators along with School Lunch Leads at the 6 schools have all supported this trial.

Now, our journey has begun from School Lunch Project to School Lunch Program, with 60 schools to be involved by 2026.



Images Top and Above: Students and staff participating in the School Lunch Project.

Our School Lunch Project Partners

We couldn't have achieved such amazing results without the ongoing support, dedication and professionalism of our valued partners:



· **Loaves and Fishes Tasmania** led by Andrew Hillier, Aaron Kropf, Michelle Bourke, Alanna Hodgetts, Faye Hodgetts and Renee de Bruyn.



· **DoH Community Dietitians** – Claire Galloway and Kate DePaoli and Senior Food Safety Officer, Olivia While



· **Menzies Evaluation team** led by Dr Laura Sutton and team members; Dr Kim Jose, Dr Kylie Smith and Assoc Prof Verity Cleland



· **All 30 schools involved** – Austins Ferry PS, Gagebrook PS, Herdsmans Cove PS, New Norfolk HS, Oatlands DHS, Rokeby PS, Sorell School, Warrane PS, Clarendon Vale PS, Cosgrove HS, Dodges Ferry PS, Fairview PS, Huonville PS, East Derwent PS, JRLF Senior School, Beaconsfield PS, Bridport PS, Campbell Town DHS, Waverley PS, Winnaleah DHS, East Devonport PS, Mountain Heights School (Queenstown), Rosebery DS, Smithton H, Yolla DHS, Havenview PS, Mole Creek PS, Montello PS, Triabunna DS, Swansea PS. You are all amazing.



· **Members of the School Lunch Advisory group** – including representatives from Department of Health, Department for Education, Children and Young People, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Loaves and Fishes Tasmania, FoodBank, along with independent food consultants Leah Galvin, Jo Cook, and Amanda Sutton (Home Economics Institute of Tasmania).



· **Our local farmers and producers** who have supplied over our target of 50% of fresh produce sourced from Tasmania. Tassie food feeding Tassie children.



Special mention to our School Lunch Project Manager Julie Dunbabin and her team of School Lunch Project Coordinators; Sam Rathmell, Alison Holmstrom, Kate Carlin, Nieta Lynch, Pietta Jackson and Jen Lea who have done a great job in supporting schools on the ground.

Everyone has been unwavering in their focus and purpose in providing school lunches to children. The benefits to the children and school life are continuing to grow.



School Lunch Project Evaluation - *Menzies Institute for Medical Research*

The Menzies Institute for Medical Research Final Report of the School Lunch Project (2024) details that the project was well received by the participating schools. All those involved in the delivery of the project had a shared vision, and commitment to feeding students well at school. All stakeholders demonstrated flexibility and adapted to changing circumstances which proved to be critical for successful implementation.

In 2023, the School Lunch Project provided:



191,968

nutritious cooked meals



4,104

Tasmanian students fed



30

schools participated



7,079

meals per week



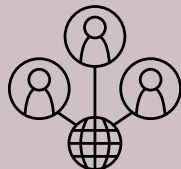
Key Findings and Considerations



71.5% of parents indicated their child ate the meals on the days they were available.

Some parents noticed their children trying new foods at home.

48.5% of parents surveyed were still packing snack food in case their child did not like the meal provided or were hungry.



There was strong support and enthusiasm for the project from a range of partners, with new partnerships formed to support project delivery.



Where possible, food was sourced from Tasmania, reaching over the 50% target.

A local food procurement strategy is under development by Loaves and Fishes Tasmania



Schools reported enhanced social connection and positive behavioural change in students.

Students having access to a healthy lunch and opportunity to try new foods was seen as a benefit by school staff.

Challenges in schools included; resourcing and staff workload, minimising food waste, allocating space and time for sit down lunch, and catering for allergies.

Key Findings and Considerations continued...



Menus were developed based on the Australian Dietary Guidelines (2013) with minimal processed/packaged foods and based on the five food groups.

Meals consisted of a main and a side dish.



5% of students at school involved in the SLP had an allergy or intolerance.

An Allergen Management Working Group was established and modified meals trialled to address the needs of those students.

Vegetarian students were catered for with an alternative available daily. All students had at least one vegetarian meal rotated throughout the term.



Food waste was limited in those schools demonstrating initiative in using uneaten meals to address food insecurity in their local community.

Plate waste was either fed to school farm animals or composted for school gardens and worm farms.



Parents surveyed were willing to pay for school lunches with a median of \$3.

There was strong support for discounts for those families with more than one child.

SchoolFood4Change

The Tasmanian School Lunch Program was noticed by the European Union Schoolfood4change movement and we were asked to be a replication region – one of five in the southern hemisphere. We have also been twinned with Malmo (Sweden) and Dunkerque (France). Meetings and webinars have been invaluable, as well as a focus on sustainable food procurement, implementing a whole school food approach and the need to have trained school cooks.





WELL FED TASMANIA

DELICIOUS, FRESH, LOCAL, TASSIE FOOD

The Well Fed Tasmania food van has continued to visit community and school settings over the past 12 months. The food van was a partnership with Families Tasmania for the last 5 years but unfortunately the partnership ended when Families Tasmania went into administration. School Food Matters will continue to seek funding to activate and utilise the Well Fed Tasmania food van at community and school events through out Tasmania.



Above Photos: The Well Fed Tasmania van served up delicious treats and smoothies by pedal power at Hobart College Health and Wellbeing Day in 2023.



FUNDING & PARTNERSHIPS

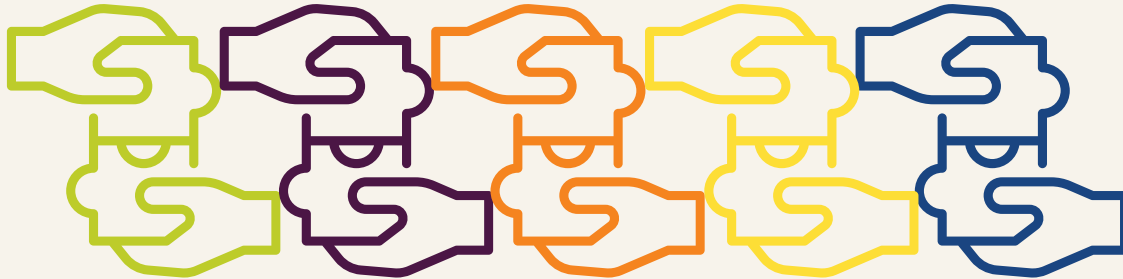
Our funding partners including the Department of Health (DoH), the Department of Education Children and Young People (DECYP) and Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC) want measurable returns on their investment through our SmartFood Program and the School Lunch Project. We want to ensure that every child has access to nutritious and delicious food while at school, which is essential to their overall health, wellbeing, and learning.

School Food Matters continues to value and appreciate working with the DoH's Primary Health Service's Dietitians and the support and professionalism that we received from the DECYP. We have been part of the Government's Healthy Tasmania Five Year Strategic Plan (2022 - 2026). The school setting and the need to feed children well will continue to be a focus of this strategy.



Our partnerships

School Food Matters works with a number of government agencies and other organisations to deliver our programs and projects to best support positive change in our communities. We are extremely grateful for these partnerships and understand the importance of sharing expertise and resources for the benefit of all Tasmanians.



Department of Health

Welcome to the Department for Education, Children and Young People



Tasmanian Government
Department of Premier and Cabinet



THE GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA



Medhurst
KITCHEN EQUIPMENT







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