

RESULTS

Interview 1: High School Parent

How do you go about packing lunchboxes for the school day?

I try to rush in the morning a lot of times I'm time poor so I just throw in whatever I see. I buy little chip packets, individual biscuit packets, muesli bars. I haven't really planned and I don't know what to make so sometimes I'm not really organised so I try to quickly rub some butter and jam on bread. Sometimes my son does, I wish he did more but it depends on the day and how busy we are.

How healthy do you feel the contents of the lunchboxes you pack are?

Not very healthy sadly. I do rely on a lot of supermarket packed stuff. Sometimes I wonder how healthy that is. I do feel guilty but I don't know what else I can do. It feels really hard to do anything different with not time and a limited budget.

What prevents you from packing healthy lunchboxes?

I'm so busy all the time, life is so busy, that it just gets so hard to pack my son's lunchbox with any thought to it - so often I grab whatever's most convenient and most of the time that turns out to be packaged and unhealthy snacks and I just feel so bad but the sad truth is I'm probably not eating any better either for my work lunch packs. There's no time in the morning to think what's healthy. It's just pack and go and everyone out the door.

Do you feel you eat relatively healthily as a family? What about weekday lunches?

Weekday lunches are not as healthy as they should be. But we at least try to eat some vegetables at dinner. Our lunches are the most unhealthy as we eat anything packaged usually and dinner we try to cook something healthier.

How would you describe your understanding of healthy eating and knowledge of nutritious food?

Well I know that we should eat more fruits and vegetables. It's just hard to fit in all in when you're not home most of the day so I suppose dinner we cook.

What would encourage or assist you to pack healthier lunches?

If it was easier. If I knew what to pack, a lot of times I got no idea. I walk in the supermarket and grab whatever I see, I don't know what to get, a lot of times I don't know what to pack. If I had a plan and more time that would help. It would also be nice if I had help and it wasn't just me doing everything as the mum. The kids are in high school. Sometimes I think they should take a more active role but they're not interested in meals.

Interview 2: School Teacher

What are some unhealthy lifestyle habits you observe amongst your students at school?

Obviously poor diet, students eat a lot of processed, packaged food they bring from home. Too much screen time, kids use a lot of screens but it's hard to get away from screens when you do lessons. Kids also don't sleep enough, a lot come to school and say they were tired and stayed up late. A lot don't eat breakfast or at fruit snack time some don't bring fruits and veg so they don't end up eating anything, therefore their energy is lacking.

Do you see any impacts of unhealthy lifestyle habits at school?

The impact is that because kids are hungry and lack sleep, they're always tired and they need to eat and they don't. We provide time mid-morning for fruit and veg and a lot don't bring something to eat and when you ask them they say they don't have anything. A lot of kids don't exercise too much and this means a lot of kids are unfit and if we go out for a game some just want to sit on the side and not do physical activity.

What do you think of healthy lifestyle education?

I think it's very important that kids while they are at school get this type of education as it will set them up for a healthy life.

How do you find the state of the lunchboxes students pack today? How healthy are they?

Not healthy at all. It's just not good. Most of my students are bringing very basic foods to school and a lot of times it's all processed foods - chips, chocolates, white bread, sugary drinks. Especially the older ones, they seem to find it cool to have those snacks... It's impacting their behaviour I feel, and it's causing kids to learn unhealthy habits. More awareness needs to be raised.

Do you feel your students understand what healthy eating means?

No I don't think a lot of them do. Especially they don't understand the impact of too much sugar so they really need more education and also they need to be shown ways to pack their own lunch because they can't just rely on packaged foods.

Do you see any impacts of unhealthy eating at school?

Once the lunch boxes are open all you see is all these packets - literally that's all I see in the lunchbox. A lot of times there's not even a sandwich. It's all packages. It's really sad. Some kids don't even bring lunch, they don't even take the time or have time to pack lunch. They end up coming to school without food. It really impacts student focus and concentration. It also creates much more negative behaviour which impacts everyone at school.

What do you think would encourage students to better understand healthy food choices and motivate them to bring healthier foods to school?

I think they need to be involved in the packing of their lunchboxes and have more education regarding what is healthy. Be involved in making the foods in the family. I think their family has a great impact on what they eat. So if they see their parents or caregivers having a healthy diet, they're the role models for the kids. There's only so much we can do at school.

Really you have to say the home is a really important place for developing healthy eating habits.

Interview 3: Year 10 High School Student, Female

What does healthy eating mean to you? What do you know about eating nutritious food?

It's basically having some vegetables and trying to eat a bit like home cooked meals and stuff.

Do you know what the main food groups are?

I think so. Fruit and veg, meat, and dairy and bread and rice and like oils.

Do you feel you eat relatively healthily? What about the rest of your family?

I don't think I eat healthy every day cause I eat a lot of takeout cause my mum is busy all the time so we don't really eat healthy food much.

What prevents you from eating healthy foods?

Well usually it gets busy and I don't know what to eat and I know healthy food but I don't know what else to eat other than vegetables. Normally we eat the same things every week. So I just eat the same sort of things all the time.

Do you want to eat healthier?

Yeah I want to eat healthier it's cool to eat healthy you see everyone eating healthy online. If I knew what to eat and had time that would be good.

Do you struggle eating healthily? Are there certain foods that you avoid? What about for your school lunches?

Now that I think about it, I feel I don't eat as healthy when I think about it in a day. Like I might have an apple during lunch but otherwise sometimes I might take some cucumbers but I feel bad now i don't eat that healthy and sometimes veggies you know just don't taste good. So I don't fully enjoy eating healthy.

What foods do you usually have in your school lunchbox?

I sometimes take oreos or tiny teddies, shapes, muesli bar sometimes like an LCM or those twist ones with fruits in them. And then maybe a popper, a mandarin and then for my main lunch I would have usually like maybe a turkey sandwich or vegemite sandwich or nutella. Sometimes I just take a cheese sandwich.

Currently as a family, how do you go about planning and packing lunches for the school week? Do you pack your lunches or do your parents?

My mum puts in all my foods. She does it in the morning as I'm getting dressed for school and then I just run down the stairs and grab my lunch and I might throw in an extra pack of cookies or chips or something.

Do you choose what goes in your lunchbox? If so, why do you choose the foods you pick?

I don't pack my food but I pick normally my mum buys whatever snacks are on sale and I pick a flavour like shapes so I choose that way. But I usually eat the same food so there's not

too much variety in my lunches and I usually expect what I eat. It's pretty much the same but it does get a bit boring though.

How healthy do you feel the contents of your friends' lunchboxes are?

Some of my friends, one of my friends always brings chips everyday and we just talk about the flavour she's gonna get that day. Normally their lunches are packets or some chocolate and just like fruit on top and maybe some salami I don't know. None of us have the healthiest of lunches.

Do you know what meal planning is? Have you ever tried meal planning for lunchboxes for the week? If so, how did you find it?

Yeah I saw these tik toks of meal planning and they packed like 20 meals of the same meal and put in the freezer. I've seen that otherwise I did see a plan but I haven't done it.

What would encourage you to take healthier lunches?

I guess if it was easy and fun and I knew what to do. I guess some help.

Do you think it would be helpful to meal plan everyone's lunchboxes for the upcoming week?

If it's easy that might be good then I know what I'll be eating and I get a say in what I'm eating.

Would you be interested in using a solution that helps in meal planning lunchboxes for the week, showing you key food groups to include for each day?

I guess that's cool. I don't know what it'll be like but why not.

Would you feel motivated seeing how healthy your lunchbox plan is for the week and having key food groups to include?

I guess I'll get to make sure I eat all the food groups so yeah.

How would you feel seeing a healthiness rating of your week's lunches compared to your family? Would this motivate you to pick healthier foods?

Yeah that could be a cool challenge. Would be cool to do with friends too.

Interview 4: Year 9 High School Student, Female

What does healthy eating mean to you? What do you know about eating nutritious food?

It means you eat healthy, like lots of nutrition.

Do you feel you eat relatively healthily? What about the rest of your family?

Yes, we try to be pretty healthy but not perfect.

What prevents you from eating healthy foods?

Unhealthy food is tempting. It's there and it tastes good.

Do you know what the main food groups are?

No. I know fruits and veg, dairy and gluten categories, but I don't know. I don't know what would be a balanced meal, though I guess a meal with meat, vegetables and dairy.

Do you struggle eating healthily? Are there certain foods that you avoid? What about for your school lunches?

Yeah definitely. I grab unhealthy food all the time, especially snacks. My lunchbox isn't the most healthy.

What foods do you usually have in your school lunchbox?

It's usually a sandwich with lettuce and ham and some fruit and some nuts and a lolly. I also usually sneak in some milk chocolate too. But I feel it's not healthy.

Currently as a family, how do you go about planning and packing lunches for the school week? Do you pack your lunches or do your parents?

My mum does it in the mornings. I tell her I want this and this and she packs it for me. My mum works a few days a week and she has no time to pack her lunch so she usually eats my leftovers from my lunch and she gets some fruit from the fridge like cucumbers - whatever she sees she gets, like leftovers.

Do you always take a sandwich to school? If so, why?

Yeah, maybe once I took leftovers but it's mostly the same sandwich everyday. It's easier and there's no time to plan what else to take.

Do you like leftovers?

Yeah

What do your school friends bring in their lunchboxes?

My friends eat a lot of unhealthy food, like chocolate, pikelets, candy and sandwiches and a lot from the tuckshop. Especially garlic bread and chocolates.

Do you find any challenges when it comes to packing your school lunchbox?

No - because my mum does it so no challenges for me. But I'm sick of eating the same sandwich every day. It's pretty boring.

How healthy do you feel the contents of the lunchboxes you take to school are? What about your friends' lunchboxes?

I think my lunch is okay. It's not the most healthy but it's pretty okay.

Do you know what meal planning is? Have you ever tried meal planning for lunchboxes for the week? If so, how did you find it?

I know what it is but I haven't done it before.

What prevents you from taking healthy lunchboxes?

No time and unhealthy food is easy to take.

What would encourage you to take healthier lunches?

If it was easy to pack and plan I guess.

Do you think it would be helpful to meal plan everyone's lunchboxes for the upcoming week?

Yeah definitely. Then it saves my mum lots of time and I can have different foods each day, not just my ham sandwich.

Would you be interested in using a solution that helps in meal planning lunchboxes for the week, showing you key food groups to include for each day?

Yes, that would be nice. Yes, cause then it like plans your food and your diet for you.

Would you feel motivated seeing how healthy your lunchbox plan is for the week and having key food groups to include?

It would motivate me. I want to eat healthier so I can be strong.

How would you feel seeing a healthiness rating of your week's lunches compared to your family? Would this motivate you to pick healthier foods?

I wanna see that because then that's good, I can track my healthiness and see others' - it would motivate me in the future to make healthier choices.

Interview 5: High School Parent

Do you feel you eat relatively healthily as a family?

Not really, we don't.

What about weekday lunches?

Weekday lunches are quite rushed and difficult to prepare as I work full time and my two kids in the house, there's just no time and the weekends are packed so I try to throw something together and it's not usually healthy.

How would you describe your understanding of healthy eating and knowledge of nutritious food?

As long as we get a couple of vegetables each day, I think that's pretty healthy. I think I know the main food groups - vegetables, fruits, dairy and meat. I only know a basic amount of healthy eating - mainly that we need to eat fruit and 1 or 2 vegetables a day. But I generally feel we have poor nutrition as a family. But I am a bit overweight and I've been trying to cut down on fat and my kids aren't that active and I've noticed my son's been gaining some weight too.

What prevents you from eating healthily?

Healthy food I think is quite expensive. I also don't have time to make it healthy. Vegetables are expensive. I don't know what healthy eating even is so I just plan my food in the shops and grab some ready made meals and packets and that's a meal for us.

Who is responsible for making sure everyone eats healthily?

Well me as a mother, I do the grocery shopping but I do get a lot of requests by my kids to buy some soft drinks and those sorts of things. So each kid asks for some chips and chocolates a week and that's why I feel we aren't eating healthy. But I'm becoming aware we are eating unhealthy but I don't know where to start. I don't have the time to plan it and I'm not sure if it's cheap.

Do you have any tools or methods to strive to eat healthier?

Not really. I just know one fruit or veggie a day is enough to meet the requirements, isn't it? I try to get my kids to eat one fruit if they can but we do eat out a few times a week and some days we forget to eat healthy.

Do you or your family members struggle eating healthily? Are there certain foods that are avoided?

We like our fast food so we definitely struggle. We love pies and burgers. The kids don't like anything green, I haven't been able to fix this. I don't know what is helpful. I'm trying to eat healthy but I don't know where to start.

Have you or your family members ever tried eating healthier? What was effective?

I have - at night I make sure everyone tries a serving of vegetables. Adding sauces to vegetables was effective to make it tasty. The kids love cheeses so a creamy sauce is great to make them eat vegetables.

For a typical work and school week, what do you and your family members usually eat?

Lunch for the kids is a quick ham or nutella sandwich, some chips, biscuits and a piece of fruit. I try to take leftovers if I can and if I can't I buy out, which does cost more, like a sausage roll or a pie. Sometimes if I'm lucky I'll get a salad. Depends where I'm working as I work in different locations so it's up to where I'm at.

Currently as a family, how do you go about planning and packing lunches for the school and work week?

Well I do feel bad about this but I feel the kids being in high school need to take their own responsibility so they do their own lunches I don't look at it much to be honest, I provide the breads and spreads - they make their own sandwiches but a lot of times they take packaged foods and I feel guilty. I don't have the time to make their own lunch boxes plus they're in high school, like come on, but I feel we don't know much about healthy food as we have never done that but I wish we did.

How do you go about packing lunchboxes for the school day? What about for the work day?

I'll make sure they have a piece of fruit, that's it - apples or mandarins. As long as they take one I'm happy. I'll buy some chips and dips and they're in charge of packing their own lunch. But I've been thinking for a while that they need some sort of structure because I don't think they've been eating healthy as my son has put on some weight. For me, I try to take myself some 2 minute noodles if I don't get time that's always a saviour or I might take leftovers or buy out. I plan my lunch in the morning as I'm too tired to think about it we have long days so I end up buying out if I'm really tired as I'm on the road a lot so I'll pass McDonalds or get a sausage roll or something.

What do you usually take to work for lunch? Do you find any struggles packing lunch?

I usually take some leftovers some days, I buy something or I take noodles or a quick sandwich.

How healthy do you feel the contents of the lunchboxes you pack are?

Not as healthy as I'd like as I have noticed most of us have gained weight in the last year.

Have you ever tried meal planning for lunchboxes for the week? If so, how did you find it?

I had tried in the past, many failed attempts over the years, I just found that everyone seemed to have different likes and dislikes and I never got it right and there's no time to plan something. I really need help in this area. Actually, I would be really interested if there's something to help with that. It just feels like eating healthy is hard work.

What prevents you from packing healthy lunchboxes?

Time and the cost. It just feels like being healthy is costly and time consuming. You have to chop stuff and I don't have time in the mornings. I guess I could do it in the evenings but I don't know we just never got organised on that.

What would encourage or assist you to pack healthier lunches?

If there was a plan and if the kids got involved in trying to eat healthier. The kids just want to grab things that are ready. It's just not fun enough. I suppose if we did it as a family that would encourage them.

Do you think it would be helpful to meal plan everyone's lunchboxes for the upcoming week?

Definitely if we had some system we could use that was quick and easy to use I would really think that would be great as I really do want to eat healthier as a family.

Would you be interested in using a technological solution that assists in meal planning lunchboxes for the week, showing you key food groups to include for each day?

Definitely because I feel technology is the way to grab my kids' attention - they'd be on board.

Would you feel motivated seeing how healthy your lunchbox plan is for the week and having key food groups to include?

Yes. That would motivate me because it'll make me feel good. I'm eating healthy and my family is eating healthier. I feel having the food groups would be great as I'm not actually eating all the food groups.

How would you feel seeing a healthiness rating of your week's lunches compared to your family? Would this motivate you to pick healthier foods?

Yeah that sounds quite unf actually to see what the kids are packing and compare it to what I'm eating that would probably motivate each of us we could even get into a competition with each other and encourage each other I think that would be great and we could talk about it as a family so I think that's a great motivator.

Interview 6: Year 8 High School Student, Male

What does healthy eating mean to you? What do you know about eating nutritious food?

It means to eat good food, fruits and veggies. Not junk food.

Do you know what the main food groups are?

Yeah. Fruits, veggies, meat, bread.

Do you feel you eat relatively healthily? What about the rest of your family?

No my parents eat way more healthy than me. They tell me to eat veggies sometimes, I try to eat a carrot or something at dinner but I don't know how to eat veggies, it's pretty much salads. But I like to eat healthy. I buy a lot of tuckshop from school because it's easy and quick.

What prevents you from eating healthy foods?

My mum works full time and doesn't get home til late so we normally get takeout when we're busy. I love eating unhealthy food I think that's also my weakness.

Do you want to eat healthier?

Yeah well I probably should.

Do you struggle eating healthily? Are there certain foods that you avoid? What about for your school lunches?

Yeah I struggle because some days I don't eat fruit at all and I don't really like vegetables much and I know that's not healthy. I hate anything green except lettuce.

What foods do you usually have in your school lunchbox?

I always have a pack of chips or crackers cause I love them sometimes a couple of biscuits or a muffin and a piece of fruit like I'll have an apple and they're the main things and sometimes a sandwich.

Currently as a family, how do you go about planning and packing lunches for the school week? Do you pack your lunches or do your parents?

I don't really pack the lunch. We don't have time to plan I don't remember the last time we planned a lunch. My mum in the morning packs our lunches quickly as we run out the door. Sometimes she doesn't tell me what we're eating as I have no time and she packs sandwiches I don't like.

Do you choose what goes in your lunchbox? If so, why do you choose the foods you pick?

I don't choose the lunch but for snacks my mum knows I like crackers and biscuits so she packs some of them and I usually throw in some more snacks.

How healthy do you feel the contents of your friends' lunchboxes are?

I never see what's in their lunchboxes they just pull out their food and eat while walking to the basketball courts. They get garlic bread from the tuckshop so not that healthy.

Do you know what meal planning is? Have you ever tried meal planning for lunchboxes for the week? If so, how did you find it?

No I don't and I've never tried it.

What would encourage you to take healthier lunches?

If it tasted good and it was cool to make and easy and if I even knew what to take.

Do you think it would be helpful to meal plan everyone's lunchboxes for the upcoming week?

I think it'll probably be good cause my mum's so busy she won't have to stress as much. We might actually eat healthier if it was planned.

Would you be interested in using a solution that helps in meal planning lunchboxes for the week, showing you key food groups to include for each day?

Yeah sounds good.

Would you feel motivated seeing how healthy your lunchbox plan is for the week and having key food groups to include?

I suppose so I like to eat healthier.

How would you feel seeing a healthiness rating of your week's lunches compared to your family? Would this motivate you to pick healthier foods?

Yeah see if I can beat my mum cause even she doesn't eat that healthy.