



### Southern Cross Early Childhood School

## Encouraging healthy habits early

Fresh Tastes has become an important part of the curriculum at Southern Cross Early Childhood School. The school is a great example of how to link activities from all the Fresh Tastes action areas to have a bigger impact on the health of the school community.

The school supports families to provide nutritious options for children at school, and the school community is actively involved, with many parents and carers volunteering their time to support the children's learning about healthy options.

"In our school newsletters, we include information for parents and carers on healthy eating as well as holding information sessions to promote healthy lunch options," said Heidi Weilguny, the school's Fresh Tastes coordinator.

There is also an active parent-led 'Green Team' who meet regularly to ensure the school's Environment Courtyard is maintained and to help the children in the Garden Club.

"It's great to see families show interest as they walk by our Environment Courtyard each day," said Jason Thornton, the school's community coordinator. "I often hear children explaining to their families what is growing in the garden beds and how they have been involved."

Recently all staff completed Food&ME™ professional learning, which is aligned with the Australian Curriculum and Early Years Learning Framework.

"We learnt a lot about healthy eating and how we can incorporate it into our classrooms," said Heidi. "We now have new resources and knowledge to use in the classroom."

**Students have developed a better understanding of how food is grown and have had the opportunity to cook and taste new foods.**

Soon school staff will be attending the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation workshop to gain new gardening and cooking skills and knowledge.

A fun and interactive magic performance is scheduled for Kindergarten to Year 2 students to promote healthy eating and reinforce what students are learning in the classroom.

Fresh Tastes also complements the school's sustainability focus, which aims to reduce waste and commercial packaging across the school.

With the help of Fresh Tastes, Southern Cross Early Childhood School has supported its community to learn about healthy eating, nutritious lunchboxes, and how to grow and cook fresh food.

*Fresh Tastes is open to all primary schools across Canberra. Contact the Fresh Tastes team for information about how your school can get involved. Fresh Tastes is part of the ACT Government's Healthy Weight Initiative supporting a healthy, active and productive community.*

