



Keeping Children Healthy

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

NUTRITION

How can I educate my child to adopt healthier eating habits in school?

Parents, if you're worried about what your child will eat in school, rest assured.

They will have access to healthier food options in the school canteen, thanks to the 'Healthy Meals in Schools Programme'. And since all school canteens serve a wide range of options to cater to different palates, your child will surely find something they love.



Is your child transitioning to P1?

Unlike preschool where your child is served meals based on a fixed menu, they will have to start making more independent choices about what they want to eat in primary school.

This transition from being served to choosing for themselves can be daunting for children. Prepare them for it in the following ways:



- a) Talk to your child about 'My Healthy Plate' and highlight the importance of different food groups in our diet. Teach them how to choose a combination of dishes using the 'quarter-quarter-half' method so they learn to incorporate all food groups in their meals.

Here is an example of a meal that is not well-balanced, and a couple that are:





- b) Find out more about the types of food sold in your child's school canteen, and talk to them about these options so they know what to expect.

Remind them to complete each meal with vegetables and a fruit (served with most meals in school). Teach them how eating complete meals will keep them fuller for longer.

- c) Most canteens still require students to pay with cash. Explain to your child the different kinds of coins and dollars to your child, and role-play ordering food at home. You can also encourage them to start practicing ordering while eating out.



How can I prepare my child to make good food decisions in school?

- a) Your child is taught about 'My Healthy Plate' in school. Reiterate the importance of food groups as they have specific benefits to the body.
- b) Encourage your child to eat full meals in schools so they can feel fuller for longer.
- c) Talk to your child about the benefits of eating fruit and vegetables of different colours daily, as they help our bodies in different ways.
- d) Most meals served in school include vegetables and a portion of fruit. Encourage your child to set a good habit of eating fruit for dessert with their meals.



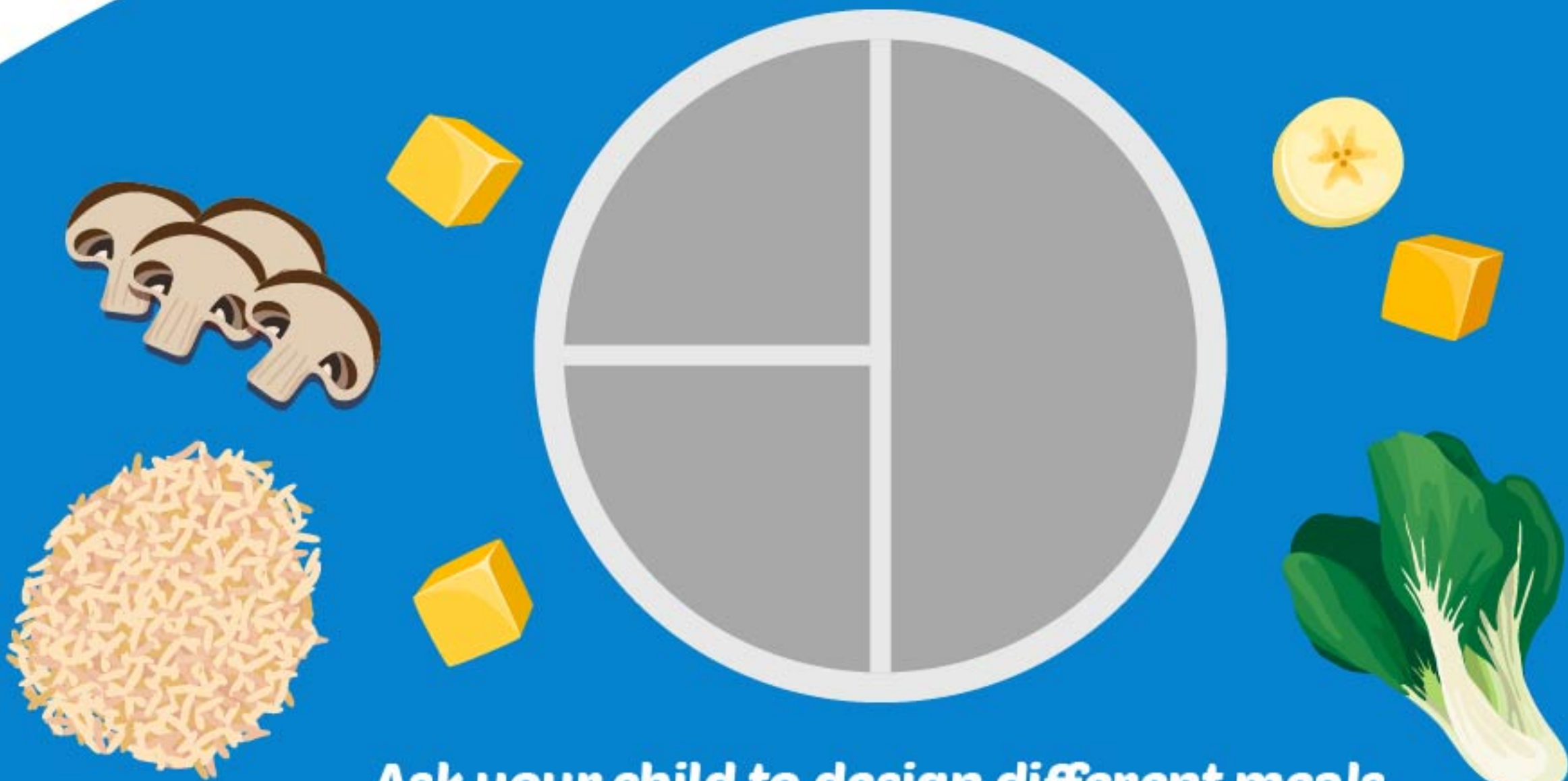
Checklist for Parents

As your child prepares for Primary 1, use this checklist as a reminder of all things you should consider when discussing recess food with your child:

- I have reviewed the dishes my child can order during recess.
- I have taught my child the benefits of having a complete meal with 4 food groups.
- I have taught my child how to manage his/her pocket money when paying for meals in school.



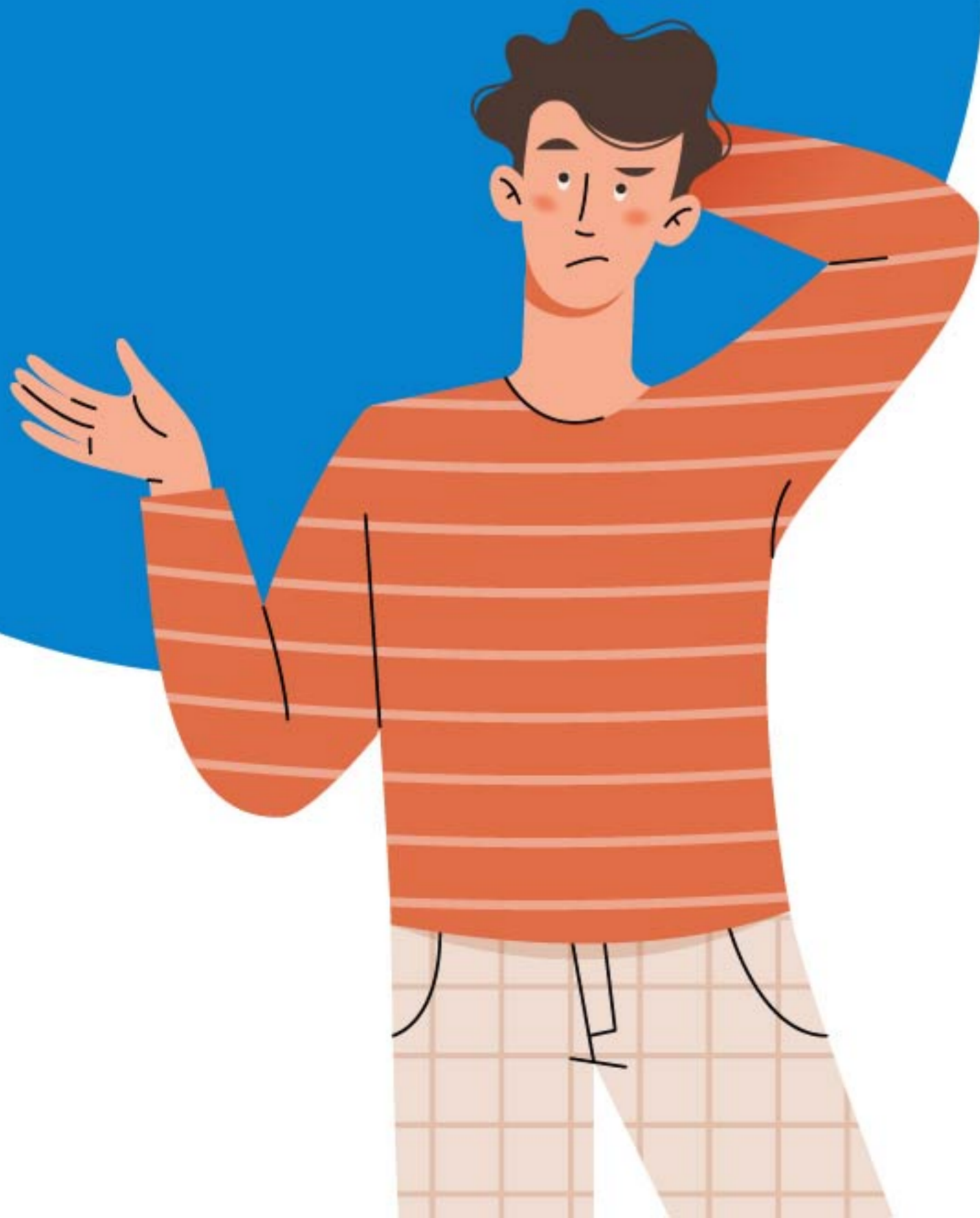
ACTIVITY TIME!



Ask your child to design different meals following the 'quarter-quarter-half' method by cutting out various ingredients and placing them on the plate. Use a paper plate for them to show what their choices of meals could be in school.



Mental Well-being



How do I help my child through a major transition like a change of schools?

If your child is about to change school, realise that a new environment can be very daunting for them. Do discuss the transition with your child in advance. Here are a few things you can do to help them:

a) Help them adjust to a new routine

- Turning in and waking up earlier can help children gradually get accustomed to the school morning routine.
- Having a healthy breakfast, which includes food from all four food groups, can help them start their day on the right note.
- Help them get familiar with how to travel to the new school.

b) Encourage them to make a friend who can go through this big transition with them

- This buddy can be someone with similar interests as them, or just someone sitting next to them in class.

c) Have open conversations and encourage them

- Ask them about the new school, activities, teachers and friends.
- Let them know you are proud of them even for the smallest things, such as making a new friend, volunteering to help out in class or knowing the names of new teachers.

ACTIVITY TIME!

Print out this Wellness Journal and encourage your child to fill it up every day; it can help develop more awareness and appreciation in them.

WELLNESS JOURNAL

Date:

Today's positive thoughts:

Exercise type: _____

Duration: _____

Daily steps: Up to 3K ★ 3-6K ★★
 6-9K ★★★ >9K+ ★★★★★

Reflections on the day:

Food for the day:

Breakfast

Lunch

Dinner

Tea Break

How can I tell if my child is vaping?

Worried that your child may be vaping? There are several telltale signs to watch out for:

- Vaping devices come with detachable parts like pods, vaporisers, etc. They may look like a USB at first glance, so examine these products carefully if you spot them in your child's possession.
- Whiffs of sweet fragrances, as most youths prefer sweet/fruit-flavoured e-juice, could also be an indication your child is vaping.
- Your child's online activities can also give you hints about your child's vaping habits, so keep a watchful eye on them.

For other tips to prevent your child from vaping/smoking, click [here](#).

**SUBSTANCE
ABUSE**



Are there any support channels to help my child quit vaping?

If you find out that your child is smoking or vaping, you can reach out to HPB's QuitLine (1800 438 2000), a free and confidential helpline for personalised professional advice on how to quit.



Can the school help if my child has picked up smoking/vaping?

Selected schools have Student Health Advisors or Lifestyle Coaches to support students who smoke/vape in quitting.

Alternatively, HPB conducts a group-based counselling programme that leverages students' strengths to build confidence and channel their attention away from smoking/vaping. The programme comprises 5 counselling sessions conducted either face-to-face or virtually, and is available upon request by schools.

ACTIVITY TIME!

Take the time out to address these vaping myths with your child.

CARD ONE

Myth:

“Vaping is harmless. It’s just flavoured water vapour.”

Answer:

False!
Substances commonly found in vapes include nicotine – primarily to induce an addiction, and cancer-causing compounds like formaldehyde and benzene.

Visit <https://go.gov.sg/vaping> to learn more.



CARD TWO

Myth:

“Vaping has no health risks at all.”

Answer:

False!
Vapes include cancer-causing substances such as formaldehyde and benzene. Nicotine also lowers youths’ impulse control, and ability to learn.

Visit <https://go.gov.sg/vaping-myths> to learn more.



CARD THREE

Myth:

“I can stop vaping whenever I want to.”

Answer:

Vapes contain nicotine, a highly addictive substance. Because the brain is still developing in adolescence, youths can become addicted to nicotine more easily as compared to adults.

Visit <https://go.gov.sg/vaping> to learn more.



Role Model Good Personal Hygiene Habits

What you do, your child sees and follows. So set a good example with good personal hygiene habits. Washing hands properly and thoroughly is one of them.



Teach your child to wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water

Teach your child to follow the 8 steps of handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. That's how long you take to sing the HAPPY BIRTHDAY song twice!

ACTIVITY TIME!

Print out the following poster and paste it near the wash basin at home to encourage your child to wash their hands properly every time.

Scrub your hands with soap for at least 20 seconds.

STEP
1 PALM
TO PALM



STEP
2 BETWEEN
FINGERS



STEP
3 BACK OF
HANDS



STEP
4 BASE OF
THUMBS



STEP
5 BACK OF
FINGERS



STEP
6 FINGERNAILS



STEP
7 WRISTS



STEP
8 RINSE AND
WIPE DRY



SCAN TO
LEARN MORE



you've g  t this!

For more parent resources, please visit Parenthub
at go.gov.sg/parenthub-prisch



<https://go.gov.sg/parenthub-prisch>