



Rollins Primary School

**practical strategies  
for teachers & parents**



## dedication to you

I hope these pages empower you to accept and celebrate the body you have, and share that message with the young people in your life.



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# chapter 1

## education



## **first things first**

When it comes to diet and food choices, we need to be encouraging our young people to eat enough to meet their bodies high demand. We also need to encourage them to eat what feels good and right for them. We shouldn't judge food preferences; judgement leads to shame.

In the pages to follow, I will share the three key messages from the presentation.

## **message: our bodies are incredible**

According to the 2023 Body Kind Youth Survey, 95% of young people struggle with their body image. A powerful tool that can support young people with their body image is to draw their attention to what their bodies can do.

### **activity idea:**

Each person in the class goes around and shares three things their body is doing for them right now. For example, sitting, concentrating, looking, listening, digesting food, talking, releasing hormones, smiling, smelling, touching their pen, moving their eyebrows, hair/nails growing.

## **message: we are all unique**

We all are biochemically unique, which means that all our bodies are going to look, move and feel different. Our DNA is our genetic blueprint. It determines characteristics like our eye colour, hair colour, whether we have curly hair or straight hair. It also determines our weight and height.

Even if you ate the same foods, did the same amount of exercise, used the same products, and got the same amount of sleep as our best friend, sister or mum the physical and psychological outcome would be completely different.

## **message: health doesn't have a 'look'**

We have been conditioned to see health as something that can be assessed solely based on the way that a person appears. The reality is that health isn't something you can see.

Health is broad and encompasses factors such as social connectedness, ability to manage stress, sleeping through the night, feelings of motivation, desire to move their body, ability to identify and honour hunger and fullness cues.



# chapter 2

## strategies in practice



## key issues

In 2024, teachers have drawn my attention to these four key issues:

1. young people not eating before school
2. young people not eating at school
3. body shaming at school
4. increased prevalence of eating disorders and disordered eating

## issue: young people not eating before school

This has really cropped up as an issue in the past couple of years in my work with young people. So many of them have been really generous and have shared with me why they don't eat before school. Two come up again and again – no time or no appetite. When I ask them when they get their appetite, it is generally in lesson one.

### strategy 1 - breakfast club

Is your school able to provide a space at school where young people can prepare breakfast? It could be a gold coin donation to have food provided or alternatively you encourage young people to bring their own food and prepare it at school so they can eat it before homeroom. Consider availability of appliances such as:

- \* toaster
- \* microwave
- \* mini fridge
- \* pantry

### strategy 2 - flexible eating arrangements

Allowing young people to bring something into lesson one to eat might just change the trajectory of their energy for the remainder of the day. I understand that eating in class may be distracting if all students don't take this option or if it interrupts what you're teaching. This is where boundaries come in.

You can provide the option to eat after you have gone through the content and invite them to get out their breakfast when they're working independently or in small groups.

### strategy 3 - teach students about what they can eat on the go

If these aren't possible within your school community, you can invite your young people to consider options they can have on the way to school that involve little to no effort in the morning. For example - smoothies, overnight oats, microwave porridge, breaky wrap, muesli bars, granola, yoghurt, fresh fruit and a handful of nuts. Perhaps these suggestions can be stuck up in the classroom or be posted on the Google Classroom or Compass.

## **issue: young people not eating at school**

There are a number of reasons why young people may choose not to eat something at school. Some reasons include feeling shame about their body, sensory overwhelm, safe foods not being accessible, interoception, misophonia, sympathetic nervous system dominance.

### **strategy 1 - lead with curiosity**

If you notice that a young person isn't eating at school and you're concerned it is worth raising it with them. The way you do this is important. This isn't about shaming them to eat, it is about understanding and allowing the young person to feel seen. It can be for a multitude of reasons like the ones discussed, or even be due to lack of food availability at home. Their answer will decide your next step.

Remember that if they are choosing not to eat at school, it doesn't necessarily mean that their nutritional needs aren't being met.

### **strategy 2 - create opportunities to share food**

Is there capacity within your school community for young people to share food? Could you have a Friday tradition in homeroom where you all eat breaky together or perhaps you create safe spaces at school for young people to eat in a classroom because that is more comfortable than eating outside.

Food isn't just about energy, it is a gateway for connection too. Sometimes sitting down to eat can feel really intimidating because there may be a fear that people are watching them so why not make it more FUN – can you have a space where you have playing cards, connect four, uno, and conversation starters to provide distraction and promote connection.

### **strategy 3 - involve your young person**

There are three things to remember – your young person needs to enjoy the food, feel full and satisfied and have food in their lunch box that will give them energy.

**TBC on the next page...**

## strategy 3 - involve your young person

Here are some tips to get you started -

### 1. include a combination of the three macronutrients (carbohydrates, protein and fats)

#### carbohydrates

- \* wraps
- \* wholemeal pasta
- \* sandwich
- \* bread roll
- \* roti bread
- \* muesli
- \* crumpets
- \* quinoa
- \* rice
- \* fruit
- \* vegetables

#### protein

- \* chickpeas
- \* hummus
- \* chicken
- \* tuna
- \* salmon
- \* feta
- \* halloumi
- \* eggs
- \* burger patties
- \* beans
- \* tofu

#### fats

- \* avocado
- \* olive oil
- \* nuts
- \* seeds
- \* nut butter
- \* tahini
- \* Greek yoghurt
- \* feta
- \* halloumi

#### colour and joy

- \* carrots
- \* cucumber
- \* Your favourite sauce
- \* sundried tomatoes
- \* olives
- \* croutons
- \* peanuts
- \* apple
- \* parsley
- \* dill
- \* basil

### 2. put in more food than you think they will eat

Their bodies are growing at a rapid pace and some days their body will need more food than others. If possible, choose items that can be re-packaged to reduce food wastage.

### 3. think about the **WHOLE** experience

Include a combination of foods that are salty, sweet, crunchy, soft, and smooth so the lunch box is interesting and inviting.

### 4. keep the safe foods in

Be sure to include foods that you know they will enjoy. Some young people really struggle in the school environment so having foods in their lunch box that are safe and predictable can make them feel more comfortable in an environment that might otherwise not be.

### 5. remember...

If a young person is choosing not to eat at school, that doesn't necessarily mean that their nutritional needs aren't being met. It is about looking at your young person's diet holistically across a period of time, and not focussing on every meal and every day. Some days we may not feel like adding in colour and that is okay, creating space for all foods is what is really important.

## **issue: body shaming at school**

According to the 2023 Body Kind Youth Survey Report, 77.7% of young people have received comments, or been teased, about their appearance. Of those, 77% said that this most frequently occurred at school. The report found that nearly 90% of young people said that schools need to do more to stop bullying and teasing around appearance.

### **strategy 1 - support for the young person who has been bullied**

Young people need to trust that they can turn to people within their school community for support. This means making it known to them where to go for support, who to speak to, and what kind of services are available to them. Young people should be reminded of this as often as possible, so they don't have to second guess where to go for support.

One of the most promising things I have noticed since I started This is Your Body is increased wellbeing support from wellbeing educators, counsellors, psychologists and in some cases therapy dogs. We need to acknowledge the progress. We need to celebrate the wins we have had, but also have an awareness that the problems aren't going away and there is still more work to be done.

### **strategy 2 - call it out**

Part of the issue surrounding body shaming is just how casually it's done. It's woven into conversation, and it is so normalised that if the comment isn't being directed at you, you might not even think twice about it. Commenting on a person's body is never okay.

Explicitly characterising 'body shaming' as a form of bullying in the school bullying policy will allow the school to take appropriate steps to address the behaviour. This includes any behaviours or comments made that make a young person feel inadequate about their body – be it their weight, skin, shape, colour, or overall appearance.

When a young person bullies another young person about their appearance, it may be because they too have experienced that kind of bullying. Conversations with the person who made the comment need to be done with compassion with the goal of understanding the reason behind the behaviour so they too can receive support if they need it.

### **PTO for more strategies**

## issue: body shaming at school

### strategy 3 - increase exposure to body diversity

When we step outside of the house, we get the opportunity to see people of all different heights, ethnicities, weights, hair colours and complexions. When young people open up TikTok or turn on their favourite show, they may not get access to that kind of diversity so we need to introduce them to environments or circumstances where they might get greater exposure to people with bodies and lived experiences that they may not otherwise see.

It is through doing this, that young people can see that there is more than one type of 'good' body out there, and that people are valued for far more than their appearance.

### strategy 4 - refrain from commenting on appetite or feeding preferences

Puberty is non-linear. Teens don't wake up one morning fully developed, and it can be super challenging for young people to navigate their changing body. The amount of food each young person needs will vary, so it is best not to make comments on how much or how little they are eating. Providing space for them to be attuned to their hunger and fullness cues, and the importance of honouring those, is a gentle way to encourage them to listen their body and what it needs.

### strategy 5 - focus on function

Young people spend a lot of time at school and this may be the only environment they're exposed to that promotes body appreciation and focusses on body function over appearance. Schools can have a really positive impact on a young person's body image. Hearing teachers express gratitude for their body, listen to them compliment the skills and qualities of others and watch them eat in a way that brings them joy and satisfaction demonstrates that no matter what a person looks like, they are worthy and loveable.

The key here is to focus on function – Your strong arms for carrying books to class, your legs for letting you walk around, your mind for helping you remember things and come up with new ideas.

## **issue: increased prevalence of eating disorders and disordered eating**

There are a multitude of reasons that a young person may develop an eating disorder, there is no one single cause. To give you some insight, there may be genetic vulnerability, psychological factors, and socio-cultural influences. Another factor is the impact of diet culture on young people, which is where these strategies are geared toward.

### **strategy 1 - remove the labels**

The way you speak about food in the classroom matters. Labels such as 'good', 'bad', 'naughty', 'sometimes', 'treat', 'cheat', 'clean' and 'guilt free' should not be used to describe the food you're eating or the food you observe your students eating. Labelling foods demonises some foods, while putting others on a pedestal.

Ultimately, we want to encourage growing teens to eat enough food to satisfy their hunger, rather than placing limitations on their choices because of our own (or society's) moral standing.

### **strategy 2 - limit appearance or food-based complements**

Compliments on appearance and food, both positive and negative have the potential to draw unwanted attention to a young person's body and food choices. At best, they may accept the complement. At worst, it can make them uncomfortable, upset, disappointed or propel them to continue engaging in potentially unhealthy behaviours in pursuit of further praise and compliments.

### **strategy 3 - model body appreciation**

This can be really hard, particularly if you struggle or have struggled with your body image in the past. As teachers, you have an incredible opportunity to model body appreciation. You have the ability to show them what it might look like for them to shift their focus away from appearance towards what their body can do. You can also invite them to explore new and delicious foods that they might not otherwise have access to in their own home through education and cooking demonstrations.

If we are hypercritical of our bodies and food choices, we risk normalising that behaviour.



# chapter 3

## how we help



## **we are on a mission...**

This is Your Body are on a mission to help all young people to build a joyful relationship with food and their bodies. We need your help to get there!

Did you know that 90% of Australian high school students want better body image support in schools? This is where we come in!

This is Your Body offers engaging, joyful and evidence-based presentations and workshops designed to educate teens about nutrition, body image, mental health, and wellbeing.

## working together

what we do

### presentations & workshops



**the joy of  
being me**

years 8-12



**let's talk about  
mental health**

years 8-11



**cook along &  
nutrition basics**

years 7-12



**how can I get my  
energy back?**

years 10-12



**fuelling  
active teens**

years 7-10

### in addition...

- \* building my own brand
- \* writing about personal journeys
- \* parent support

expect

### what we bring

- \* stories, activities, facts & snacks
- \* practical and interactive workshops
- \* knowledge & skills
- \* enthusiasm & joy
- \* evidence-based presentations



## I'd love to chat

For more information or to book a chat, go to  
our website [www.thisisyourbody.com.au](http://www.thisisyourbody.com.au)

# chapter 4

## recipes



# blueberry muffins



## recipe (makes 12)

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### ingredients:

- \* 1.5 cups almond meal
- \* 1 cup wholemeal flour
- \* 1 tsp baking powder
- \* 1 tsp baking soda
- \* 2 tsp cinnamon
- \* 1 pinch salt
- \* Zest of ½ orange
- \* Juice of ½ orange
- \* 3 eggs
- \* ¼ cup light olive oil
- \* ¼ cup maple syrup
- \* 1 tsp vanilla extract
- \* 1 cup frozen blueberries

### method:

1. Preheat oven to 180C.
2. Place patty pans in the muffin tray.
3. Pour your blueberries into a small bowl and add a tablespoon of the wholemeal flour to it (this is to ensure the blueberries don't sink to the bottom of the muffin). Set aside.

# blueberry muffins



## recipe (makes 12)

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### method:

4. In a large bowl mix together the almond meal, remaining wholemeal flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, salt and orange zest. Set aside.
5. Beat the eggs, olive oil, maple syrup, orange juice and vanilla until well combined.
6. Add the wet mixture into the large bowl and mixed until combined.
7. Fold in the blueberries.
8. Spoon the mixture evenly into the 12 patty pans.
9. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean.

Tip: Store in an airtight container for 5 days or you can freeze them and reheat them when you're ready for them.

# chocolate and seed granola



## recipe (makes 4 cups)

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### ingredients:

- \* 1 cup oats
- \* 1.5 cups buckwheat groats
- \* 1 cup mixed seeds (pumpkin, sunflower, flax).
- \* 2/3 cup cacao
- \* ½ tsp salt
- \* 1 tsp cinnamon
- \* ½ cup dates, pitted and roughly chopped
- \* 100g block chocolate, roughly chopped.
- \* 1/3 cup maple syrup
- \* ½ cup melted coconut oil

### method:

1. Line a tray with baking paper and preheat the oven to 180C with the fan on.
2. In a large bowl, mix together the oats, buckwheat groats, mixed seeds, cacao, salt, cinnamon, dates and chocolate. Set aside.
3. In a small bowl, mix together the maple syrup and coconut oil.



# chocolate and seed granola



## recipe (makes 4 cups)

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### method:

4. Pour the maple syrup mixture into the large bowl with the dry ingredients and mix until well combined.
5. Pour the mixture onto the lined baking tray in a single layer and bake for 20 minutes.
6. Remove from the oven and allow to cool for at least an hour.
7. Break up the granola into chunks and store in an airtight jar/container for up to two weeks.

Tip: There are two ways you can eat this. You can do what my brother does and eat it straight out of the container or from a zip lock bag. Alternatively, you can sprinkle it over some yogurt and top with fresh berries.

# honey & oat cookies



## recipe (makes 15)

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### ingredients:

- \* 1 cup rolled oats
- \*  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup shredded coconut
- \*  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup almond meal
- \* 1 cup wholemeal flour
- \* 1 tsp salt
- \* 1 tsp bicarbonate dissolved in  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup boiling water
- \*  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup olive oil
- \*  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup honey (or more if you want it a bit sweeter)

### method:

1. Preheat your oven to 180C and line a tray with baking paper.
2. In a small bowl mix together the bicarbonate and boiling water, set aside.
3. In a large bowl mix together the oats, shredded coconut, almond meal, flour, and salt.
4. Add the bicarbonate mixture, olive oil and honey to the dry ingredients and mix together until combined.

# honey & oat cookies



## recipe (makes 15)

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### method:

5. Spoon the mixture onto a baking tray (you can make the cookies any size you like!).
6. Bake for 15-20 minutes rotating the tray after 7 minutes.
7. Allow to cool completely before eating them all up or storing in an airtight container in the pantry.

# fruit & seed chocolate bars



## recipe (makes 16 chunks)

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### ingredients:

- \* 400g chocolate (milk or dark)
- \* 2 cups of roasted seeds (I used pumpkin and sunflower)
- \* 1 cup dates, pitted and chopped
- \* 1 cup dried apricots, chopped
- \* 1/2 cup desiccated coconut
- \* Zest of one orange
- \* Salt

### method:

1. In a small bowl add the chocolate in either a microwave or over a double boiler.
2. In a large bowl add in the roasted seeds, dates, dried apricots, desiccated coconut, orange zest and a pinch of salt.
3. Pour the melted chocolate into the bowl and mix until everything is well combined.

PTO

# fruit & seed chocolate bars



## recipe (makes 16 chunks)

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### method:

4. Line a baking tray with baking paper and pour in the rocky road mixture.
5. Place the tray in the fridge to set for 3-4 hours.
6. Cut into large chunks and store in an airtight container.

# roasted pumpkin hummus



## recipe (makes 4 cups)

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### ingredients:

- \* ¼ Jap pumpkin
- \* 2 400g cans chickpeas, rinsed
- \* 2 tbsp unhulled tahini
- \* Juice of ½ lemon
- \* 2 cloves garlic, roasted\*\*
- \* Olive oil
- \* Salt
- \* For serving: Salt flakes, chilli flakes, roasted hazelnuts or pepitas (about 1/4 cup)

### method:

1. Preheat oven to 180C with the fan on and line a baking tray with baking paper.
2. Cut the pumpkin into large wedges (leave the skin on) and place on the lined tray. Drizzle with 1-2 tbsp of olive oil and sprinkle salt over the top. Using your hands, make sure both sides of the pumpkin are well coated in the oil and salt. Bake for 40-45 minutes or until you can easily insert a fork into the pumpkin and it is lightly golden on the bottom.
3. Allow the pumpkin to cool for at least 30 minutes. Remove the flesh of the pumpkin from the skin.

# roasted pumpkin hummus



## recipe (makes 4 cups)

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### method:

4. In a food processor add in the flesh of the pumpkin, chickpeas, tahini, lemon juice, roasted garlic, cumin, 2 tbsp of olive oil and a tsp of salt. Blitz until it turns into a thick paste. If you don't want it to be as thick, continue adding olive oil until it reaches your desired texture. Taste for seasoning and adjust if necessary (you can also try adding in paprika, turmeric or ground coriander seeds for a different flavour).

5. Pour the dip into a bowl or large container and top with sea salt flakes, chilli flakes (optional) and your roasted hazelnuts/pepitas.

## chapter 3

# hungry for more?





# eBook teen lunch box eBook

Learn how to fill your teen's lunch box with food that is going to provide them with the energy they need to get through the day at school.

## inside you will find:

- \* loads of recipes
- \* meal ideas
- \* snacks you can get at the supermarket
- \* nutrition basics

## get it today

you can purchase it online at  
<https://www.thisisyourbody.com.au/>  
for just \$19.99



# 1:1 support body bop

Body bop is a 6-week 1:1 body appreciation and nutrition program for teens to reframe their relationship with food and their body.

## what can I help with?

- \* Always tired or catching colds
- \* Gut issues
- \* Sports nutrition
- \* Struggling with concentration/fatigue
- \* Irregular menstrual cycles
- \* Skin issues
- \* Poor sleep
- \* Struggling with your relationship with food and your body

## let's chat!

book in a 15 minute chat on my website ([www.thisisyourbody.com.au/lets-chat](http://www.thisisyourbody.com.au/lets-chat)) or send me a DM on Instagram





# family support sprinkle of joy

A collection of my FAVOURITE recipes that I have made again and again for me and my family!

## what do I get?

- ✳ A sit down chat where we put together a plan to get you to the shops, cutting things up in the kitchen & serving food with the help of your family too!
- ✳ Food & nutrition education videos
- ✳ A fun activity to get you and your family around the table chatting about things that wouldn't usually come up!
- ✳ 20 new recipes

## all for just...

You can access Sprinkle of Joy on your phone, laptop, or iPad ANYTIME for a one time payment of \$29.99



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