

Are Healthy Organic School Dinners on the Increase?

Jamie Olivers campaign to improve school dinners has galvanized politicians and parents alike. Even the Prime Minister has got involved saying that if changes are made it will only be a matter of months before British health, education and farming could be affected for the better. It could be one of the biggest food revolutions that England has ever seen. What is now needed is real commitment to this change and the funds from central government to back it up.

In a response to the plea from Jamie Oliver for a school dinner revolution, the Prime Minister has also said that school kitchens will be rebuilt and equipped so that food dishes can be cooked from scratch, while dinner ladies are given culinary skills to help them create appetizing menus.

From autumn 2006, school dinners in England will now exclude crisps, chocolate, fizzy drinks and low-quality meat. School children will be served at least two portions of fruit and vegetables with every meal and deep-fried food will be restricted to two portions per week. Meals that are high in salt and fat from the school canteen are also banned.

From a parents perspective, many want better school meals for their children and to swap junk food for both organic and local fresh meals but there has been pictures in the national newspapers of some parents taking dinner orders at the school gates and going and buying burgers, chips and other unhealthy meals and then delivering it to their children and others. This is clearly undermining what Jamie Oliver and the Prime Minister is trying to do, at school they have to wear a uniform and conform to certain rules, why cant this include eating green and healthy food? When they get home they can then wear and eat what they want. Its not going to kill them to eat 5 healthy meals per week is it? Wake up!!! This also reminds me of Ian Wrights (famous ex Arsenal football player in the UK) recent TV programme about unhealthy kids, he tried his hardest to engage them in exercise to reduce their obesity levels and when he was struggling he asked their parents to lead by example...many of them refused!

Back to healthy meals again-the Soil Association is encouraging the use of organic and local produce in school meals by running a Food for Life workshop at interested schools. It is a one day workshop for key stage two pupils. It is run by the Soil Associations education department. The workshop provides children with an opportunity to consider healthy eating, local and organic food through the theme of choices.

Schools also need information on good practice when sourcing healthy food for school meals. Schools can further improve childrens diets and increase their understanding of food by means of farm visits, and classroom activities. Wouldnt it be wonderful if all schools could have gardens so that kids can see that food doesnt come just from packets or appear miraculously in shops?

To encourage kids at home to eat healthily why not make soups with organic vegetables, while the children can make their own smoothies in the blender with organic yogurt or milk and fresh or frozen fruit. I bet the kids can taste the difference. All the kids in my family love organic yoghurts, and for snacks they have organic dried fruit.

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About the Author

Davinos Greeno works for the [organic food](#) and [ethical clothes](#) directory that lists 100s of Organic and Ethical Companies and we also have [Health Articles](#) for you to read or publish.