



Cadence Health invites schools to register their interest in participating in the Healthy Eating Coordinators program. Parents, teachers, parents associations and school staff are welcome to submit this application to their school to encourage involvement.

The HEC program is a revolutionary program that involves training a staff member to be an in-house healthy eating coordinator. Uniquely this program does not seek to 'reinvent the wheel'; rather it uses the extensive resources and programs already produced by government agencies. HECs are intensively trained on the fundamentals of nutrition so that they are able to use resources to influence the health of the entire school community.

HECs are involved in curriculum, canteen, information provision, mentoring, sporting and other school teams, and in supporting students, teachers and parents in healthy lifestyles.

What is the Healthy Eating program?

The program involves face-to-face training of a staff member in the principles of healthy eating and nutrition. This staff member (the 'Healthy Eating Coordinator' (HEC)) will be involved in issues related to the basic nutrition of staff, students, parents and canteen.

Duties that the HEC may be involved in include (but not limited to):

- Student, staff and parent nutrition, healthy eating and diet support
 - Talking directly about healthy eating and topical issues relating to diet and nutrition.
 - Sourcing experts to address specialised nutrition issues.
 - Suppling resources to teachers and assisting in curriculum update and reviews.
 - Offering referral details of relevant health professionals.
 - Sourcing copies of approved nutrition information such as posters, booklets, tip sheets and so on from the extensive web of providers (government and private).
 - Assisting in implementing government health initiatives for example Munch and Move or Crunch and Sip etc.
- Canteen reviews
 - Assisting in the implementation of government canteen recommendations i.e. Fresh Tastes NSW or similar.
 - Providing practical information to canteen staff, volunteers and committee regarding recipes, brands and nutrition tips.
 - Assisting in training staff and volunteers in practical application of healthy eating principles.
- Provision of information for school newsletters, staff newsletters, through to PDHPE class and take home activities and parent information nights.
 - Providing editorial and fast facts to address topical issues; clarify media mis-information and raise awareness of HEC service.

The training will be conducted over two days from 9am to 3pm in a small group of five participants (clusters of five schools). Cadence Health provides relevant training packs, materials and extensive nutrition resources for your school, qualified trainers (a nutritionist and a PDHPE teacher) and lunch for participants. We will also provide ongoing support and guidance to all HECs as long as they remain employed within an Australian school.

The aims of the program are to:

- **Maximise** student wellness, longevity, cognitive functioning, sporting performance, body weight, self-image and self-esteem.

- **Create a web of healthy eating support** and information within each school that is consistent, practical and achievable.
- **Reach out to both parents and children** and offer practical nutrition information to improve community health in the short and long-term.
- **Offer improved access** to basic dietary and nutritional information for teachers, students, parents, cooks and staff.
- **Bring together resources** currently available for example from National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), State Health Departments, Health Insite, Food Standards, Commonwealth Health Department, Food Safety, Anaphylaxis Australia and various State and Federal agencies plus potentially the commercial sector.
- **Reduce the cost** associated with accessing dietary and nutritional assistance.
- Ultimately see schools as one of the vehicles for improved community health and in reducing health care cost thereby incentivising **increased funding of schools**.

Which schools can apply?

All schools across Australia can apply, from preparatory and primary to high school, public, catholic and independent schools.

We are currently rolling the program out across NSW; however we are taking applications across all States and Territories and will confirm details with schools who apply. Schools that run from kindergarten to year 12 and have separate junior and senior schools should submit a staff member for HEC training for each school as often policies differ across the two schools.

Why do we need the HEC program?

Almost 25% of children in Australia are now considered either overweight or obese. While overweightness in children has doubled, obesity has tripled. Almost all types of food allergies are on the rise. Very few children eat even 15% of the minimum vegetable intake. In NSW a little over 40% of children between the ages of 5–12 drink one or more cups a day of soft drink (remember many have up to 9 teaspoons of sugar). So not only do our children eat more energy dense nutrient poor foods, they also move less.

Healthy eating and activity require a consistent, regular, judgement free message. Our schools are the perfect vehicle for improving not only student learning and health outcomes but the health of our entire community. The success of environmental programs in our schools has given rise to a generation of savvy children who are now informed consumers influencing our planet and future. The HEC program is set to be the equivalent for healthy eating. Our students will be the healthy eating parents of the future, with informed grandparents it is a recipe for success.

Why choose the HEC program?

The HEC program has been designed to be totally inclusive of the entire school community, it is cyclic in nature so the knowledge shared permeates the school and is not transitory.

The HEC program differs from other initiatives on many levels. It is in no way competitive with the dozens of excellent government programs, it is in fact set to tap into these and ensure their longevity. Figure 1 below demonstrates ways that the HEC will lead to ongoing health improvements within your school in ways that have not been done before. Your school will be a standout school by having an HEC.

Figure 1 Areas of difference between the HEC program and other initiatives

Current situation	The HEC program
Many initiatives target only selected groups in the school.	Addresses almost all areas of nutritional concern , from overweight, lunchboxes, allergies to sports nutrition.

<p>Many initiatives are short lived.</p> <p>Many of the fantastic resources produced by governmental agencies are not well marketed and distributed.</p> <p>Initiatives involve external people working with schools.</p> <p>Often initiatives are at a State level and are not able to cross boundaries.</p> <p>Information and training tends not to be in depth enough for real and permanent changes to be made across the whole school.</p> <p>While of course teaching students is a major focus within our education institutions, we found that often parents and teachers were ignored in the health outcomes of initiatives.</p>	<p>Has ongoing support and mentoring to ensure its long-term success.</p> <p>Includes extensive programs and resources with training on how to access and implement them.</p> <p>Trains an in-house member of staff to be the central resource for the entire school community.</p> <p>Provides national training with consistent content along with State/Territory specific information.</p> <p>Training is extensive, practical and expansive, providing a thoroughly trained member of staff who also has the support of our team of professionals.</p> <p>Views generational health improvements come from teaching the students and the students to teach as well as informing parents and all of those involved with the school.</p> <p>Everyone learns when they are involved with a school. The HEC program views schools as vehicles for social change, but to do this the whole school community must be involved.</p>
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What are the fundamental healthy eating messages?

- We focus on both honouring a child's right to choose but also that what we offer our children to eat is central to their health.
- It is important to get the foundations of a diet right; healthy eating is about variety of healthy food.
- Healthy eating is also about being real, offering common-sense, practical and convenient options and choices for students, parents and canteen. We train HECs to work within the experiences of people and build on the positive aspects.
- Communication is influential in how well HECs input is accepted. HECs are carefully instructed on how to work with and for members of their school community and to involve all stakeholders.

HEC role in practice

What can you expect from your HECs?

- Requests to address staff meetings and to have the HEC role noted in relevant school communications.
- Requests to have regular slots in newsletters for nutrition tip were agreed as a most desirable starting point.
- Sourcing copies of a tip sheets for example from the Health Department or Cadence Health and distribute them to students to take home.
- Open up dialogue with canteen staff and work with them on current reviews.
- Organise time to talk with students about healthy eating.
- Seek to address meetings, review curriculum and meet with canteen staff.
- Source the most current dietary and physical activity guidelines, resources and booklets. Your HEC is also likely to access government backed initiatives such as Munch and Move for example and look at ways these can be implemented where relevant.

How will your school benefit from its involvement?

The program's success would be reflected in lowered nutritionally-related obstacles to learning, and nutritionally-related unwellness of students.

Other advantages might include:

- A **trained and newly motivated member of staff** able to problem-solve fundamental nutritional and dietary issues that your school may face.
- A HEC familiar with the **extensive resources** available to schools to support staff, parents and students in health from good eating.
- **Pooling of State and Federal resources.** This has never been done; our participating schools are the founding schools. Some of the agencies who provide resources in hard copy and soft include Canteen Associations, the National Health and Medical Research Council, NSW Health Department, Food Standards, Food Safety Association, the Better Health Channel, SA Health Promotion Unit and Dental Service, Anaphylaxis Australia, the Royal Childrens Hospital and the list continues to grow.
- **Strong cohesiveness and pride** experienced across the school community from the extended support and care. You will be able to demonstrate the proactive nature of your school via these improvements by linking them to the annual school report and or school management plan.
- If appropriate, **media coverage** of this program.

What will your school receive?

Your HEC receives a training folder which contains extensive resources for your school:

- An extensive nutrition text/**workbook**.
- A manual for access to our **online facilities** for HECs which holds extensive web links and reports from State and Federal health agencies and healthy eating and activity initiatives and tip sheets from both health agencies and Cadence Health's series of childhood nutrition tip sheets.
- Extensive government **nutrition resources** such as posters, booklets, fliers, tip sheets and more. HECs are trained on how to tap into these resources and apply to their schools needs.
- A **CD-ROM** with nutrition policies, guidelines, many State and Federal healthy eating and staying active government initiatives, tip sheets, reports.
- Copies of all the Cadence Health **kid's healthy eating tip sheets** for teachers, parents and canteen.

Many of the resources and web links provide **teaching resources** to ensure current knowledge is used and to assist in **curriculum goals**. There are also a number of **web links for students** to be directed to also. So the whole program is designed to provide support at all levels within your school community.

HECs are encouraged to join **mailing lists** and to source copies of relevant resources that can be put to positive use within their school. You may like to ask your HEC to bring the kit to a staff meeting so that it can be accessed as a resource to all staff.

Staying in-touch, mentoring and ongoing contact

We will stay in-touch with HECs and provide mentoring opportunities. The cyclic nature of the programs life is critical to its long-term success.

Retraining

Cadence Health will provide updating sessions as well as retraining at schools that have successfully undergone the program to account for changes in public health knowledge and policy, as well as staff changes at HEC program schools.

What are the initial requirements?

How does my school join the Healthy Eating Coordinators program?

We conduct training sessions in clusters or groups of five participants. You may form your own cluster by completing the cluster registration form attached. You are welcome to select the host school.

Alternatively register as an individual school and we will assign your school to a local cluster. In the case where you are assigned your cluster group we will also assign the hosting school.

Once you have completed the registration form simply fax it to us on 02 9949 5712. We will contact you as soon as we receive your form and advise you of the next step.

What will you need to do next?

1. Start the process to select your HEC. In most cases approaching teachers in the PDHPE department would be ideal, or a teaching staff member with a strong interest or background in health. We recommend where the school has K1 to year 12 students that two HECs be considered, one for the junior school the other for the senior school. This will help with the different policies that apply to each.
 - In order for your school to help select an HEC, upon registration we will forward an introduction letter and draft position description to provide to interested staff members. We are also happy for prospective HECs to contact us directly for more details.
2. Your principal may need to consider making the HEC role an extra-curricula position for your HEC and transitioning them from current extra-curricula to this new role.
3. To approve of a set of outcome criteria to jointly determine how your school can view the programs achievements.

The host school would be required to:

1. Provide access to a training room to seat seven people.
2. Approve Cadence Health trainers and teachers from four other schools to be permitted access as a visitor to the school.
3. Provide access for a local café to deliver lunch to the group.
4. Possibly provide access to local press for pictures (if relevant).

Fees and your funding options

The fee for the program is \$650 per participant; this is totally inclusive of the training manual, all resources, lunch, ongoing support, website access and GST. We recognise that our learning institutions are financially stretched; we have an ever increasing list of funding options starting with the following:

1. The Relief Teacher Grant – Department of Education
2. Northern Sydney Seeding Grants Application 2009 (opens April 2009) - The Northern Beaches Health Promotion
3. Woolworths Fresh Food Kids Grant (opens late January 2009)

Feel free to discuss this process directly with us, we are also happy to assist your school in completing the applications to ensure the criteria's are meet.

What the HEC training is not about?

The program is not designed to train instructors to offer dietary advice that involves diagnosis, treatment options or the taking of supplements. It is firmly set within the safety of a healthy eating frame work.

Where can you get more details?

For further information about the Healthy Eating Coordinators Program go to www.cadencehealth.com.au/HEC.htm or contact:

Emma Donnan
Project Manager,
T: 0403 835 846, F: 02 9949 5712, E: info@cadencehealth.com.au

Healthy Eating Coordinators Program for Schools Cluster Registration Form 2008-9

Use this form to register a cluster of schools

Region		Fax completed form to Cadence Health on 02 9949 5712
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These schools would like to register as a cluster in the HEC program. Five schools are required.	
1. (Contact school)	4.
2.	5.
3.	

School 1 details CONTACT SCHOOL					
School name					
Address					
Principal				Principal approved?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Contact name					
School fax					
Type of school	Public	Independent	Catholic	Primary	Secondary Both
School 2 details					
School name					
Address					
Principal				Principal approved?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Contact name					
School fax					
Type of school	Public	Independent	Catholic	Primary	Secondary Both
School 3 details					
School name					
Address					
Principal				Principal approved?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Contact name					
School fax					
Type of school	Public	Independent	Catholic	Primary	Secondary Both
School 4 details					
School name					
Address					
Principal				Principal approved?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Contact name					
School fax					
Type of school	Public	Independent	Catholic	Primary	Secondary Both
School 5 details					
School name					
Address					
Principal				Principal approved?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Contact name					
School fax					
Type of school	Public	Independent	Catholic	Primary	Secondary Both

Healthy Eating Coordinators Program for Schools Individual School Registration Form 2008-9

Use this form to register as an individual school

FAX TO CADENCE HEALTH ON 02 9949 5712

Region	
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Our school would like to register for the HEC program.						
School details						
School name						
Address						
Principal			Principal approved? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes			
Contact name						
School fax						
Type of school	Public	Independent	Catholic	Primary	Secondary	Both