

Crunch&Sip[®]—increasing fruit, veg and water consumption in rural and remote WA schools

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Western Australia is achieving success with students eating more fruit and vegetables in remote Aboriginal and regional primary schools through implementation of the Crunch&Sip[®] program.

Crunch&Sip[®] is a set break to eat fruit or vegetables and drink water in the classroom. Students 're-fuel' with fruit or vegetables during the morning or afternoon and sip water throughout the day. Through Crunch&Sip[®], schools demonstrate commitment to nutrition education by making links with the curriculum and creating a supportive school environment. The Crunch&Sip[®] break is a simple way to ensure students are eating at least one serve of fruit or vegetables each day. Well-nourished children concentrate and perform better. Their mental, physical and social function is also improved.

Parents provide children with fruit or vegetables for the break. However, access and availability of fruit and vegetables may be a barrier for rural and remote communities, so schools are encouraged to use Foodbank WA's School Breakfast Program to source fruit for the Crunch&Sip[®] break, therefore qualifying them to become a certified Crunch&Sip[®] school. Both fresh and tinned fruit are supplied for the break. We intend to approach large corporations requesting sponsorship for the transportation of fruit and vegetables to the regional and remote sites.

As a result of the program, students are starting to influence their families by requesting fruit and vegetables from home, which involves parents purchasing them for the Crunch&Sip[®] break and for home meals. Teachers have reported improvements in student behaviour and concentration as a result of Crunch&Sip[®].

There are over 164 certified Crunch&Sip[®] schools in WA, including 70 rural and three remote Aboriginal schools. Plans are under way to roll out Crunch&Sip[®] in New South Wales and South Australia.

This presentation will provide an overview of Crunch&Sip[®] and case studies of certified Crunch&Sip[®] remote Aboriginal schools.