

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**EDMONTON DAD SETS THE HIGH BAR IN AUSTRALIA’S HEALTHIER LUNCHBOXES QUEST**

Last year’s winner of *Australia’s Healthier Lunchboxes* competition,Edmonton dad Crios O’Hare is calling on parents to think outside the (lunch) box, with this year’s contest offering families and schools the chance to share in a record $18,000 prize pool.

The annual healthy lunchbox campaign delivered by children’s health promotion charity Life Ed in partnership with Woolworths, aims to empower and educate parents and kids to create healthy habits, with lunchbox meals accounting for around a third of a child’s daily nutritional needs.

Crios, a fitness coach for Cairns youngsters, was one of 10 nationwide winners last year. His daughter Niamh’s impressive entry, featuring homemade granola, hummus and a colourful mix of fresh vegetables and fruit, wowed the judges.

“Niamh was excited to part of the competition,” Crios said. “She loves choosing what goes into her lunchbox and looks forward to what she is going to eat during the day.

“Preparation is key. We plan on weekends to make weekday mornings easier, prepping snacks ahead and freezing them. Buying in bulk, like larger bags of popcorn, also helps save money. Whole foods are simple and effective - not every lunch has to be an elaborate cooked meal.”

Life Ed Queensland CEO Michael Fawsitt said the four-week *Australia’s Healthier Lunchboxes* campaign builds on Life Ed’s nutrition-focused modules, helping children understand that healthy choices are vital for both their minds and bodies.

“Children learn best by doing, which is why hands-on initiatives like this are so powerful,” Mr Fawsitt said.

“It takes learning beyond the classroom, encouraging families to work together to embed healthy habits. What kids eat today impacts their health both now and in the future.”

To enter, parents simply snap a photo of their child’s healthier lunchbox and upload it to the [Life Ed Queensland website](https://lifeeducationqld.org.au/australias-healthier-lunchboxes/).

This year, six families will each win a $1000 Woolworths e-Gift card, with their child’s school also receiving a $2,000 Woolworths e-Gift card.

**Key dates:**

* **Entries open: 3 February**
* **Entries close: 28 February**
* **Judging: [date pending]**
* **Winners announced: [date pending]**

As part of the *Australia’s Healthier Lunchboxes* initiative, parents and schools can access free resources and activities from Healthy Harold and Woolworths. These include [budget-friendly recipes](https://lifeeducationqld.org.au/australias-healthier-lunchboxes/) and fun, interactive activities to help kids get excited about healthier eating.

“A nutritious lunch is essential for young people to help them thrive at school and at home,” said Sarah De La Mare, Woolworths Head of Community and Sponsorships.

“As Today’s Fresh Food People, we’re committed to making healthier easier for families and communities. Programs like Free Fruit for Kids, which has provided more than 160 million pieces of fruit to children in Australia and New Zealand, are just one way we support healthier lifestyles.

“We also recognise that parents are busy, and coming up with lunchbox ideas and balancing the household budget can be a challenge. So, this year, we’ve also released new kids’ lunchbox recipes under $5 per serve to help busy parents balance budgets while packing nutritious meals,” Ms De La Mare said.

**ENDS**

About Life Ed Queensland

Life Ed Queensland is the largest non-government provider of preventative health education for children and young people.

With the help of iconic mascot Healthy Harold and a team of specialist educators, Life Ed has been empowering children and young people to make safer, healthier choices for 38 years in Queensland, and more than 45 years nationally.

Each year, around 180 000 children across 1,000 schools and early learning centres take part in Life Ed's programs, which cover topics including nutrition and exercise, drugs and alcohol, vaping, bullying prevention, respectful relationships, consent, personal safety, mental health and wellbeing.

Life Ed Queensland also delivers Talk About It – the state's largest puberty, relationships and sexual health education program – reaching more than 50,000 students annually.

<https://www.lifeedqld.org.au/>

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