



# SOUL FOOD COMMUNITY CAFÉ

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## CASE STUDY

Soul Food Community Café is a not-for-profit café owned and operated by the Soul Food Christian Community. The aim of the café is to provide a comfortable space for real connection amongst people, with a particular focus on families and the local community. The venue aims to be family friendly by providing a useful space for parents and young children. The team includes both paid staff and volunteers, and the food is described by the manager as ‘affordable and practical’.

### Registering with the healthy kids menu initiative

Prior to signing up to the Healthy Kids Menu initiative, the café was looking into the idea of healthy choices on their menu because it was perceived as a need for the community. By chance, the café was contacted by a Healthy Kids Menu team member in 2017. This was followed up by a face-face meeting to discuss the initiative, registration process, and development of a healthy kids menu. Following some back and forth contact, menu changes were put in place and the Soul Food Community Café was officially registered with the initiative.

The café manager admitted that they weren’t initially sure what changes to make to their existing menu in order to comply with the Healthy Kids Menu Code of Practice. However, a Healthy Kids Menu team member made some simple suggestions and provided assistance and guidance throughout the registration process. The main incentive for registering was that as a community-based café, they felt it was important to showcase their commitment towards the health of the community.

Soul Food Community Cafe has an established decision-making process for menu changes. The café manager and staff generate ideas and bring these ideas to the core team. This ‘core team’ run the new ideas through their criteria for menu items, including considerations such as ‘Does the recipe use existing ingredients? Does it contribute to food wastage?’. These new ideas are then tested out on a specials board, before the final decision is made for the item to be included on the menu.



### Implementation

The café has made use of the Healthy Kids Menu promotional materials provided to them, including stickers, table toppers and posters. During the initial launch, staff posted on their Facebook page about joining the initiative which they believe gained traction (e.g. lots of 'likes'); but it is difficult to determine whether this promotion led to an increase in business. They have however received positive feedback from customers who have visited the cafe because they 'saw they had healthy kids' options available'.

As a not-for-profit café, Soul Food Community café generally doesn't do much promoting as there is no budget for this and limited time available to spend on it. Like most hospitality venues, Facebook is the main promotional tool for its ease of use and affordability.

### Summary

Soul Food Community Cafe remains a part of the Healthy Kids Menu initiative and has used their involvement to expand on the services they offer, including hosting educational dietitian-run workshops in the café.

They believe that other venues may be hesitant to participate in the initiative due to a perception of customer disinterest, a poor fit with their existing menu structure, or difficulty coming up with new healthy menu ideas.

Soul Food Community Café nonetheless believes the initiative helps parents make healthy choices for kids, creates awareness around healthy eating, and the venue enjoys being able to send the message that 'they care about kids'.

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### SOUL FOOD COMMUNITY CAFÉ

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[soulfoodcommunity.org.au](http://soulfoodcommunity.org.au)

For more information

Wellbeing SA  
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