

# Bildungsthemen

The magazine by Phorms Education



## The family meal as a cultural heritage

Eating culture from a historical  
and social perspective P. 10



phorms  
education

BILINGUAL NURSERIES AND SCHOOLS IN  
**BERLIN    FRANKFURT    HAMBURG**  
**MUNICH    NECKARSULM/HEILBRONN**

# 'A nutritious, healthy diet is fundamental to physical and mental wellbeing'



Recent years have seen a new focus on nutrition in public debate. This is a complex issue, as it involves factors such as health, culture, and general wellbeing. It is of particular relevance for educational institutions. First of all, it's important that young children and adolescents in all-day education are provided with food of the highest quality. Furthermore, there are now frequent calls for nutrition to be made a core part of the curriculum, so that knowledge of this important topic can be entrenched in the long term. I'm very optimistic that we will see progress in this area in the years to come. After all, one thing is clear: a nutritious, healthy diet is fundamental to physical and mental wellbeing, particularly during adolescence. With that in mind, we have explored the topic from a variety of perspectives, looking at culture, health, and – of course – education.

Beyond nutrition, we've got plenty more to discover in this issue. For instance, we take a look at the fascinating life and times of our head of school in Berlin Mitte, and we have news of an incredible award for the Josef-Schwarz-Schule in Baden-Württemberg. Last but not least, we report on an interesting role reversal in Munich, where students supervised their teachers as they played sport.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of our magazine.  
Best wishes,

Dr Carsten Breyde

## MAIN TOPIC

# The family meal as a cultural heritage



10

Learning from cultural history: why we eat what we eat  
and what it means to us

**From page 10**

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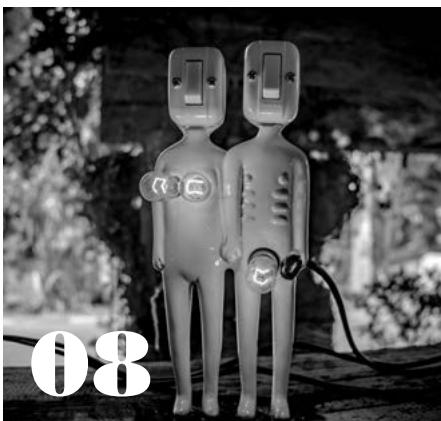
Any pronouns used refer equally to all genders.



#### Find Mr Phox!

Once again, there's a red fox hiding in the pages of Bildungsthemen.  
Can you find him?

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# Did you know?

## Polyunsaturated satisfaction

Olive oil has long had a reputation as the healthiest vegetable oil. But it actually contains a lower percentage of healthy polyunsaturated fatty acids than **rapeseed** and **thistle** (also known as safflower) oil. These both clock in at more than 60 per cent, putting them among the most nutritious vegetable oils. **Soybean** and **peanut** oil offer a touch of exotic flavour. Their polyunsaturated fatty acid content lies somewhere between that of olive and rapeseed oil. **Peanut** oil can be heated to higher temperatures than any other edible oil without developing compounds that are harmful to humans. This makes it perfect for frying and roasting.

<https://www.livescience.com/59893-which-cooking-oils-are-healthiest.html>  
(from 21 July 2017)

SPICES PROMOTE WELLBEING!

## A pharmacy of spices

**Turmeric** stimulates bile production and helps you digest fatty foods – just like **anise**, **fennel**, and **caraway**.

**Caraway tea** also alleviates stomach cramps, bloating, and feelings of fullness.

**Saffron** has a detoxifying, antidepressant effect, and is also anti-inflammatory.

**Ginger** not only helps with migraines, but also dizziness, chronic coughs, and arthritis.

**Chilli** can be used to help with sore throats, muscle tension, and acute back pain.

• • •  
**However, spices only offer long-lasting health benefits when consumed regularly.**

<https://www.teacoffeespiceofindia.com/spice/spice-health-lifestyle>  
(from 7 January 2020)

## Happiness without getting addicted

Many people say they're addicted to snacking on sweet things. And it's true that chocolate contains addictive substances – just not enough of them to truly trigger addiction. What chocolate does do is provide the body with serotonin, the 'happiness hormone'. Unfortunately, its serotonin concentration isn't high enough to lift your mood for long periods of time. The feeling of happiness you experience when eating chocolate has more to do with the pleasant childhood memories it brings back.

<https://psychcentral.com/lib/does-chocolate-addiction-exist/>  
(from 18 October 2018)



## Can coffee harm your health?

The bitter-tasting compounds in coffee attack the stomach lining, which some people find difficult to tolerate. People with sensitive stomachs can try switching to espresso – it's roasted for longer, which means it contains less acid. The idea that coffee removes liquid from the body has been proven to be a myth: you can safely count it as part of your daily quota of fluids. Despite its caffeine content, it's perfectly safe for healthy adults to drink two cups of filter coffee one after the other – and up to four cups over the course of a day. Coffee has been proven to reduce the risk of diabetes. It's only people with very high blood pressure who should reduce their intake – but they still don't have to give it up entirely.

<https://time.com/4768860/is-coffee-good-for-you/>  
(from 5 May 2017)

A RECIPE  
FOR KIDS OF ALL  
AGES

## INGREDIENTS

- 100 g buckwheat
- 150 g oats (gluten-free also available)
- 200 ml water
- 4 tbsp coconut oil for the dough and extra to grease the tin
- 2 tsp herb salt
- 4 tbsp sesame seeds
  
- 300 g spinach
- 1 leek
- 2 stalks of celery
  
- 150 ml plant milk (e.g. oat milk)
- 1 tsp tapioca starch
- 2 tsp yeast flakes
- 1 tsp Himalayan salt
- 1 tbsp tahini



Photos: Anna Fuchs

# Mini quiches

*with spinach, leek and celery*

## THIS IS WHAT YOU DO

Grind the buckwheat and oats one after the other in a blender to create a smooth flour. (Alternatively, ready-to-use buckwheat flour may be used. Oats can be also ground in a small blender.) Mix the flour with lukewarm water, the coconut oil, a teaspoon of herb salt, and the sesame seeds, then knead until the dough is smooth. Place the dough in the refrigerator until it's firm and malleable again.

For the filling, dice the leek and celery. Melt the coconut oil in a pan. Braise the leek and celery and add salt. Finally, add the spinach and braise briefly.

For the sauce, mix the plant milk, tapioca starch, yeast flakes, tahini and Himalayan salt in a small blender or with a hand blender. Take the dough out of the fridge and spread a portion the size of a table tennis ball evenly over the base and sides of each cup of a muffin tin. Then fill with the vegetables. Top with the sauce and sprinkle with sesame seeds.

Bake in the oven at 170°C for about 35 minutes.

## ABOUT ME

I'm Anna Fuchs, the woman behind the 'Blattgold' food blog. I'm a communication and media scientist, graphic designer, mother of three, vegan, passionate cook, fan of wild herbs and oils and nutritionist based in Berlin. In 2016, my family and I moved to the idyllic Cotswolds in central England for a year. It was during this creative time-out that I devoted all my energy to baking, cooking and creating vegan food. That heralded the start of 'Blattgold'. Now, I also share my experience and knowledge as part of cooking courses and provide people with individual support on their path to a healthy, sugar-free life.'



→ [www.annas-blattgold.com/en](http://www.annas-blattgold.com/en)

# A school day in Greece

## LOOKING TO THE WIDER WORLD:

*Ilias, 9 years old, year 4, from Athens, Greece*

### **Which school do you attend?**

**Ilias** Athener Schule, a private Greek-German school in Athens, Greece. It's a primary school that also includes a kindergarten. We learn German on a daily basis, starting in kindergarten. Schools in Greece are obliged to follow the education ministry's curriculum, but we also use our own books. What makes the school special is that it is the only school in Greece run by a board made up of parents. There is no single owner. Instead, it belongs to a Greek-German education group that consists of parents.

### **How big is your school and your class?**

My school is relatively small and my class only has 17 children in it. In my year, there are two classes, but in my sister's year, there is only one class.



### **What do you like the most about your school?**

My friends. I also like all of my teachers, they are all very nice.

### **Which languages do you speak in your lessons?**

Greek, German and English.

### **Do you have to wear a school uniform?**

No, students don't have to wear school uniforms in Greece.

### **What is your favourite subject?**

Maths, because I like numbers and calculating. I also like physical education because I enjoy playing volleyball, the exercises we do and the free playtime at the end.

### **Is there a subject you don't really like?**

No, I like them all.

### **How far away is your school?**

Not far, it takes about 10 minutes for my parents to drive me there. In Greece, most kids go to school either by car or with the school bus. Kids my age don't walk to school by themselves.

### **Do you like your school building?**

I like it a lot because it's small and has coloured walls.

### **Who is your favourite teacher and why?**

My Greek and maths teacher because she's a very, very happy person.

### **What do you want to be when you grow up?**

I haven't decided yet. Maybe a banker, because I like studying the details on banknotes and calculating money. My grandmother used to work in a bank and she has told me a lot about it.

### **Do you use computers in school?**

Yes, during computer class. Our teachers use computers with an interactive board. Most classrooms have interactive boards.

### **Is there something in particular at your school that you really like or dislike?**

I like the fact that it is a small school and all the students are friendly towards each other. ♦

# — What are you reading? —



**PRIDE AND  
PREJUDICE**  
*by Jane Austen*

I love reading this over 200-year-old book again and again – whether in the original English, or in German or French. In this novel, which is around 500 pages long, the reader is transported to another world – to a conservative era in England when women, according to the author, had just one primary concern: to marry well.

The Bennet family, with five daughters and no sons, are at the centre of *Pride and Prejudice*. According to the inheritance rules that existed at that time, upon the father's death, the family home would be passed on to the next male relative, and the mother and her daughters would be put out on the street. The mother therefore wants to see her daughter Elizabeth marry the stupid cousin who will one day inherit the house. This way, the family would continue to have a roof over their heads. But Elizabeth has very different plans in mind.

I love the book so much that I even wrote a play based on it and performed it with my amateur drama group. Since then, my version of *Pride and Prejudice* has been performed by secondary schools all over Germany.



**TIP FROM**  
**Elke Brumm,**  
whose sons are  
in years 11 and 9 at  
the Phorms Campus  
Berlin Süd



**LITTLE PEOPLE,  
BIG DREAMS –  
FRIDA KAHLO**  
*by María Isabel  
Sánchez Vegara*

I adore Frida Kahlo and this book is full of interesting facts about her.

It begins in Mexico in 1907 with baby Frida. Her father was German and her mother was Mexican. From the day she was born, she was very special. When she was 6 years old, an illness made her right leg as thin as a stick. But Frida didn't care – she liked to be different.

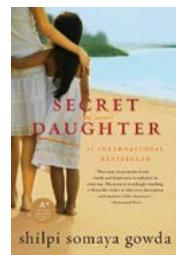
When she was 18, she suffered another big misfortune: she was in a bus accident. For a long time, she wasn't allowed to walk. She was in pain, as she had always been throughout her life. The illness destroyed her dream of becoming a doctor. When she was bored one day, she started to draw her foot. Later, she drew self-portraits in front of a mirror. She became a better artist with every picture she drew.

When she was allowed to walk again, she showed her pictures to Diego Rivera, a Mexican artist. They fell in love and got married, but they also had fights. Frida drew about sadness, pain and happiness. She eventually became famous. Before her first exhibition in Mexico, she was no longer able to stand up. She moved her bed to the gallery and lay there during the opening.

Her motto was: 'Life is a party, my friends, let's celebrate it.' Frida died on 13 July 1954. Many people adore her for her style and her courage.



**TIP FROM**  
**Asya,**  
who is in year 4  
at the Phorms  
Campus Berlin  
Mitte



**SECRET DAUGHTER \***  
*by Shilpi Somaya  
Gowda*

This novel consists of two plot strands. One takes place in India and tells the story of married couple Kavita and Jasu. Kavita is pregnant, but the baby is a girl, which means she's not allowed to keep it. When her second child Asha also turns out to be a girl, Kavita gives her up to an orphanage. It breaks her heart.

In the second plot strand, US-based doctors Somer and Kris discover that they aren't able to have their own children, and decide to adopt a child from India, Krishna's home country. There, Somer and Kris meet little Asha. They want to take her back to the US with them. Somer knows that it won't be an easy path to tread, but she hopes that love will overcome all obstacles.

Indian-Canadian author Shilpi Somaya Gowda's *Secret Daughter* is a sensitive and moving novel that takes a critical approach to social issues. The contrast between the two cultures gave the story a particular element of tension and reminded me of the cultural diversity to be found among Phorms's school community.

\* Read in German



**TIP FROM**  
**Astrid Simon,**  
head of primary  
school at the  
Phorms Taunus  
Campus

# From Kama Sutra to football



BY  
**Justus**

*Justus is 17 years old and in year 11 at the Phorms Campus Berlin Süd. He tells us how easy-going a sex education workshop turned out to be. Happy reading!*

Anyone visiting the Phorms Campus Berlin Süd in the last few weeks may have been surprised to find themselves crossing paths with groups of students carrying condoms and vulva stickers. But people who've been part of such groups themselves know exactly what it's all about. Recently, all students from years seven to twelve took part in a sex education workshop led by the BiKo Berlin team. BiKo Berlin is run by sex educators Agi Malach and David Schulz. Together, they offer workshops, further education and training, and parents' evenings on the topic of sex education.

The initial introductions were much more entertaining than the usual name-age-hobby thing, and we knew right away that this wouldn't be the typical sex ed class that we'd been used to from primary school on. Next, we familiarised ourselves with the rules of the workshop. Firstly, it would take place on a first-name basis. Secondly, there were no taboo words – so long as we weren't hurting anyone with them. And thirdly, anyone could leave the room at any time if they weren't interested in a particular topic or if it made them feel uncomfortable. These little details created



an incredibly relaxed and open atmosphere during the workshop, as though we were just discussing the topics with friends. Being able to use first names made our interactions with Agi and David much more personal. Communication was also easier because we didn't have to stop all the time to think about whether we were using the right words, and no-one was forced to be there – although the proportion of teenagers who don't want to talk about sex is usually pretty low. If only school was always this easy ...

Throughout the whole workshop, Agi and David succeeded in getting us involved and conveying all kinds of information, for example with the help of wood and fabric models of penises and vulvas. A simple brainstorming exercise on the whiteboard somehow led us from words like 'Kama Sutra' and 'pornography' to 'advertising' and 'football'. Mind maps on the theme of sexuality inspired us to carry out our own small-scale version of the current highly controversial gender debate.

Shortly before the end of the workshop, we could choose whether to attend the 'boys' group' with David or the 'girls' group' with Agi. Although we'd just been having a heated discussion about the existence of many different genders, we found it pretty easy to divide ourselves up here. In the 'boys' group', we then had the opportunity to anonymously ask questions that we might not have wanted to raise with the girls around. And to mark the occasion, David demonstrated what can happen if you put an oil-based cream such as Vaseline on a blown-up condom. These creams are often mistakenly used as lubricants. I can tell you one thing: don't do it!

At the end, we were given free condoms ... and crossed paths with a couple of bemused visitors on the Phorms Campus Berlin Süd. ♦

# Jana Stölting – Heading for new horizons

TEXT

**Anna Luszczakiewicz**

*Jana Stölting became head of school at the Phorms Campus Berlin Mitte in January 2019*



Photo: Phorms Campus Berlin Mitte

Music and reading have been Jana Stölting's great passions for as long as she can remember. Which is why she chose to start a degree in music in the 1980s – but then everything changed. 'I grew up in East Germany, and after the Wall came down, I suddenly had to completely rethink my future and my goals,' says Stölting. As a way of giving herself unlimited access to literature, she began studying German and history with a teacher training component at the Freie Universität Berlin. 'I used to have so many books in mind that I wanted to read but couldn't,' recalls Stölting.

When she took her first job at a private school in Berlin, she discovered 'how much fun you can have as a teacher, how much joy and, above all, how much potential for innovation there is.' She valued working for a school that gave her room for freedom and creativity rather than prescribing 'tradition, conformity, and bureaucracy'. After four years, during which Stölting studied drama alongside working, she and her husband decided to move abroad. There was a vacancy at the Deutsche Internationale Schule Johannesburg that exactly matched Stölting's academic profile. She originally intended to stay for just two years – but ended up staying for 14. While in South Africa, Stölting completed a part-time distance-learning master's in school management.

Just as Stölting was looking for a new leadership challenge, the Phorms Campus Berlin Mitte was advertising for a new head of school. 'I knew immediately that it was a school I could identify with, where I could be a trustworthy head and introduce new ideas,' says Stölting. She has been in charge of strategic and operational management at the Berlin campus since the beginning of 2019. She also runs the secondary school. 'As a bilingual, multi-cultural school, it is a reflection of Berlin Mitte for me,' says Stölting. 'Children from different cultures can become extremely well-integrated under the guiding principles of tolerance, respect and openness. The school is home to lots of passionate colleagues who hold precisely those values.'

Together with other department heads and school management, Stölting recently developed a programme to advance the dependable high quality of the school's infrastructure and results and increase the number of students on campus. It sets out new cross-departmental concepts for language development and digitalisation and a new plan for staff development.

With the big move to another continent and setting forward-looking projects in motion at Phorms, Stölting hasn't had much time left over for her hobbies. 'I'm a very creative person,' she says. 'I look forward to exploring Berlin's cultural scene – next year.' ♦

# Family mealtime -

**notes on  
an endangered  
species**



*From the beginning of civilisation, sharing a meal has been a social event that has established solidarity as well as hierarchies. Today's eating habits can be explained by taking a closer look at their development. A cultural history of eating can teach us why we eat what we eat and what it means to us*

TEXT

**Gunther Hirschfelder**  
**Sarah Thanner**

ILLUSTRATION

**Friederike Schlenz**



When your average supermarket stocks about 12,000 food products, it is little wonder that the world of food has become a confusing place. It can be difficult to keep track. What is healthy? What is bad for you? What tastes best? Is it sustainably sourced? It's easy to forget that while food is a material quantity, eating is – above all – a cultural activity. In childhood, we learn from our family and our social environment what to eat, how to eat and with whom. On a personal level, this basic pattern changes very little over time. However, we have to adapt it to our everyday routines in today's highly mobile, global and digital world.

Has the good old-fashioned family mealtime fallen by the wayside on our journey into the modern age? Do canteens and refectories, fast-food outlets and discount stores, snacks and takeaways now play a much greater role? In fact, what role do mealtimes still play in our society? It is difficult to say, because our perception of the way we eat differs fundamentally from reality. It is fed by historical traditions, media depictions and, not least, our own personal memories. Today, family mealtimes seem to be more of an exception than the rule, but we still cling to the idea of them.

The social reality of our everyday eating and drinking habits is pluralistic and complex. The Industrial Era, which shaped our lives and provided our perspective, has disappeared. While class shaped our society in the old Federal Republic, we have now moved to a lifestyle

society in which scenes and milieus are just as important as our family background. This is reflected in our food culture.

The world of work has also changed. Since the late 1990s, the demand for flexibility has grown and the boundaries between work and leisure time have become increasingly blurred. This has had a knock-on effect on traditional family mealtimes.

However, if we take a closer look, we can see that mealtimes have not lost their social value. They have simply forfeited their function of imposing social regulation and discipline. To understand this development, it helps to take a look at the past.

#### **From the Stone Age to the mid-20th century**

About 300,000 years ago, the discovery of fire meant that for the first time, there was a fixed location for meals. Social life and communication between individuals and groups came to be centred around the fire.

The Neolithic period, about 10,000 years ago, saw humans gradually transition from hunter-gatherers to farmers, and hunting came to be a manorial privilege. Eating habits became a mirror of social hierarchies. While mealtimes up until this point had brought people together, now they divided the rich from the poor.

By the end of the 18th century, different forms of meals had developed. Communal meals were a defining



feature of Spartan society in about 500 BCE. Important cultural, political and economic decisions were made at the collective symposium in ancient Athens. The 'three meals a day' system arose in ancient Rome at around the time of the birth of Christ.

With the transition from the ancient world to what is known as the Migration Period (from about 400 CE) and then the early Middle Ages, the culture of meals changed again: eating one's fill was now associated with higher social standing. Meals acquired ever greater symbolic value and could be exploited as a result. The nobility would lay on a lavish banquet in an attempt to extend its influence. An invitation to such a banquet signified admission to a social group; the shared meal strengthened ties. Literary evidence of this can be seen in the legend of King Arthur's round table. Whereas today the tendency is to eat in isolation, in the early Middle Ages, the shared meal was at the heart of all social relationships.

A major turning point for the modern meal system came in the early 19th century with the transition to the Industrial Era: industrially manufactured products had a profound effect on consumption habits and preparation techniques. Food intake had to be adapted to the rhythm of the machines. Factory workers had to eat quickly during short breaks or even while working. Mealtimes where the whole family came together began to be an exception. At the same time, the middle classes began to develop their own mealtime traditions. The

famous morality tale of 'Zappelphilipp', the undisciplined boy who fidgeted at the dinner table, underlines the fact that these traditions were rather Prussian in nature. Education at the table, military manners, strict obedience: these were the premises of the 19th century.

From the discovery of fire to the mid-20th century, shared meals were the core of our social life. They provided an opportunity to sound out relationships and were a symbol of integration and exclusion, of community and hierarchies.

### Developments since the mid-20th century

After World War II, the economic miracle brought an end to hunger in central Europe. This had previously been a constant of European food culture: for millennia, times of plenty had alternated with times of famine. Because hunger usually outweighed abundance, consumption became a driving force.

Much of the behaviour in the 1950s can be seen as a reaction to the hunger of the war and immediate post-war years. People increasingly and ostentatiously consumed food items that had been seen as luxury products up until the 19th century: chocolate, cream, butter, meat and alcohol. This laid the foundations for the obesity epidemic in the age of mass consumption.

The 1960s marked the end of the road for the shared meal. A pervasive transformation was underway, as the rapid rise in household technology ushered in an era of frozen food and convenience products. The availability of food was no longer dictated by seasons and harvests. With increasing mobility, people ate at home less and less often.

Although there were many new things on the table, the same old warnings could still be heard: 'While your feet are under my table, you'll do what I say.'



19th century-style bourgeois/Prussian/military patterns of upbringing continued to put a patriarchal stamp on the family meal. For children and adolescents, these patterns felt overly disciplinarian. This changed only in the wake of the student unrest in 1968, when young people began to question authoritarianism in all areas of life.

The 1960s and 1970s also saw the rise of fast-food culture. Following the example of the occupying British forces, people began to eat standing up. This new trend spread from major cities to rural areas. Snacking offered a food experience that was free from social constraints.

### Present day

Looking back at the past shows that shared meals have always helped to cement ties, but at the same time, they have also strengthened hierarchies. Has our pluralistic lifestyle society sounded their death knell? Yes and no.

There is no denying that they have lost much of their prescriptive nature. A pluralistic, individualistic society shaped by milieus and scenes gives us the freedom to get up from the table and to eat what, how, when, and where we want. In doing so, we remove ourselves from social and pedagogical control. This freedom can be a challenge for any parent whose children want to eat alone and escape their influence.

Today, diets and meals are more diverse than ever. More and more people eat alone at hours that defy traditional timetables but which are, above all, practical. Individual meals can express lifestyles and mindsets. Concerns about the ecological sustainability of our planet and a fear of the consequences of climate change are also reflected in our eating habits. We are not just talking about trends such as veganism here. People are looking for traditional values that seem to defy the widespread crisis of confidence in society.

Even in today's society, with its strong focus on the individual, people remain social beings. They need communication, can only develop as part of a community and suffer from loneliness. For many people, having to eat alone has negative connotations. Ever since the discovery of fire, shared meals have been one of the most important anthropological constants. In an era of isolation, they stand for an intact community.

Superficially, they may appear to have become redundant. In actual fact, they have never been as needed as much as they are today. A shared meal builds confidence and trust in a way that few other activities can. This is why it can be useful to look at the ties between food culture, tradition, and history from a pedagogical viewpoint too. They should not only be taught as part of the history curriculum, but also as part of religion and ethics, geography and art, and of course, natural sciences. The history of food

shows us how society has developed up to the present day. It can be used to outline former social orders and to explain ideal notions of life and the human body. And we should not forget that the shared meal continues to form the basis of community, in all its forms. ♦



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a historical and contemporary  
perspective.

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funded project VIGITIA at the  
Chair of Media Informatics at  
Regensburg University and is  
currently doing her PhD in Cultural  
Anthropology.



# ‘Family meals help children to form healthy eating habits’

BY  
Anna Luszczakiewicz



*Dr Mattea Dallacker has conducted two extensive meta-analyses at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development investigating the social impact of family meals on children’s eating habits*

*What were your findings in the two studies?*

**Mattea Dallacker** In 2018, we started by investigating family meals from a purely quantitative perspective. We analysed 57 international studies with 200,000 participants to find out the extent to which parents and/or families can influence children’s eating habits and, by extension, their body weight. All the studies used the Body Mass Index (BMI) and the number of portions of fruit and vegetables, or fast food and soft drinks, consumed every day as indicators of healthy and unhealthy nutrition. The findings showed that children who frequently eat with their families have a healthier diet and are generally less at risk of being overweight. This result was relatively consistent around the globe. Parents act as nutritional gatekeepers: they can create a beneficial learning environment at the dinner table by setting an example of healthy eating patterns themselves.

*In other words, does it make a difference how often families eat together?*

The results of our initial analysis suggest that it does, yes. However, it was not clear which psychological and social factors were most relevant in this respect. That is why we decided to focus more on the question of what it is exactly that makes family meals so good for people’s health. We investigated this question in the second meta-analysis in 2019, which looked at 50 studies with 29,000 participants. We were able to identify six factors that correlate with better nutritional health in childhood and adolescence, finding that the quality of communal mealtimes is more important than their quantity.

### *What are these factors and how can they be incorporated into everyday life?*

Of course, the quality of the food plays an important role: fresh, homemade food is generally seen in a positive light. The duration of the meal and the atmosphere while it is being eaten are also relevant factors. The meal should be free from stress and conflict. Ideally, everyone involved should be able to consciously enjoy the time they spend together. It is equally important that parents are active role models: they should lead by example and eat the same food as their children. As trivial as it may sound, switching off the TV is an additional factor. Finally, we also observed how important it is to involve children when preparing meals. Helping with the planning, shopping, and preparation can make a positive difference to their diet. One possible explanation is something known as the IKEA effect: psychological research shows that people view an object more positively if they were involved in making it. This can also be applied to children who help prepare fruit and vegetables, which increases the likelihood that they will enjoy eating them, or enjoy eating them even more, as a result.

*If parents work full-time and children are engaged in ever more extracurricular activities, the family will often only meet in passing. How relevant is the concept of eating together as a family today and how realistic is it that we can put it into practice?*

As a matter of fact, family meals have become more frequent in Germany over the last ten years. This was the conclusion of the EsKiMo-II study published in 2019 by the Robert Koch Institute. It is worrying, however, that this trend is not reflected in families with low socioeconomic status. In the AOK family study published in 2016, families also stated that the best time they spent together was during mealtimes enjoyed as a family.

In our modern society, there are a number of ways in which families can eat together. No matter whether breakfast, lunch, or dinner, any kind of communal meal has a positive effect. Over the course of our analysis, we also found that it is not always necessary for the whole family to sit down at the table together. This would simply be unrealistic nowadays. If a father is able to have breakfast with one of his children in the mornings, that's a good step in itself. It doesn't always have to be a feast – a simple meal that can be flexibly integrated into everyday life is perfectly adequate.

*What might a good meal look like? Do you have any practical tips?*  
The aim should not be 'we have to eat together every evening', but rather 'when and how can we manage to get together to share a meal?'. The food itself does not have to be elaborate; quick, convenient options are just as good. If preparing the meal becomes a stress factor in the run-up to the event, it makes it hard to create a positive atmosphere. Avoiding arguments and controversial topics at the family dining table also helps to maintain this positive mood.

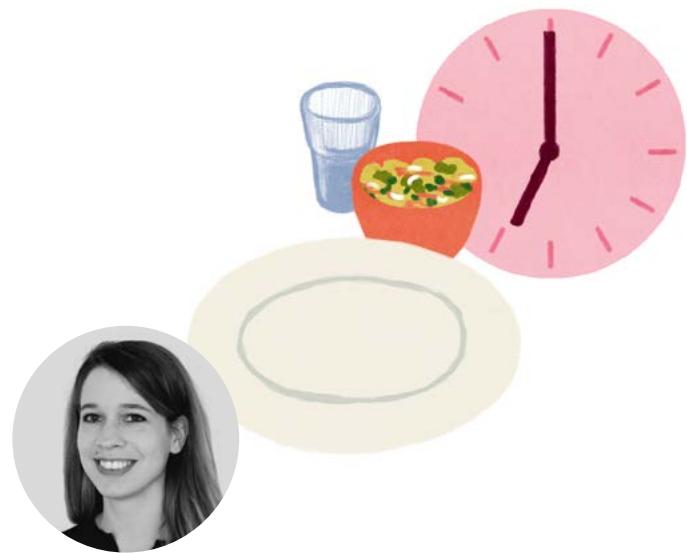
The six factors we have identified for healthy family meals do not represent a set of rules. Instead, they are intended to serve as guidelines. How they are implemented is dependent on the specific circumstances at play, and the important thing is to find out what is really feasible for your own family.

### *Can the positive effects be seen in other areas besides nutritional health?*

Some studies suggest that eating meals together is associated with better school performance and a lower risk of depression and eating disorders. The ritual of sitting together and eating together strengthens individual family members, improves family cohesion and makes families healthier because it provides space for discussion and interaction.

*Throughout Germany, increasing numbers of children are enrolled in full-day schools. Here at Phorms, children also attend school all day. What role do teachers play in relation to nutrition?*

Experimental studies have shown that teachers can also serve as role models when it comes to nutrition. If they eat fruit and vegetables at a communal meal and show that they like these foods, it is more likely that the children will also enjoy eating them. In other words, there is evidence that the positive effects of eating meals as a family can also be achieved in schools if teachers play their part in this. This is a very interesting point, considering how much time children spend at school these days and how many meals they eat while in the care of their teachers. ♦



#### **Dr Mattea Dallacker**

is a psychologist and postdoctoral researcher in the field of adaptive rationality at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin. Her research there focuses on the question of how to improve decision-making relating to health.

#### LITERATURE

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# Too much sugar!

*An interview with Silke Restemeyer from the German Nutrition Society (DGE) on excess sugar in children's diets*

BY  
Jasmin Priesnitz



In 2018, the KiGGS study on the health of children and adolescents in Germany reported that the international incidence of overweight and obese children and adolescents has been on the rise since the mid-1970s. The DGE, the German Obesity Society (DAG) and the German Diabetes Society (DDG) published the consensus paper 'Quantitative recommendation on sugar intake in Germany', in which they illustrate the risks, among other things, of a diet high in sugar.

*What are the possible consequences of being overweight at a young age, and what are the risks associated with children consuming excess sugar?*

**Silke Restemeyer** Dietary habits are formed in the first few years of life. It's often the case that overweight children become overweight adults. Extremely overweight children and adolescents, in particular, keep on gaining weight and the programmes designed to help them are only so effective.

Foods and drinks with added sugar are often lacking in nutrients and contain empty calories. Sugar also increases the risk of tooth decay. The excessive and regular consumption of sugar leads to people being overweight, in addition to numerous diseases associated with carrying excess weight, which include type 2 diabetes, obesity, and cardiovascular diseases. A diet low in sugar is the optimal choice for a healthy lifestyle.

*Why are so many children in Germany overweight?*

*What is the biggest issue associated with children's diets?*

Children who consume high-calorie foods and drinks and don't get their bodies moving enough tend to become overweight, even though they're still growing. In addition to genetic predisposition, the eating behaviour and level of physical activity within a child's family also play a role.

Interestingly, children whose families regularly sit down to eat together tend to have a lower BMI and consume a healthier diet overall. Research conducted by the Max Planck Institute for

Human Development and the University of Mannheim backs this up. Several studies on the quality of family mealtimes have shown that, for example, a positive atmosphere at the dinner table can also lead to children consuming a healthy diet.

*How bad are processed foods for children? Which products contain hidden sugar that we wouldn't expect?*

Processed foods often contain high amounts of sugar, salt, and saturated fats. A quick look at the label not only tells you what ingredients the product contains, but also the quantities thereof.

Unfortunately, foods that we wouldn't expect to contain sugar often do, such as ketchup, barbecue marinades, salad dressings, and convenience meals such as frozen pizza. Processed and ready-to-eat foods usually have a very high sugar content, especially foods that are aimed at children such as fruit yoghurt, fruit quark, and breakfast cereals. Nectars and fruit juices also contain a lot of sugar.

*So-called 'free sugars' are added to the food we eat. Which sweeteners are considered free sugars?*

The sweet taste present in certain foods can be attributed to a number of ingredients. The most widespread sweetener is common white sugar (sucrose). This is frequently added to food. However, brown sugar, honey, agave syrup, coconut sugar, other syrups, and the sugar in fruit should be treated the same as common white sugar.

*Does food packaging in Germany have to label the sugar content? What should we look out for?*

Make sure to carefully read the food label. The total sugar content is listed under the nutritional values on all packaged foods. However, sugar is not always labelled as such in the ingredients list: sugar hides behind many other names. In addition to ingredients with 'sugar' in their names, food manufacturers use sweeteners that are often hard to pinpoint as sugar because of their complicated chemical descriptions.

Furthermore, manufacturers are not legally obliged to indicate

**The following are considered either a sugar or a sugar-rich ingredient:**

- Sucrose
- Dextrose
- Raffinose
- Glucose
- Fructose syrup and fructose-glucose syrup
- Glucose syrup, glucose-fructose syrup, and starch syrup
- Caramel syrup
- Lactose
- Maltose and malt extract/barley malt extract
- Maltodextrin, dextrin, and wheat dextrin



what amounts of these individual types of sugar are used. A good way to find your way around this is to observe the order in which the ingredients are listed. If sugar varieties are listed towards the beginning of the list, this indicates that there is a high content of the sugar in question. Unfortunately, it's not always possible to estimate the sugar content if different types of sugar are listed in different places throughout the ingredients.

*Does the excess consumption of sugary drinks pose a real risk to children in Germany?*

Yes. Today, experts are aware that the excess consumption of sugary drinks (soft drink, fruit juice, nectar, iced tea, cordial etc.) is partially to blame for the increasing number of overweight children. Children who consume too many sweet drinks can experience a surplus of energy, which can lead to an increase in body weight and put them at a heightened risk of developing related diseases. Sugary drinks don't make you feel full, so it's easy to overconsume them and end up with surplus energy. Energy balance aside, there's also a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

Nectars, fruit juice drinks, and refreshing drinks, in particular, are generally not recommended. These drinks are high in calories, are not filling and, as a general rule, offer no essential nutrients.

*And how should parents regulate the consumption of fruit juice?*

Fruit juice made with 100% pure fruit is high in vitamins and minerals. However, it is also high in fructose and calories. If a child regularly drinks pure fruit juice, there is a risk that they are consuming more energy than they actually need.

*What can parents do to keep their children healthy if they fear they may be consuming too much sugar? What do they need to look out for?*

Feed your children a balanced diet high in plant-based foods such as vegetables, fruit and wholegrain products, and let them reach for as few processed foods as possible.

The DGE's '10 guidelines for a wholesome diet', updated in 2017, recommends reducing overall sugar consumption. You can start reducing your children's consumption of free sugars by only letting them consume highly-processed and sweetened foods in moderation, and by replacing sugary drinks with water or unsweetened tea. It's best to not let children get accustomed to a diet high in sugar – and the associated sweet taste – in the first place. Packaged foods that are aimed at children are often high in sugar and therefore not recommended. ♦



**Silke Restemeyer**

studied home economics and nutritional science at Giessen University. She works in the Public Relations Division of the German Nutrition Society, has two children aged nine and 14, and lives with her family in Bonn.



# Healthy and happy

*How to handle everyday nutrition responsibly*

## BOXES THAT SPREAD JOY

*Every school day, parents face the challenge of creating a children's snack box that's healthy and original, and complements the food the children eat at school and at home. But the most important thing: the kids need to like the food in the box*



### KEY COMPONENTS:

- A bento box, preferably with five compartments
- Colourful food, preferably in five colours

### THE AUTUMN / WINTER BOX

To save you time in the morning, cut the vegetables into thin slices the evening before. Spread herb cream cheese on a wrap, add the vegetables and a slice of cold meat if you wish, roll up, and cut into bite-sized pieces.

There's space in the middle of the box for yoghurt with a spoonful of spirulina powder. The microalgae doesn't just provide a bright colour: it also strengthens the immune system and dispels tiredness. It's perfect for students in winter.

In winter, dried organic fruit is a tasty snack in addition to a gherkin, a hard-boiled egg, and fresh fruit.



### THE SPRING / SUMMER BOX

For the warmer months, slice vegetables into short, thin pieces. Roll them in rice paper with a lettuce leaf and a spoonful of peanut butter. Fill the remaining compartments with nuts, almonds, raisins, and a selection of seasonal fruit.

TIP FROM  
**Magdalena  
Suszycka-Jasch,**  
whose four children  
study at the Phorms  
Campus Berlin  
Mitte

## DRINKING NEEDS TO BE TAUGHT

*Children learn how to drink enough from their role models. Parents can encourage their little ones to develop healthy drinking habits by following a few simple guidelines*

The German Nutrition Society (DGE) recommends that young children drink around 820 ml a day, which equates to roughly six small glasses. This recommendation applies to fluids consumed in addition to those contained in the foods that children eat. However, the body requires more fluids after engaging in physical activity, on hot days, when experiencing a fever. Parents can set the right example for their children by showing them that they themselves drink a glass of water with every meal.

Water is the most thirst-quenching beverage and contains no calories. Children may also drink carbonated water if they so desire and if they can tolerate it. Fruit tea, herbal tea, and rooibos tea are also good thirst-quenchers when left unsweetened.

Iced tea, instant tea, soft drinks, and juice contain high amounts of sugar, are bad for the teeth, and lead to weight gain. Even a small glass of apple juice naturally contains five teaspoons of sugar. If your child wants a glass of juice, a small amount diluted with water is fine in moderation, as long as the juice does not make up more than a quarter of the glass. If you persistently offer your child water when they are thirsty, they will discover that water is a better thirst-quencher than sugary drinks.

The German Federal Centre for Nutrition (BZfE) and the DGE recommend that children increase their daily intake of liquids to 1.2 litres by the time they turn 14. Parents should remind their children to take drink breaks when they're out on excursions or playing sport, give them water bottles, and encourage them to drink during their lessons. Habits adopted in early childhood are less likely to change later on, so learning how to drink enough as a small child will make it much easier to do so as an adult. WK ♦

VEGETARIAN,  
FOR A CHANGE?

## POTATO RÖSTI WITH CREAMY MUSHROOMS

### INGREDIENTS (SERVES 6)

1.5–2 kg raw potatoes  
3 eggs  
Salt, pepper or seasoning mix  
1.2–1.5 kg mushrooms  
3 onions  
450 g (lactose-free) cream or vegetable-based cream  
Oil for frying  
Chives

### WHAT TO DO

- 01 Peel the potatoes and roughly grate them. Place the grated potatoes in a bowl and mix with the eggs. Season the potato and egg mixture well.
- 02 Peel and dice the onions. Clean the mushrooms and cut them into thick slices.
- 03 Heat up oil in a pan and add small dollops of the potato and egg mixture using a tablespoon. Fry over a medium heat and flip after around 10 minutes.
- 04 Add oil to a second pan and briefly sauté the diced onion until transparent. Add the mushrooms and fry for around four to five minutes. Season the whole mixture, add the cream (or vegetable-based cream) and stir in a little water if needed. Cook for around three to four minutes, stirring occasionally.
- 05 Finely dice the chives. Place the rösti and the mushrooms on a plate with a little sauce. Sprinkle the chives over the top.

TIP FROM  
**Melanie Altrieth**,  
whose daughter  
studies at the Josef-Schwarz-Schule

FOR MORE RECIPES PLEASE VISIT  
[www.bildungsthemen-phorms.de](http://www.bildungsthemen-phorms.de)



# How do children learn to self-regulate?

*Sabina Pauen is a professor of developmental and biological psychology at the University of Heidelberg. She is particularly interested in early childhood, because the foundations laid during this period often determine future development. Her current focus is on children's ability to self-regulate and the role that parents can play here*

BY

Jasmin Priesnitz



*What is your stance on sweets? Should we ban children from eating sweets?*

While bans can sometimes be necessary, banning anything outright can be problematic. A ban will help regulate the amount of sweets your children eat, but only while you are there to keep an eye on them. What it won't do is help children to question their craving for sugar. All they will be thinking about is what is stopping them from getting what they want and how they can get hold of some sweets. As soon as you are not there to supervise or someone else offers them sweets, the children will be all the keener to tuck in. This is the problem with bans. We need to take an alternative approach and help children adopt a sensible attitude towards sugar.

The key here is not to offer children sweets too early. Parents should also make sure that their children's diets don't feature too many items that contain hidden sugar – like juice, for example. If children are offered too much sugar from an early age, their bodies learn to see it as the quickest and easiest source of energy. All other foodstuffs have to be broken down first, which is more work for the body but healthier.

*What age groups are you talking about here?*

Babies and toddlers. Once children reach nursery age, it becomes more difficult to control their sugar intake because they aren't just eating at home any more. But it still makes sense to limit how much you offer when they are at home.

*You mentioned self-regulation. What do you mean by that?*

*And how does it work?*

In general terms, self-regulation is about controlling your own behaviour, thoughts and feelings. The first step here is recognising your own craving for sweets. Then you have to learn to make a conscious decision about how to deal with the cravings. To give an example: if there's a plate of biscuits on the table in front of me and I notice that I can't think about anything else except those biscuits, then perhaps the best thing I can do is to push them aside. I can also try to push my thoughts aside. But these are strategies that children have to learn. Children in their early years are not generally ready for nuanced self-reflection. However, we can help them to develop along those lines.

*How can parents support their children? Are there strategies or routines that can help? And what is the best age for parents to begin with this?*

In our research we have discovered that direct impulse control develops at around the second year of life. This is a key developmental phase, so it is vital that we, as parents, support our children from the outset. By the age of around three, the orbitofrontal cortex, responsible for impulse control, has matured significantly. But even before this, children listen to what we say. We have to make sure that our statements are very clear, because children aren't yet able to follow or process long sentences. Parents should be aware that saying 'stop' once in a while helps their child to develop. Of course, it is important how parents say it. It needs to be said in a friendly but firm tone. And when you do say 'stop', it

is vital to make sure that your child does actually stop. A child will only learn if he or she recognises that, 'When my parents tell me to do something, they mean it.' Failing to impose consequences has the opposite effect. It sounds easy in principle, but it's often difficult to put into practice.

#### *How important is it that we set a good example for our children?*

If I, as a parent, drink a lot of fruit juice or fizzy drinks, I can't just offer my child mineral water. That just won't work. I can't expect my child to eat and drink sensibly if I don't pay attention to what I'm eating and drinking, too. I need to be able to justify what I'm doing. As a parent, I'm the one who fills the fridge and cupboards with sugary food, not my child. And my children also learn from watching my eating habits.

Parents may find it useful to talk about how difficult it sometimes is to resist. It can be helpful for your child to hear you say, 'I'd like another piece of chocolate too, but I know that it's better if we don't have one just now'. This way the child learns that this isn't a simple situation and you can also begin to show the child how best to deal with it. Parents might say, for example, 'Come on, let's put the biscuits away now!' or 'We'll tidy the kitchen up first and then we'll have a little piece'. The same strategies that help me, as a parent, to regulate my own consumption can also help my child. That's why it's good to articulate these thoughts in front of your child. If your child learns to see regulating cravings as something that you have in common, he or she will be more inclined to join in.

#### *So children learn these strategies from their parents, internalise them and, in an ideal scenario, can also apply them at nursery?*

Yes, I find that really interesting! Children who are good at self-regulation are often able to teach other children self-regulatory strategies. From a good starting point, the system can have a positive ripple effect. But not all children are the same. Some children have very strong impulses, while others are more restrained. Those who behave very impulsively naturally find self-regulation more difficult. In these cases it is all the more important that parents remain patient and are not put off by setbacks.

#### *What role does understanding the body's inner balance play?*

If the family talks about internal feelings, by asking a child, for example, 'Are you full yet or not?' this encourages a mindful self-view. The child learns to find words for their internal feelings. Talking makes children begin to think about what is going on inside. The better they are able to do this, the less they will feel the need for a sugar rush.

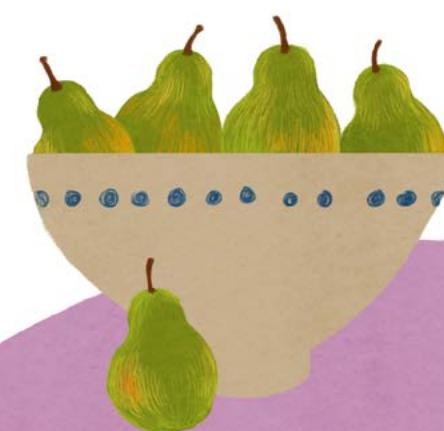
#### *Can self-regulation also be transferred to other areas of everyday life, for example media consumption or emotions?*

Yes, definitely. Mindfulness and self-regulation can be practised in a range of different everyday situations. It is important to help children learn self-control by listening patiently and sympathetically, by talking about their feelings and needs, but also by standing your ground. Including where sweets are concerned! ◆



*'I can't expect my child to eat and drink sensibly if I don't pay attention to what I'm eating and drinking, too. I need to be able to justify what I'm doing. My children learn from watching my eating habits.'*

– Prof Sabina Pauen



# At the dining table with Phorms families

*People from different cultural backgrounds sharing the same meal*



## RITZER FAMILY — STEINBACH (TAUNUS)

'At the weekends, we always eat together. Since we all like to sleep in, we sometimes have breakfast instead of lunch. In that case, we invariably take our time over it. In the evening or in the late afternoon, we enjoy cooking and eating together. This is very important to us. We talk to each other and discuss topics related to the family.'

## NITTURI FAMILY — HEILBRONN

'We have breakfast together every day of the week. After that, we disperse to our work and school routines. We have snacks and lunch in our offices and at school. We eat dinner together at least four times a week. It is important to us to sit together and tell each other what has happened since breakfast. We talk about happy and sad moments or funny things. Our kids love to hear about our days at the office and to give us useful advice.'





#### SAVINA / HELD FAMILY — BERLIN MITTE

'During the week, we lead very busy lives and are often in different locations. That means that we appreciate our dinner time together and the long breakfasts at the weekends all the more. Sundays are something the whole family looks forward to at the beginning of the week. It is often dad who does the cooking. For one thing, he's very good at it. Secondly, mum has to take care of the baby while he's in the kitchen. But it's her job to ensure there's enough food at hand because she's in charge of the weekly grocery shop.'



#### VAN FAMILY — HEIDELBERG

'We eat together almost every day, whenever every one of us has the time to gather at the table. We all have a particular place to sit. It's our time to be together and discuss family matters. Usually, we have crudités as a starter, then fried rice, vegetables, and meat. We pay particular attention to making sure our food contains all the essential nutrients. We are always happy to have Chinese food, but we also appreciate some variety in what we eat during the week.'





# Eating mindfully

*Two Phorms schools reveal how they are contributing to a healthy diet and a better awareness of nutrition*

TEXT  
**Sheena Apericho**  
year 1 teacher and head of year at  
the Phorms Campus Frankfurt City

## PHORMS SCHOOL FRANKFURT

**C**hildren need to be taught the basics of nutrition in a way that is geared specifically towards them. At the beginning of November, year 1 students from the Phorms School Frankfurt City participated in healthy eating workshops held by FPS Catering. These workshops followed on from the healthy breakfast workshops previously held by Phorms and FPS, and brought together what the children had learnt in their Sachkunde (general science) and Humanities classes. In Sachkunde, students explored the topic of healthy nutrition, which is part of the Hessian curriculum. They learnt the correct names of foods and how to identify where they belong in the food pyramid. They also learnt which nutrients are crucial for their development. In Humanities, which is delivered using the Cambridge Global Perspectives programme, students learnt about what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. This included learning about hygiene, exercise, social and emotional wellbeing, and healthy eating.

The students discovered many new and often surprising facts, with the aim being for them to take charge of their own nutrition. FPS Catering started the workshops by building a food pyramid with the children. Several of them were shocked to learn that sugary foods and drinks should only be consumed in moderation. Prior to making the food pyramid, one student had stated that people should eat sweets at least twice a day.

The students then visited different stations, each of which had a sensory activity that appealed to a different sense. At the 'touch' station, students put their hands into a box and had to guess what food was inside. At the 'sight' station, students looked at different vegetables and learnt their names. Then the students ate bread and drank fruit tea at the 'taste' station. Finally, the 'smell' station had cups filled with coffee, mint leaves, cinnamon and lemon. When asked which station was their favourite, an overwhelming majority of students chose the 'taste' station, with the 'smell' station coming in second place. To finish things off, the students applied their newly learnt skills and drew their idea of a healthy breakfast on their chef's hats.

Overall, the workshops were well-received by the students and teachers at the Phorms School Frankfurt City. As the head of year, I was pleased with the outcome of the workshops. It was a fun and interactive way for the students to learn about healthy eating, and it was also a nice collaborative effort from the German and English teams. We will definitely be doing this again next year. ♦



## PHORMS CAMPUS MÜNCHEN

**E**ating is an important part of the daily programme at Phorms. The students need healthy, varied food options to keep them going through the long school day. The food is cooked fresh on site every day at the Phorms Campus München. This is taken care of by the Michelin star holder and former chef of the German national football team Holger Stromberg and his five-strong team. This catering crew has been providing healthy food for over 770 children and adults since 2010. Stromberg believes society has a lot of catching up to do when it comes to nutritional knowledge. He advocates starting to teach children about nutrition while they are still at school, ideally in the form of a dedicated subject: dietetics.

### 1. Eat natural:

No additives are added to the food.

### 2. Be aware of your fluid intake:

Water can also be absorbed via food.

### 3. Be good to your gut:

This involves consuming complex, high-quality carbohydrates.

When it comes to choosing food for school meals, cost is obviously always a factor, too. Nevertheless, Stromberg favours high-quality foods without additives and, where possible, foods that are organic, regionally produced and have a low carbon footprint.

The catering team plans the menu eight weeks in advance for organisational reasons – but Wednesday's menu always remains a surprise. On Wednesdays, head chef Oliver Heinrichmeier can take advantage of current offers, such as on organic meat. Meat is usually only served once a week at the Phorms Campus München, but it's always high quality. 'As an alternative, we have introduced one day a week where we serve a meal containing organic, Demeter-certified grains,' explains Heinrichmeier.

Producing as little food waste as possible is also a top priority for the catering team. When they began, they analysed the general waste to discover which foods people ate and which were left. The findings are continually factored in when planning the menus and calculating quantities. As a result, Stromberg's team has been able to reduce food waste by around 50 per cent.

The catering team also accommodates dietary requirements when preparing meals, and provides vegetarian, vegan, lactose-, gluten-, and nut-free alternatives. The friendly server Dani knows every child – not necessarily by name, but she can match each face to their preferences and intolerances. It's not always easy to make everyone happy when there are so many children, parents, and teachers from different cultural backgrounds. Some degree of compromise is inevitable. 'At the end of the day, it's about what people want to eat, not what we want to serve,' says Stromberg. For example, Monday is pasta day. Everyone knows kids love pasta – yet another good reason why the children can look forward to going back to school on Mondays.

And how has the menu affected everyday school life? 'Since introducing our menu nine years ago, the teachers have informed us that the students concentrate better and perform better in class,' says Stromberg. And how have the children responded? 'The children like eating here and enjoy the food,' concludes Heinrichmeier. 'We can see that when we're serving. But the most important thing to note is how little food is thrown away. There's no better proof than that.' ♦

TEXT

Jasmin Priesnitz



**Holger Stromberg**

As a father, chef and author, Stromberg is dedicated to healthy, sustainable eating. His book *Manege frei für kleine Köche* ('Make way for young chefs') is about making vegetables tasty for children. The healthy, child-friendly recipes come with superhero illustrations. Essential nutrients, fruit, and vegetables are presented as appealing characters that make nutritional knowledge accessible to children in a playful way. 'It's all about communication. If children know that "this will make me strong," then that's a huge step forward. Children want to grow up to be big and strong. I don't need to tell them it's healthy. Children generally are healthy. They want to have superpowers, and be active and smart. We just need to make vegetables an attractive option,' says Stromberg. When it comes to eating habits for parents and children, it's not about banning things – it's about giving them information and setting a healthy example.'

# Getting kids into the kitchen

TEXT

Anna Fuchs

If we want to ensure that children have a healthy relationship with food, we need to do more than just cook them healthy and nutritious meals: we have to get them involved. The best way of doing so is by collectively deciding what's available and then preparing the food together. While doing so, we can talk about where our food comes from and what happens to it in the body.

These good intentions can easily get sidelined in everyday life. It's far more convenient to make decisions on your own. In all honesty, I sometimes enjoy peace and quiet in the kitchen. But it never normally lasts long, ending when the food's been served and everyone's grumbling because it isn't what they wanted, at the latest.

So, how can we prevent this? In a good community, everyone's needs are equally important. Everyone listens to one another and works together. So, in our family, we take note of what everyone wants and see what we can make using the contents of our cupboards. Then, we figure out what we have time for. What the children want is just as important as what I want and my need for healthy ingredients.

If my children suggest something that's 'tasty and unhealthy', such as pizza, they now immediately add: 'Yes, Mum, with lots of salad, sprouted seeds and fermented foods on the side.' We can all live with that. When you enjoy something, it makes you happy! Food is really only healthy when it tastes good. If we have to eat something we don't like, we end up stressed and stress is always unhealthy.

## Little cooks

My children are two, five, and eight years old. They are all involved in the kitchen in whatever way they can and want. While this may sound somewhat chaotic,

the more they participate, the more independent they become. They take on lots of tasks: chopping vegetables, mixing dough, spinning salad, watering sprouted seeds, or setting the table. My five-year-old also chops up the fruit for our breakfast every morning. This is a task he's chosen himself: it not only allows him to snack, but also to shoulder responsibility. If someone else even thinks of chopping the fruit, he kicks up a fuss.

When we share the work and responsibility with the children, they enjoy the essential experience of being important. They feel connected and show what they're capable of. And there are pleasant benefits too. My children, for example, love to peel potatoes, which I'm not really keen on at all. That way, we make a good team, because everyone takes on the tasks that suit them. And if you like doing something, you do it well.

## Tales from our tummies

The better children understand what's happening in their bodies, the more they can make a conscious decision about what's good for them. Making up stories together in a playful way is the easiest way of teaching them something. In this game, food plays different roles. Sugar is the bad guy you must watch out for, because it pillages and plunders in our tummies. Sprouted seeds, on the other hand, are our kindly friends; fermented foods are the policemen who ensure law and order in the body. This turns every meal into a terrific tale. And, of course, it needs a happy ending, where the higher proportion of 'friendly' food ensures a healthy balance in the gut.

Our favourite way of eating is by choosing a base of wholegrain rice, quinoa, lentil pasta, potatoes, or something similar. And to garnish these bases, we put all kinds of healthy tasty treats on the table, just like at a buffet: raw oils, hemp seeds, yeast flakes, tahini, fresh salad, sprouted seeds, and raw and fermented vegetables. That means everyone can independently create their own plate that tells a special story.

If we do this successfully, we not only teach children how to have a positive relationship with food: we also educate them on where it comes from and why it's so important to our health. What makes this approach even more valuable is that it also allows us to spend plenty of quality time together as a family. ♦



# Do you know these foods?

You can find the word we're looking for by writing their first letters in the numbered boxes.



## SOLUTION

In the kitchen, you need me to prepare your meal. In another context, I'm a flying device. Right now, I'm not too far away.



## Art in action

*Children in year 7 at the Phorms Campus Hamburg are transforming the entrance to their school into a fantastic world of monsters*

## TEXT

**Julia Wandel**

teaches art to years 5 to 12 at the  
Phorms Campus Hamburg

Mosaics shimmer and glitter and invite you to touch them. Your hands glide over them as they would over fine porcelain. They remind us of Middle Eastern lands, churches, and museum artefacts, where hundreds of tiny tiles come together to form a picture.

The idea of creating a mosaic in the school was inspired by my love of this art form. An unused, cavernous room at the school entrance was the perfect place to create a home for shimmering monsters between fields of flowers and outer space. Thanks to the generous sponsorship from the Hamburg shops Mortensen and Mosaic Outlet, the project suddenly went from an

idea to a reality. So that's how I and the students, then in year 6, spent part of last summer – opening boxes full of tiles, carefully removing them from their mesh and sorting them by colour. It soon became clear that we had to abandon the fine details and complicated shapes that we had originally planned to create. With mosaic work, you're limited by the colour palette available – it's different from painting in that sense. The quality of the tiles determines how expressive the picture can be.

It's winter now, and I'm not teaching the students anymore, now they're in year 7. So we decided to use our weekends to finish the artwork. We were rewarded with waffles and pizza for giving up our spare time.

We've almost finished now. When we lay the final tile, I'm sure we'll feel a mixture of joy and sadness.

Participating student Sarita Harings (age 13) said the following about the project: 'It was really great that the whole class got to do something together and that we



had the freedom to create what we wanted. For example, we could choose the colours we wanted to use, and how to create our monster. It was also nice to meet up outside of school time. While we worked on the monsters, girls and boys helped each other and gave each other tips. Even if the project lasted for weeks, I would gladly do it again.' ♦



ERZIEHERAKADEMIE HEILBRONN

# The future of education

*The Erzieherakademie Heilbronn celebrates its opening with a science slam and a drumming session*

TEXT

Isabel Engelhaus

Following the successful start of its first school year in September 2019, the Erzieherakademie Heilbronn held its official opening ceremony on 7 November 2019 at the academy itself. There were around 100 guests in attendance, including its two managing directors, Dr Carsten Breyde and Thomas Frenzel, in addition to Silke Lohmiller, Managing Director of the Dieter Schwarz Foundation. Those in attendance enjoyed a colourful programme. Following the opening by Thomas Frenzel and head of school Isabel Engelhaus, learning expert Dr Daniel Hunold used a science slam to explain to guests how important teachers are for children's personal development. The

ensuing panel discussion debated the future of teacher training and how the profession has already changed. The discussion revealed that the host institutions, teachers and students all favour a close interconnection between theory and practice in practical education. To give the guests some insight into practical activities in lessons, students showed off their rhythmic abilities on the djembe and cajon, led by music teacher Ralf Baumgärtner. As part of the opening ceremony, the first school photo of the teachers' academy was unveiled by Silke Lohmiller. The ceremony drew to a close with refreshments and many interesting discussions. ♦

JOSEF-SCHWARZ-SCHULE

# Excellence for future skills

*The secondary levels 1 and 2 have received the 'STEM-friendly school' quality label for the first time*

When Experimenta opened its new Science Center in Heilbronn on Sunday, 31 March 2019, many JSS students chose to come along. It was partly down to curiosity, as local schools are able to work together at the adjoining child research centre to develop projects for the 'Jugend forscht' (young researchers) competition. The collaboration between JSS and Experimenta, meanwhile, has really taken root: JSS students are able to attend the labs there to learn things like how a robot is programmed or how DNA analysis works.

These kinds of initiatives that go beyond the curriculum helped the Josef-Schwarz-Schule to receive the title of 'STEM-friendly school' for its secondary levels 1 and 2. The primary school received the same certification back in 2016. The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) awards this distinction to schools throughout Germany that demonstrate pedagogic excellence by encouraging their students' learning in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

The STEM programme at the Josef-Schwarz-Schule includes one hour more of maths per week than stipulated in the state curriculum. The primary school also has its own small research laboratory, where the children conduct different experiments every month, under supervision. The afternoon club programme is another key STEM component at the school. JSS teacher Maria Tasker, who played a guiding role in the 'STEM-friendly school' project, reports: 'Kids who are naturally drawn to STEM subjects come to the after-school clubs. I have some very keen year five students joining the maths and science programme. And I've got some highly inquisitive scientists that come along to that. We also have the coding club.'

STEM-friendly schools receive particularly strong support by the business sector: 'These excellent schools do an outstanding job and inspire students to learn more about STEM. They are setting high standards in disseminating "future skills" and providing a focused professional grounding,' says Stefan Küpper, Director of Politics, Education and the Job Market at Arbeitgeber

Baden-Württemberg, one of the partner institutions that decides whether to award the quality label. The 'STEM-friendly school' label provides guidance for parents about where their children will receive a scientific and technical education that matches their interests. WK ♦





## PHORMS CAMPUS BERLIN SÜD

## Heading to China with the new lower secondary coordinator

*Six students from years 8 to 11 got to discover a new culture through an exchange programme*

In October 2019, the students from Berlin spent 12 days visiting the metropolis of Qingdao in eastern China, in addition to Beijing, which is around 650 km from Qingdao. The exchange programme at the Phorms Campus Berlin Süd has previously seen students visit Canada, Spain and Saint Martin. Thanks to the initiative of Qingdao middle school no. 4, China was now next in line.

In Qingdao, the Phorms students stayed with Chinese host families, allowing them to experience their hosts' everyday way of life and their generous hospitality. Before the trip, the group was able to get ready for the journey with a one-day seminar at the Confucius Institute at the Freie Universität Berlin. This consisted of a lecture on the current situation in China, a language course, a calligraphy unit and

an introduction to the art of tai-chi. Even after all this, however, their experiences in China were unexpected and overwhelming.

On a three-day excursion to Beijing, the students visited Tiananmen Square, which was where the massacre began in 1989. They learned a lot about how this event was processed in the aftermath, and they also touched on the government's restrictive mechanisms of control. It is currently not certain whether a reciprocal visit by the Chinese students to Berlin will be possible, due to the political situation in their country.

Robert Schleifer, the lower secondary coordinator at the Phorms Campus Berlin Süd, accompanied students on the exchange trip. The 29-year-old maths teacher has held this new position since August 2019 and, among other duties, is responsible for organising the learning assessment in year 7, the VERA 8 assessment of academic progress, and the MSA exams for year 10. He is a competent point of contact when it comes to school career guidance, questions relating to organising students' learning and motivation. Robert Schleifer not only guides the students' academic progress, but also facilitates discussions with teachers and parents. He believes that a strong relationship of trust and personal communication with students are very important. They are the essential foundations for positive interactions in everyday life both on the campus in Berlin and in China. AL ♦



PHORMS CAMPUS BERLIN MITTE

## How do you write a bestseller?

*Secondary school students were able to meet and interview the young adult author Karen McManus*

**O**n this particular afternoon, the smell of freshly printed books drifts through the air in the light-flooded music room at the Phorms Campus Berlin Mitte. The year 11 and year 12 secondary school students are waiting excitedly for the US author Karen McManus, who writes young adult novels. She is visiting the Berlin students with her new work *Two Can Keep a Secret* in tow. McManus's debut novel *One of Us is Lying* made it onto bestseller lists around the world, and the recently published sequel is now conquering the hearts of her young fans anew.

This enthusiasm is shared by students

Elena and Josephine. They spend an hour asking the author about her two novels and the art of writing, while their fellow students listen. The secondary school teachers Oda Langner and Diane Alken organised this event in cooperation with the literature initiative promoted by the Senate of Berlin. The Phorms secondary school in Berlin Mitte is the only school in Germany that McManus will visit on her book tour.

The two young interviewees are charismatic and professional as they lead the discussion, and elicit many informative answers from the friendly author. For example, McManus explains that she encountered plenty of critical opinions and rejections

with her first attempts at writing. However, she never lost sight of her dream.

'That's exactly why events like this are so great,' says English teacher Diane Alken. 'Our students can see someone who has a job they love, and who also manages to be incredibly successful with it.' Elena, who is preparing to take her final exams, adds: 'In terms of our final exams and the question of what career path to take afterwards, I also think it's very important and inspiring to have this kind of event here at school.'

And so the students not only take signed books home from the afternoon, but also fresh motivation for their future. NE♦



# Role reversal in PE

*Turning the world as we know it on its head:  
students get teachers in shape for the Abitur  
exam during a project seminar*



**Y**oga mats, TheraBands, fascia rollers, and motivated year 12 students are all that's needed to challenge teachers during a workout at the bilingual secondary school Phorms Campus München. Two students, each wearing white shirts with 'P-Seminar Abi 2020' printed on them, walk around the room confidently, motivating teachers of different subjects to do knee bends, squats, and other strength exercises. Keeping a close eye on everything, they ensure that the teachers perform the exercises correctly and sometimes gently

guide a teacher's trembling knee into the correct position. This is the 11th of a total of 12 work-out sessions. For Julia and Ila, both year 12 students, it is the last session and the one that is graded for their Abitur exam.

'Schüler machen Lehrer fit' ('Students make teachers fit') was created as part of the study and career guidance project seminar. Over time, it has generated more and more enthusiasm. Essentially, the secondary school students are responsible for jointly developing a concept that leads to

a finished product: a training programme for volunteer teachers, in this case.

Up to eight teachers took part in the work-out sessions. After the first few sessions, some participants found that their muscles hurt when they climbed the stairs, but the benefits ultimately outweighed this: 'It's great fun and allows you to get to know the students on a completely different level. It's also very motivating to work out in a supportive atmosphere and we get fitter along the way,' reports Julia Gleich, who teaches German and Ethics at the secondary school in Munich.

The seminar role reversal was particularly interesting for teachers and students alike: 'The fact that the students can get to know us from a very different perspective helps to promote harmony and togetherness in the classroom,' explains Gleich. For Julia and Ila, the situation took some getting used to at first, but the motivation boost that the work-out sessions gave them helped to step away from their usual role. Ultimately, they came to the following conclusion: 'Yes, it was fun! Our relationship with the teachers has become more relaxed and friendlier – we bond through the work-outs,' reports Ila.

'What makes the seminar so special is really what I have always wanted as a teacher: to be allowed to implement projects and ideas that aren't part of the curriculum,' affirms PE teacher Florian Kempf, who supervised the programme as part of the Abitur exam at the secondary school in Munich. Kempf already has an idea for the next seminar, one that revolves around the topics of sustainability, exercise, nutrition, and health. We look forward to seeing how PE continues to develop at the Phorms Campus München. JP ♦



**PHORMS CAMPUS  
FRANKFURT CITY**

## Global Perspectives in the classroom

*In a new subject, students learn how to understand exciting global interactions*

‘We wanted to develop a subject that gives our students modern core skills and supports them in feeling part of a global society,’ says Nickolas Praulins, head of the primary school at the Phorms Campus Frankfurt City. The new subject of Global Perspectives is based on

the Cambridge International Primary Programme (CIPP) and will be taught at the Frankfurt site for the first time this year. From year 1 to year 4, the teachers explain to the children how they can explore the topics of collaboration, reflection, innovation, problem-solving, and research with an international outlook. The teaching methods are further developed with each school year and adjusted to the ongoing learning process.

Together with the teachers, the students research the backgrounds of topics that they are familiar with from their everyday lives. Praulins reports: ‘For example, we looked at the following questions: what happens to cocoa beans on their journey to becoming chocolate? How is the cocoa farm involved in the whole process? Are the plantation farmers paid fairly? What transport routes does the product follow before it reaches the supermarket? How is the price of the chocolate decided, and is it justified?’

In another project, the children looked more closely at their own journey to school and asked themselves what difference it makes if they travel by car, public transport,



or bike. They then learned about what journeys to school look like in other countries.

‘We always look at a topic on the personal, local and global levels. The children are encouraged to reflect on how their actions can make small changes for themselves, for their local area, and also on a global scale,’ says Praulins.

Global Perspectives has been enthusiastically received by teachers, students and parents alike. For example, the new subject has already inspired some parents and children to opt for the climate-friendly option of cycling more frequently. ♦



**PHORMS CAMPUS FRANKFURT**

## HEALTHY<sup>3</sup>

*The PhorMinis nursery on the Phorms Taunus Campus is becoming a meeting place for everyone who wants to live a healthy life*

TEXT

**Lisbeth Varga**

head of the nursery PhorMinis Steinbach on the Phorms Taunus Campus

Last year, the PhorMinis nursery on the Phorms Taunus Campus took part in the nationwide movement



and learning programme ‘Olympia ruft: MACH MIT!’ (Olympics calling: JOIN IN!). The PhorMinis teaching team collaborated with Techniker Krankenkasse (TK) and symbioun e.V., a non-profit organisation that promotes preventative activities and a healthy lifestyle. The collaboration was so successful for the team and the children that once the project ended, they were soon looking for an opportunity to begin another one.

The nursery therefore applied for the GESUND<sup>3</sup> (HEALTHY<sup>3</sup>) project, which is financed by TK and lasts for three years. The management team were already able to get an insight into the project planning for the upcoming collaboration as far back as October. The project aims to raise awareness of health-related topics among children and parents. It focuses on nurseries that would like to develop and establish a long-term health concept with the support and guidance of specialists.

At the start of the project, the children, parents and educational staff were asked about their wishes and expectations so that everyone’s needs could be addressed. The aim of involving all the interested parties is to ensure that as many diseases as possible are prevented. Furthermore, a supervisory group is being formed of interested parent representatives, team members, the project management, and the nursery’s management team.

The PhorMinis nursery decided to concentrate on the topics of ‘movement’ and ‘nutrition’ to holistically expand the nursery’s focus on nature. The nursery can now make use of specialist guidance and support to establish and develop local networks. There will also be a number of workshops, lectures, training and coaching sessions. The PhorMinis team is delighted to be able to offer the nursery as a meeting place for children and parents and actively help to shape the project. ♦

# Woher kommt eigentlich unser Essen?

## Mais

Mais ist nach Weizen weltweit das meist gehandelte Getreide. Der größte Mais produzent sind die Vereinigten Staaten mit rund 371 Millionen Tonnen.

## Corn

After wheat, corn is the most widely traded grain in the world. At 371 million tonnes, the USA is the largest producer.

## Kiwi

In der Zeit von April bis November kommen die Kiwis von der südlichen Halbkugel zu uns. Im September beginnt auch die Ernte in den warmen Teilen Europas.

## Kiwi

From April to November, kiwis are exported from the southern hemisphere. In the warmer parts of Europe, the harvest begins in September.

## Avocado

Der Anbau der Avocado ist extrem wasser intensiv. Ihre globale Beliebtheit führt dazu, dass es in manchen Herkunfts ländern wie Mexiko zu einer regionalen Wasserknappheit kommt.

## Avocado

Growing avocados is extremely water intensive. The global demand created by their popularity leads to water shortages in some parts of export countries like Mexico.

## Banane

Wusstet ihr, dass die Banane grün geerntet wird, wenn sie noch hart und nicht süß ist? Sie reift während des Transports. Das wichtigste Herkunftsland für die EU ist Ecuador.

## Banana

Did you know that bananas are harvested when their skin is still green, their flesh isn't soft, and they aren't sweet yet? They ripen during transportation. For the EU, the most important export country is Ecuador.

# Where does our food come from?

## Tomate

Ein Fünftel der weltweit exportierten Tomaten kam 2018 aus den Niederlanden.

## Tomato

In 2018, a fifth of the global export volume of tomatoes was provided by the Netherlands.

## Karotte

Karotten dominieren mit knapp 20 Prozent bei der deutschen Gemüseernte. In der EU werden die meisten Karotten in Polen angebaut.

## Carrot

Germany grows more carrots than any other vegetable. They make up 20 percent of the total harvest. In the EU, the largest carrot producer is Poland.

## Ananas

Wusstet ihr, dass Kolumbus die Frucht nach Europa brachte? Die meisten Supermärkte in Deutschland beziehen Ananas von der Elfenbeinküste.

## Pineapple

Did you know that Columbus brought this fruit to Europe? Most supermarkets in Germany sell pineapples from the Ivory Coast.

## Kokosnuss

Die Kokosnuss wächst am besten bei tropischem Klima mit viel Sonne und hoher Luftfeuchtigkeit. Der größte Exporteur der Palmfrucht ist Indonesien.

## Coconut

Coconuts need a sunny and humid tropical climate to grow. The leading exporter of these palm fruits is Indonesia.

## Reis

Etwa 91 Prozent der Welternte von Reis werden in Asien erbracht, davon mehr als die Hälfte in China und Indien.

## Rice

Asia is the biggest producer of rice, with around 91 per cent of the world's harvest. More than half of it comes from China and India.