

MEDIA RELEASE

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SPREADING THE WORD

The Ilhan Food Allergy Foundation has launched a major public awareness campaign to help allergy sufferers enjoy safe and delicious food and promote a healthy lifestyle for all school children.

One of the most effective ways to spread the message is to target children. The Foundation has partnered with Firbank Grammar school in Melbourne to develop a pilot curriculum program to promote healthy lifestyles.

The Foundation has published what it believes is a first of its kind for Australia - a mass-produced, glossy coffee table cookbook called *Fast Ideas* that is full of recipes to assist most allergy sufferers eat healthy food.

The recipes have been carefully designed to not include most of the major allergens that cause allergic reactions in sufferers. The cookbook is also believed to be one of the first cookbooks in Australia to offer substitute ingredients for multiple allergens in most recipes.

Fast Ideas will be sold nationally in all Crazy John's stores and represents a break through in assisting the families of allergy victims.

In addition, the Ilhan Food Allergy Foundation has produced a 45-minute DVD starring such well known personalities as celebrity chef Iain Hewitson and specialist medical practitioner Dr John Tickell highlighting healthy eating and the benefits of improved family lifestyle. The DVD called *The Healthy Eating Program* promotes fun, healthy cooking and the benefits of exercise and also deals with issues such as obesity and diabetes as well as outlining some of the medical dangers faced by allergy sufferers.

It is hoped that eventually the DVD will one day be made available to every school in Australia.

The Ilhan Food Allergy Foundation worked closely in conjunction with Firbank Grammar School in Melbourne to create both the *Fast Ideas* cookbook and DVD. Both the Foundation and the school have also partnered to develop curriculum materials in a kit to be used at Firbank to encourage healthy living for students.

John Ilhan said the decision to launch such a high profile public awareness campaign was in keeping with the strong commitment by the Foundation to promote both public education and research into the effects of food allergies.

"The cookbook and DVD are an important first steps in trying to educate the broader community that food allergies are a major problem and it is something everyone involved with food preparation must take seriously," he said.

"The cookbook allows families to confidently enjoy cooking and serving healthy food, especially when they have a family member that suffers from allergies. The DVD has broader benefits because it promotes a healthy lifestyle at a time when children everywhere are facing a range of eating issues."



FIRBANK
GRAMMAR



“On a personal level, the creation of both the cookbook and DVD are very satisfying because my wife Patricia played a crucial role in their creation. Patricia has always been crying out for a cookbook to help prepare food for our daughter Jaida who suffers from acute nut allergy and now she has her wish,” said John Ilhan.

“The Foundation was particularly proud to partner with Firbank Grammar in creating both the cookbook and DVD.”

Food allergies are a major community problem in Australia. As many as 1 in 20 children suffer from the effects of food allergies, some with tragic outcomes.

Dr Anne Sarros, Head of Firbank Grammar said her school was proud to develop a curriculum for student health and well-being in conjunction with the Ilhan Food Allergy Foundation, which includes both the DVD and cookbook.

“We anticipate that in time the curriculum will be made available to all schools Australia wide. A highlight of it was the development and production of *Fast Ideas*. This cookbook is a first of its kind, has been designed to promote healthy eating for children at school and at home,” Dr Sarros said.

“I am immensely proud of what our school has achieved, because it epitomises what Firbank represents – a school of innovation and achievement. *Fast Ideas*, the cookbook, the DVD and other materials are the basis of a very strong curriculum, that Firbank knows will have a significant impact today, tomorrow and beyond,” she said.

A food allergy is an immune system response to a food that the body mistakenly believes is harmful. Although an individual could be allergic to any food, such as fruits, vegetables, and meats, there are eight foods that account for 90 per cent of all food-allergic reactions. These are: milk, egg, peanut, tree nut (walnut, cashew, etc.), fish, shellfish, soy, and wheat.

John Ilhan, founder of the successful Crazy John’s mobile phone retailer, established the Ilhan Food Allergy Foundation in early 2006. In May 2006, he announced an initial donation of \$1 million to help support medical research and promote education into allergy issues.

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