



New Bristol Charity Launches Programme To Teach Teenagers To Cook 5 Healthy Meals

New Bristol-based charity, **CRuNCH**, wants all teenagers to be able to cook 5 simple, healthy meals before they leave home. Its **Cook5 with CRuNCH** programme is a fully-funded 5 week course delivered in senior schools which equips young people with cooking skills, a good understanding of basic nutrition and arms them with 5 simple recipes which they can cook from scratch.

CRuNCH has already successfully piloted the programme in Merchants' Academy, Withywood Bristol, and Fulham Cross Girls School, London. Now the charity is raising funds to deliver its programme in schools in the Bristol postcode area.

The charity wants Bristol to be the first '**Cook5** city', where all youngsters leave home with the ability to cook 5 meals. It plans to roll out the programme nationally in 2028, building '**Cook5** cities' around the UK. By 2030, **CRuNCH** plans to have impacted the lives of 500,000 young people.

The programme will be kicking off at Worle Community School Academy near Weston-Super-Mare on March 3rd 2025.

Some 66% of the UK teenager's daily calories come from ultra-processed foods (UPFs) - the highest proportion for any age group. These foods tend to have higher levels of added sugars, saturated fat and sodium, as well as less fibre, protein, and other important nutrients than fresh food cooked from scratch. There is strong evidence linking UPFs to the rise in obesity, type 2 diabetes, poor mental health and even certain cancers.

By 2040 almost three-quarters of adults in the UK are predicted to be obese – that's 42 million of us! Diet-related disease is putting such a strain on the nation's health and finances it is costing the NHS around £6.1 billion annually. The wider economic cost such as loss of productivity is estimated to be £27 billion per year.

CRuNCH wants to provide young people with a solid foundation for a healthier, happier future by helping them make better food choices and gain the skills and the confidence to enjoy cooking for the rest of their lives.

Cook5 with CRuNCH makes cooking fun, accessible and achievable by using the simple power of 5:

- 5 meals
- 5 nutrition tips
- 5 key skills, in
- 5 sessions, over
- 5 weeks

Meals range from how to cook eggs, healthy pancakes, soups, stir fries, rice and pasta to a classic burger, a ragu, kofta, felafel, vegetarian curries, dahl, pad Thai noodles and fajitas.

Kate Percy, founder of **CRuNCH**, says:

*“We target teenagers with our **Cook5 with CRuNCH** programme because this is the age they start to make their own decisions about food. They pick up cooking skills and understand nutrition basics very quickly if they are just given the chance. Inviting parents and carers into the final session to sample their meals brings the idea into the community. Many of the amazing year 7’s at Merchants’ Academy had never cooked before but after 4 sessions they were chopping veggies like a pro! It’s amazing to see them jump at the opportunity to try new foods when they are actually cooking them themselves”.*

*“We’re also not talking about cupcakes and cookies, **Cook5 with CRuNCH** is about enabling and inspiring young people to cook proper food; everyday meals to support a healthy lifestyle. It’s something we’ve refined over many years working in many different types of schools..”*

Sam Williamson, Principal of Merchants’ Academy, Withywood, comments:

“Kate’s positivity and energy are infectious and our young people have loved learning to cook family recipes from scratch with her. Equipping our young people with basic skills to enable them to lead healthy and happy lives has never been more of a priority and one that we are equally passionate about at Merchants’ Academy. More of the same please!”

ENDS

Notes to Editors

CRuNCH...time for a healthier, happier tomorrow, Charities Commission Registration Number: 1211341

Website: www.crunchtime.org.uk

CRuNCH is the brainchild of Kate Percy, author of the Go Faster Food series, cook and children’s healthy eating campaigner and is based on her experience over the past 15 years developing and delivering healthy eating programmes for the BBC, Virgin Sport, United Learning Academy Group and schools and sports clubs across the UK.

A Bristol resident for more than 35 years, Kate currently lives in Leigh Woods.

CRuNCH’s mission is to empower young people in England with the skills to cook healthy food for better physical and mental wellbeing ...for a healthier, happier tomorrow.

For further information, interviews with Kate Percy and hi-res imagery please contact Kate Percy:



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