



HEALTHIER OPTIONS FOR CHILDREN THIS EASTER Reports Responsesource.com

With an estimated 80 million Easter eggs sold in Britain last year and similarly huge sales expected this year, it's not easy for parents to curb their children's appetite for chocolate. But for families concerned about maintaining the good health of their youngsters, while still giving them treats and fun over the holidays, one pub company has cracked it.

The Spirit Group has responded positively to the ongoing debate on children's eating and health by launching a new menu at its family-friendly pubs.

It has reduced the fat and salt content of all the children's main courses, provided gluten free meals and flagged up a nutritional table on the menu to give greater guidance. In addition, all the 'build your own' healthy food sections have no artificial colours, flavours or sweeteners.

Youngsters treated to a meal out at these pubs will find a choice of dishes, not just the undoubtedly popular chicken nuggets and burgers. These young consumers can tuck into pasta dishes, cottage pie and curries for example, while fajitas stuffed with healthy vegetables are proving a fun make-it-yourself option.

Jason Fellows is a regional manager at Spirit Group, the managed house division of Punch Taverns, the UK's largest pub operator with more than 9,300 leased, tenanted and managed pubs across the UK. He said: "We know a meal out at the pub is a popular family treat. And with the Wacky Warehouses and outdoor play areas at many of our pubs they are a great place to go to burn off excess energy and the extra calories from the Easter eggs which kids love. "The meals we serve are an important part of that family experience and we offer quality food and value for money for children."

Young customers and their needs are taken seriously at Spirit pubs with a menu, which offers them real choice; it's not the limited and unimaginative one you may find elsewhere. Jason explained: "To ensure we got the right balance we tested our menus on experts – seeking the opinions of a children's consumer panel. We asked for their feedback, which gave us some strong views to build our menu around. "Healthy diets for children start in the home, so eating out at a pub has to be put in context, it is a treat; it is not where they have meals every day. Having said that, we do take our responsibilities to healthy eating seriously. It is why we have put renewed efforts into improving our menus from a nutritional point of view."

Spirit introduced Guideline Daily Amounts (GDA) onto the nutritional table on the back of the children's menu. The guidelines help parents choose options which allow them to mix treats with healthy, staple foods to get a balance that meets recommended daily intake.

All main dishes were reviewed for fat, saturated fats, sugar and salt with a notable reduction gained. The dishes were tasted by Spirit's consumer panel with fantastic feedback from the children and parents alike.

BFFF

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