

10 October 2005

Rt Hon Tony Blair MP
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Dear Tony

An open letter to the Prime Minister seeking support for the Children's Food Bill

We are writing to ask you to support the Children's Food Bill in its passage through Parliament. As food writers and broadcasters, chefs and promoters of good food, we believe that this Bill can turn around the decline in children's diets over the last 20 years. We stand alongside 150 national organisations, over 200 cross-party MPs and many thousands of concerned parents who already support the Bill.

Jamie's School Dinners highlighted the dire state of school food and we welcome recent Government announcements to introduce minimum nutritional standards and remove junk food from school vending machines. But there is still much more to do. Providing healthy, freshly cooked food on children's plates will require a kitchen in every school, training for catering staff, as well as funding for wholesome ingredients and the time for their preparation.

If we are to change children's attitudes to food, the Government must now act to end junk food advertising and promotions which influence children's food choices and undermine their health. And to stop the scandal of children leaving school knowing only how to open a packet or a tin, cooking and other practical food skills must become part of the school curriculum for every child.

As a father, you know how important healthy, good and enjoyable food is to the development of children. Making the Children's Food Bill law will ensure that all children – wherever they live and whatever their backgrounds – benefit from better food. They deserve nothing less.

Yours sincerely

[Signatories listed overleaf]

Signatories:

Patrick Anthony, Food writer and broadcaster

Annie Bell, Food writer, Country Living, Mail on Sunday

Raymond Blanc, Chef and restaurateur

Jill Dupleix, Food writer, The Times

Richard, Earl of Bradford, Food writer and restaurateur

Fiona Hamilton-Fairley, Food writer and Principal of Kids' Cookery School

Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, Food writer and broadcaster

Peter Gordon, Chef and food writer

Felicity Green, Food writer

Henrietta Green, Food writer and organiser of Food Lovers Fairs

Sophie Grigson, Food writer and broadcaster

Richard Johnson, Food writer and broadcaster

Sue Lawrence, Food writer and President of the Guild of Food Writers

Jeanette Orrey, Author and award winning dinner lady

Marguerite Patten OBE, food writer and presenter

Gary Rhodes, Chef, restaurateur, food writer and broadcaster

Nigel Slater, Food writer and journalist

Rick Stein, Chef, restaurateur, food writer and broadcaster

Jane Suthering, Food writer and Vice-President of the Guild of Food Writers

Mitchell Tonks, Food writer and restaurateur

Antony Worrall Thompson, Chef, restaurateur, food writer and broadcaster

Mitzie Wilson, Editor, Delicious magazine

Elisabeth Winkler, Writer and editor, Living Earth, Soil Association magazine