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Woman who lost 52 kilograms takes
healthy cooking classes for youth

JACK FLETCHER

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David Walker

Bibi Corr went through a dramatic health transformation where she lost 52kgs, now running healthy cooking classes for kids.

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A Christchurch woman is using her 52 kilogram weight loss as motivation to teach younger generations the benefits of healthy eating.

Through her company VeggieFun, Bibi Corr runs weekly vegetarian cooking classes for children as young as 7 years old, giving the fast food generation an opportunity to try healthy alternatives and take home recipes to cook with their families.

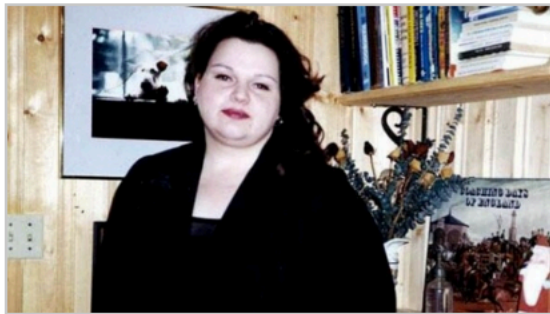
Corr said kids generally did not have a say in what was bought at the supermarket, and many were unaware of healthier options – something she experienced herself when younger.

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Bibi Corr was 24 when she realised she needed to be "responsible for my own actions". She lost 52 kilograms over three years by changing to a healthier diet.

"We ate a lot of meat, dairy products and heavy greasy foods – to me that was normal, and things just got out of hand as I got older.

At 24, she weighed 128kg.

She started to eat sensibly, taking responsibility for her own diet and writing down what she was eating and how it made her feel.



EKANT VEER

Bibi Corr helps Micaiah Veer prepare a vegetarian meal at one of Corr's VeggieFun cooking classes.

"It was hard at first but it was exciting, and the first week I stuck to it. Through a little bit of suffering, I lost two kilograms and then the next week I lost another two, and that gave me enough motivation to keep going," she said.

The weight "just slid off" during the first year, then began to plateau, but she maintained her healthy new lifestyle through exercise and vegetarianism.

"It took about three years to lose 52kgs, and that was just through changing my diet and being responsible for my own actions."

She has kept it off. Now, at age 39, she weighs 75kg.



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Corr said she was in tears after watching *Fed Up*, a recently released documentary about obese kids in America "at their wits end" and unaware of healthy food choices.

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She hoped to use her own experiences to have an influence on the issue of child obesity in New Zealand.

"I want to teach them what other foods are available and how to make it in a healthy, easy way."

Parents were often shocked at what their children would eat if they had made it themselves, she said.

"When most parents hear about VeggieFun, they automatically think, 'oh my kid would never like that', but I've had kids asking for seconds of a beetroot dip we made, who normally hated beetroot."

Corr planned to start adult classes soon, saying the demand had been huge since starting the children's classes.

"I wasn't going to do adult classes, but there has been so much interest from mothers of kids, and obviously those mothers have been telling their friends," she said.

"I think the bulk of people will be interested in transitioning to a plant-based lifestyle in a healthy way, and others will be interested in weight loss."

Christchurch Vegetarian Centre president Yolanda Soryl said Corr's initiative was a step in the right direction.

"Children are constantly bombarded with bad choices, so to teach them healthier ways of cooking and eating can only be a good thing."

- **Stuff**