

Survey questions

Poll 9 - Kids and Food: Challenges families face

December 2017

The below questions were reported on in the ninth RCH National Child Health Poll – Kids and food: Challenges families face.

As a parent or carer, you play a role in helping to decide what your child eats. Healthy eating habits and good nutrition are important for kids' health, growth and development. It can be challenging for parents to know what's best and to encourage good food habits for their children. We are interested in learning more about your experiences and thoughts on food and your family.

Question 1

There are lots of different factors that affect people's decisions about which foods to buy for their family. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements about buying food for your family.

Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly disagree

- a) I feel confident that I know which foods are healthy choices for my family
- b) When choosing food to buy, it can be difficult to know what is healthy and what is unhealthy
- c) I sometimes buy unhealthy food products that my children ask for because they have seen them advertised.
- d) Healthy food is generally more expensive than less healthy food
- e) I find it hard to know how much added sugar is in the food products I buy for my children

Question 2

Some food products have nutritional labels that provide information about nutritional content. An example is included below. Please rate your agreement with the following statement about nutritional labelling.

NUTRITION INFORMATION		
Servings per package: 3		
Serving size: 150g		
	Quantity per serving	Quantity per 100 g
Energy	608 kJ	405 kJ
Protein	4.2 g	2.8 g
Fat, total	7.4 g	4.9 g
— saturated	4.5 g	3.0 g
Carbohydrate, total	18.6 g	12.4 g
— sugars	18.6 g	12.4 g
Sodium	90 mg	60 mg
Ingredients: Whole milk, concentrated skim milk, sugar, banana (8%), strawberry (6%), grape (4%), peach (2%), pineapple (2%), gelatine, culture, thickener (1442)		
All quantities above are averages		

Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly disagree

a) I often find it hard to understand nutritional labels

With busy lifestyles, many families have different habits when it comes to preparing meals at home. The next few questions are about cooking and preparing meals for your family at home.

Question 3

Thinking about a typical week, how often do your children eat a dinner that has been cooked by a family member at home?

Every day of the week, Almost every day of the week, 4 to 5 days a week, 2 to 3 days a week, 1 day a week, Less than 1 day a week, Never

Question 4

Thinking about a typical week, how often does your child help make dinner?

Every day of the week, Almost every day of the week, 4 to 5 days a week, 2 to 3 days a week, 1 day a week, Less than 1 day a week, Never

Question 5

Thinking about a typical week, what, if anything, makes it too difficult for you to cook dinner at home? Select all that apply.

- The cost of ingredients is expensive
- I lack the time to cook
- Cooking is too stressful
- I am too tired at the end of the day
- I find it hard to be organised enough to have the ingredients I need on hand
- My children prefer food that is not cooked at home
- I don't have the skills to prepare or cook food well
- I don't have the appropriate equipment I need to cook (e.g. stove)
- None of the above

Question 6

Has your child been taught how to prepare and/or cook food at home? Please answer separately for each of your children aged over five years.

Yes, No, Not sure

6b) If not, for what reason hasn't your child been taught how to prepare and/or cook food at home?

Select all that apply

- I don't think it is important to do this
- No-one in my house has the time to do this
- This involves too much mess to clean up
- Teaching my child to cook will waste too much food
- My child is not interested
- No-one in my house has the skills to teach my child to cook
- My child is too young to learn to cook or prepare food
- It is not safe for my child to learn to cook (e.g. they might cut themselves or get burnt)
- None of the above

Lots of families have different habits when it comes to eating meals. The next few questions are about mealtime routines at home.

Question 7

Thinking about a typical week, how often does your family eat dinner together?

Every day of the week, 4 to 6 days a week, 1 to 3 days a week, Less than 1 day a week, Never, Not sure

Question 8

Thinking about a typical week, how often do your children eat take-away meals (including home delivered) or fast food for dinner?

Every day of the week, Almost every day of the week, 4 to 5 days a week, 2 to 3 days a week, 1 day a week, Less than 1 day a week, Never

Question 9

Thinking about a typical week, how many days per week does your child drink soft drinks or other sugar sweetened drinks (such as sports drinks, energy and electrolyte drinks, artificial fruit drinks or cordial)

Every day of the week, Almost every day of the week, 4 to 5 days a week, 2 to 3 days a week, 1 day a week, Less than 1 day a week, Never

Question 10

Which of the following places does your child typically drink soft drinks or other sugar sweetened drinks (such as sports drinks, energy and electrolyte drinks, artificial fruit drinks or cordial). *Select all that apply.*

- at home
- at school
- at sporting events
- at other social events outside the home

- Other, please say
- None of the above

Question 11

a) Thinking about a typical day, how many serves of fruit (not including fruit juice) does your child eat? Examples of a serve of fruit include a medium sized apple, a banana or a cup of diced fruit). BY CHILD.

None, ½, 1, 1 ½, 2, 2 ½, 3, 3 ½, 4, 4 ½, 5, 5 ½, 6, Not sure

b) Thinking about a typical day, how many serves of vegetables (including salad vegetables, legumes and beans) does your child eat? Examples of a serve of vegetables include half a cup of cooked vegetables or one cup of leafy greens or salad vegetables. BY CHILD.

None, ½, 1, 1 ½, 2, 2 ½, 3, 3 ½, 4, 4 ½, 5, 5 ½, 6, Not sure

Question 12

Do any of the following things make it difficult for you to get your children to eat fruit and vegetables? *Select all that apply.*

- My child refuses to eat them
- It takes too long to prepare
- My child prefers other food
- I don't like to eat fruit and vegetables myself
- They are too expensive to buy
- They perish too quickly
- None of the above

Question 13

a) Thinking about a typical week, how often would you give your child 'treat food' products? e.g. chips, chocolates, lollies, pizza, cakes, biscuits, flavoured milks, soft drinks, fruit bars, muesli bars, fruit straps, pastries etc BY CHILD

Every day of the week, Almost every day of the week, 4 to 5 days a week, 2 to 3 days a week, 1 day a week, Less than 1 day a week, Never

b) For what reasons do you give your children treat food products? Select all that apply.

- To make up for not being able to spend as much time as I would like with them

- To control or reward my children's behaviour
- Because I can't afford to buy them other things they want
- My children request these food products
- To comfort my children in difficult situations
- As a way to show my children I love them
- Because other children get them and I don't want my children to miss out.
- None of the above

In Australia, there are recommendations about what types of foods and how much of these foods children should eat. The next few questions are about your thoughts on these recommendations.

Question 14

On average, how many serves of fruit do you think your child should eat each day? Examples of a serve of fruit include one medium sized apple or banana or a cup of diced fruit. BY CHILD

None, ½, 1, 1 ½, 2, 2 ½, 3, 3 ½, 4, 4 ½, 5, 5 ½, 6, Not sure

Question 15

On average, how many serves of vegetables (this includes salad vegetables, legumes and beans) do you think your child should eat each day? Examples of a serve of vegetables include half a cup of cooked vegetables or one cup of leafy greens or salad vegetables. BY CHILD.

None, ½, 1, 1 ½, 2, 2 ½, 3, 3 ½, 4, 4 ½, 5, 5 ½, 6, Not sure

Question 16

Many people have differing beliefs about diet and nutrition. Please rate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.

Strongly agree, Agree, Unsure, Disagree, Strongly disagree

- a) Only children who are underweight can be malnourished
- b) Eating unhealthy food can be balanced out by eating healthy food
- c) Drinking a fruit juice product is a healthier option than drinking water
- d) Some fats and oils are healthy and should be included regularly in the diet

- e) Overweight children will naturally lose their excess weight as they get older
- f) Children need sports drinks to recover from regular physical activity
- g) A child's weight is mostly due to genetics (inherited from their parents) and can't be changed by diet or activity
- h) A healthy diet helps to support a child's mental health
- i) There's no problem with children having treat food products every day so long as they are balanced with healthy food
- j) Eating patterns established in childhood continue into adulthood

Question 17

How would you describe your child's weight? BY CHILD.

Underweight, Appropriate weight, Slightly overweight, Overweight, Obese Not sure

Participants were also asked demographic questions on gender, country of birth, languages spoken at home, annual household income, education and health care card status.

All information is the sole property of The Royal Children's Hospital National Child Health Poll. It can only be used if there is an acknowledgment that "The information came from, is copyright by and belongs to the Regents of The Royal Children's Hospital National Child Health Poll. It cannot be republished or used in any format without prior written permission from The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne."