

Poll 24 – Ready-made baby foods: Do parents know the facts?

{PRESENT MODULE to parents with at least one child aged less than 5 years}

The next few questions are about ready-made, pre-made or processed baby and toddler foods sold in supermarkets and other shops or online. These foods usually come packaged in pouches, jars or boxes. Examples of these foods include purees, ready-made meals and handheld snacks. They do not include baby or toddler formula.

{BRANCH only to parents of children aged 4 months to less than five years}

Question 1

Thinking about a typical week, how often does your child eat ready-made foods for babies or toddlers? *Please answer separately for each child aged between 4 months and less than 5 years.*

- a) Every day of the week
- b) 4–6 days a week
- c) 2–3 days a week
- d) One day a week
- e) Less than one day a week
- f) Never

{BRANCH to those who responded a through to e for question 1 i.e. those whose child eats ANY ready-made food.}

Question 2

Thinking about a typical week, approximately how much of your child's overall food intake is ready-made food? *Please answer separately for each child aged between 4 months and 5 years.*

- a) All of my child's meals and snacks
- b) Most of my child's meals and snacks
- c) About half of my child's meals and snacks
- d) Very little of my child's meals and snacks

Question 3

{OFFER ONCE to all parents of children aged < 5 years}

Parents make decisions everyday about what to feed their children. Below are some reasons why parents may choose to feed their children ready-made baby and toddler foods.

How likely are the following reasons to make you choose to feed your child/r en ready-made baby and toddler foods? *Response scale: extremely likely/very likely/somewhat likely/not at all likely*

- a) They are cheap
- b) They are quick and easy
- c) My child can eat ready-made food directly from the packet
- d) They are healthy
- e) No need to refrigerate before opening
- f) They are easy to use when out and about
- g) Wide variety to choose from
- h) I'm not sure how to prepare home-made food for my child
- i) My child prefers ready-made foods over other foods
- j) My child likes the taste of ready-made foods
- k) They are a good treat or reward

Question 4

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements about baby and toddler foods. *Response scale: Strongly agree/agree/disagree/strongly disagree/not sure*

- a) Ready-made baby and toddler foods are as healthy for children as food made at home
- b) Ready-made baby and toddler foods are healthier for children than food made at home
- c) Toddlers have different nutritional needs which means they can not eat the same foods as others in the family
- d) Ready-made baby and toddler foods have ingredients to make sure children grow and develop well
- e) Eating habits in early childhood have a lifelong impact on health
- f) As long as a child is gaining weight it means that they are healthy
- g) Ready-made baby and toddler foods must be healthy or else the government wouldn't allow them to be sold in the shops
- h) I am concerned about the environmental impact of the packaging of ready-made baby and toddler foods
- i) I would rather feed my child home-made food but I give them ready-made food because I don't have time to make it at home
- j) It is not practical for parents to make all food for their babies or toddlers at home
- k) There are laws about what is allowed to be put in ready-made foods for babies and toddlers
- l) There are laws to ensure ready-made foods for babies and toddlers provide good nutrition

The next questions are about the choices you make when you buy food for your baby or toddler.

Question 5

How likely are the following things to affect your choice about whether to buy ready-made baby and toddler foods? *Response scale: Extremely likely/very likely/somewhat likely/not at all likely*

- a) My relatives' advice and opinions
- b) My friends' advice and opinions
- c) Social media influencers' advice and opinions
- d) My partners' advice and opinions
- e) Advertising online and in magazines
- f) Advertising on TV
- g) Advice and opinions from health professionals (e.g child health nurse, doctor)
- h) Being given a free sample to try

Question 6

How likely are the following things about the packaging to affect your choice when buying ready-made baby or toddler food products? *Response scale: Extremely likely/very likely/somewhat likely/not at all likely*

- a) Images of fruit and/or vegetables
- b) Cartoons or characters that my child likes
- c) Ingredient list
- d) Nutritional Information Panel
- e) Name of the product
- f) The type of packaging (e.g. a pouch versus a jar)
- g) Brand
- h) Colour and/or design of package
- i) Being familiar with the type of packaging
- j) Information about the place where the food is made

Question 7

How likely are the following claims on the packaging to make you choose to buy a particular ready-made baby or toddler food product? *Response scale: Extremely likely/very likely/somewhat likely/not at all likely*

- a) Free from preservatives, colours, flavours, additives and/or thickeners
- b) No added sugar

- c) Organic
- d) Natural/natural ingredients
- e) Indication that the product contains specific vitamins and minerals (such as iron, calcium, B vitamins)
- f) Free from allergens (such as dairy, gluten and nuts)
- g) Statements that the food is made with real fruit and vegetables
- h) Statements that the food contains more than one serve of fruit and or vegetables
- i) Natural sweetness – that is, sweetened with fruit
- j) Other specific ingredients are in the product – e.g. contains grains / goodness of milk / prebiotics
- k) Made in Australia

In Australia certain foods and food products are regulated by the government. This means that the government makes laws and/or standards about how the foods are made, what they contain and how they are sold.

We are interested in your opinion about government laws or standards about ready-made baby (0-12 months) and toddler (1-3 years) foods sold in Australia.

Question 8

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements about ready-made food for BABIES ONLY.

There should be laws about the following things to do with ready-made baby (0-12 months) foods sold in Australia. *Response scale: Strongly agree/agree/disagree/strongly disagree*

- a) What can be put in ready-made baby foods to make sure they are not bad for the health of the baby
- b) The amount of sugars that are harmful to health that they contain
- c) The amount of salt they contain
- d) The amount of saturated fat they contain
- e) The number of servings in a single packet (e.g. in a pouch, jar, bag)
- f) The words, images and claims that can be used on the packaging
- g) All nutritional claims made about the product. E.g. 'no added sugar', 'low in salt'.

Question 9

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements about ready-made food for TODDLERS ONLY.

There should be laws about the following things to do with ready-made toddler (1-3 years) foods sold in Australia. *Response scale: Strongly agree/agree/disagree/strongly disagree*

- a) What can be put in ready-made toddler foods to make sure they are not bad for the health of the toddler
- b) The amount of all sugars that are harmful to health that they contain
- c) The amount of salt they contain
- d) The amount of saturated fat they contain
- e) The number of servings in a single packet (e.g. in a pouch, jar, bag)
- f) The words, images and claims that can be used on the packaging
- g) All nutritional claims made about the product. E.g. 'no added sugar', 'low in salt'.