

Primary School

Healthy Eating Follow-up

Surveys

Findings Report-

April 2017 (Addendum 2018)

*Lower Hume Primary Care Partnership Integrated
Health Promotion Collaborative*



Acknowledgements

This Addendum is the product of work completed by a team from the Lower Hume Primary Care Partnership Integrated Health Promotion Collaborative and provides further analysis of data from the 2013/14 and 2017 healthy eating surveys completed by primary school age children and their parents.

In addition to acknowledgements in the 2017 document, we acknowledge the contribution of the following team member for her invaluable assistance with data analysis.

Kristen Glenister, Melbourne University

RESULTS

Children's Day in the Life Questionnaire (DILQ):

The percentage of children who reported consuming fruit at school on at least one occasion during the survey day was significantly higher in the 2017 study than the 2013/2014 study (2017 n=196, 76.3%, 2013/2014 n=146, 51.4%, $p<0.001$).

Nutrition and Food Security – Parent Survey:

Comparison of parent surveys at both time frames indicated that the average daily serves of fruit consumed by children (as reported by their parents) was similar in 2017 (mean 2.5, standard deviation 1.2) and 2013/2014 (mean 2.8, standard deviation 1.7) ($p=0.289$). The average daily serves of vegetables consumed by children (as reported by their parents) was lower among the 2017 study (mean 2.2, standard deviation 1.4) than the 2013/2014 study (mean 2.9, standard deviation 2.0) ($p=0.019$).

As illustrated by Figure 1, children's intakes as reported by their parents were much more likely to meet fruit intake guidelines than they were vegetables intake guidelines.

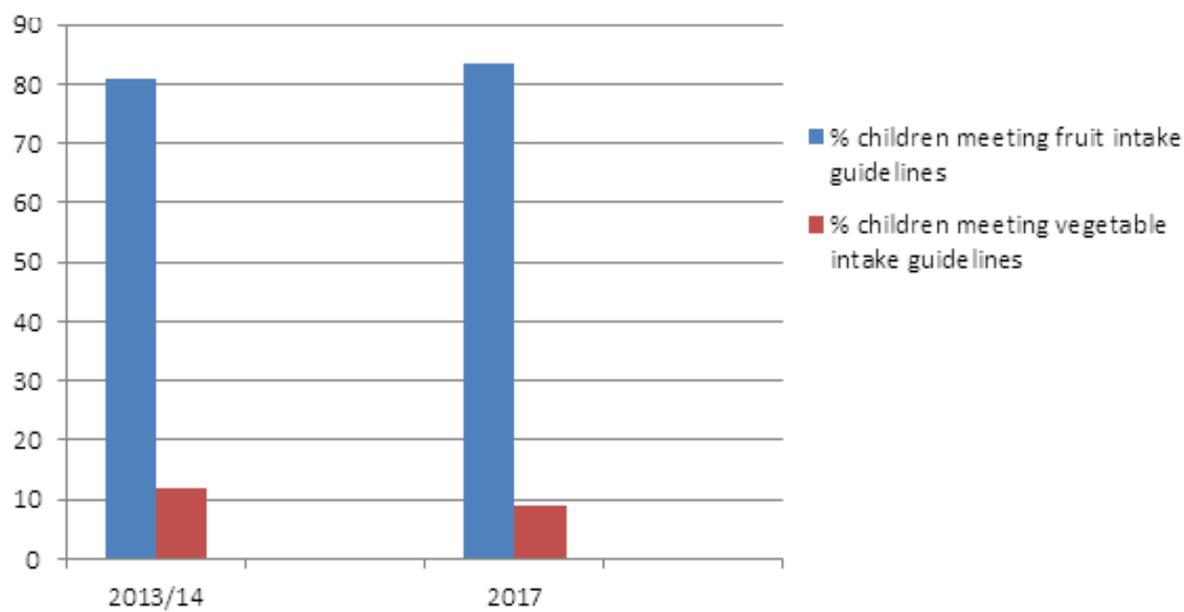
The proportion of children meeting fruit consumption guidelines were similar in 2017 study (n=46, 83.6%) and 2013/2014 study (n=76, 80.9%), $p=0.670$). The proportion of children meeting vegetable consumption guidelines (as calculated from parent reports) was similar in the 2017 study (n=5, 9.1%) and the 2013/2014 study (n=11, 11.8%), $p=0.604$.

Further analysis of the data also suggested that parent's attitudes and self rated knowledge of nutrition did not impact children's fruit and vegetable consumption. For example, the percentage of children meeting fruit consumption guidelines (based on parent reports) was similar among parents who reported that they 'cared very much' about eating nutritious food (n=72, 84.7%) in comparison to parents who reported that they cared 'quite a lot'/'little bit' (n=50, 78.1%, $p=0.302$) on a 4 point scale. No parents rated their level of care about eating nutritious food as 'not at all'.

The percentage of children meeting fruit consumption guidelines (based on parent reports) was also similar among parents who reported that they had 'excellent' knowledge of nutritious food (n=32, 80.0%) compared with parents who reported their knowledge as 'above average/ average' (n=90, 82.6%, $p=0.718$) on a 5 point scale. No parents rated their knowledge as 'poor' or 'very poor'.

Healthy Eating Surveys' Findings Report, April 2017 (Addendum July 2018)

Figure 1: Proportion of children meeting fruit and vegetable intake guidelines as reported by parents



The percentage of children meeting vegetable consumption guidelines (calculated from parent report of child's vegetable intake) was similar among parents who reported that they 'cared very much' about eating nutritious food (n=9, 10.7%) compared with parents who reported that they cared 'quite a lot'/'little bit' (n=7, 10.9%, p=0.965) on a 4 point scale. No parents rated their level of care about eating nutritious food as 'not at all'.

The percentage of children meeting vegetable consumption guidelines (calculated from parent report of child's vegetable intake) was similar among parents who reported that they had 'excellent' knowledge of nutritious food (n=6, 15.4%) compared with parents who reported their knowledge as 'above average/ average' (n=10, 9.2%, p=0.284) on a 5 point scale. No parents rated their knowledge as 'poor' or 'very poor'.

Recommendations/Conclusion:

The above results further contribute to initial report findings that in Lower Hume the vegetable intake of primary school children is poor and an area of future focus. More specifically, they demonstrate that vegetable intake guidelines are much less likely to be met when compared to fruit intake guidelines. In addition, parent's attitudes and self-rated knowledge of nutrition did not impact children's fruit and vegetable consumption.

These results further support the following recommendations that were already made in the August 2016 Report, which include;

- Vegetable consumption is an area of focus, particularly in the school setting.
- Continue with a settings based approach to reach all children.
- Further investigate strategies to assist parents in regards to food budgeting, home based gardening and quick, affordable and healthy meal ideas.
- Develop some support strategies for parents in respect to fussy eating in children management, with consideration of targeting parents of children in the 1-5 year age group.