

2020 Results

Food Sensations for Parents Program



FOOD SENSATIONS FOR PARENTS (FSP) is a community nutrition education and cooking program designed for parents of children aged 0-5 years. There is no cost for parents to attend the program which aims to improve parents' knowledge, skills and confidence to apply food literacy skills and positive parenting practices to support healthy eating. Healthway has funded this program for three years (2019-2021).

Who is attending the program?

Participants were **mostly female aged 26-35 years** with children under 3 years

188 parents or carers attended

50% of participants indicated they live in disadvantaged or low socio-economic index (SEIFA) areas

25 programs were delivered through a number of parenting organisations and online

Effectiveness



Overall **82%** of participants made at least one positive improvement in food literacy

83% of participants made a least one positive improvement in parenting practices

FSP improves food literacy and parenting practices

"Loved learning the recipes and being hands on. Wasn't made to feel bad about not knowing all the right answers. Knowledgeable teacher"
Parent

"It was extremely useful and helped change our family eating habits, making healthy choices and buying fresh produce"
Parent

Percentage of participants who made improvements in food literacy

Participants were **MORE** likely to:

Use the Nutrition Information Panel (NIP) to make food choices	Feel confident making changes in food choices	Compare prices to select low cost healthy foods
62%	60%	50%

Food literacy: Factors that are required to plan, manage, select, prepare and eat food to meet dietary needs [3]

Percentage of participants who made improvements in parenting practices

Participants were **LESS** likely to:

Distract, praise or play with their child to get them to finish their food	Prepare a different meal for their child from the family meal	Let their child eat whenever they want
54%	54%	47%

Positive parenting practices: Behaviours that create positive and supportive feeding environments. For example; when parents model healthy eating and provide healthy food, structure, routines and clear expectations around mealtimes they build a child's independence and skills [4]

At the end of the program participants reported **healthier diet changes**

Dietary behaviours:

↑44% of participants increase self-reported fruit intakes $\frac{1}{2}$ serves per day	↑47% of participants increase self-reported vegetable intakes $\frac{1}{3}$ serves per day	↓ Weekly consumption of fast food meals and sugar-sweetened beverage reduced
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3 month follow up from parent participants

Adoption:

82% of participants had recommended the FSP program to family and/or friends



Food Sensations Program overview

WEEK 1

Healthy eating nutrition basics for the whole family

WEEK 2

Feeding children requirements for healthy growth and development

WEEK 3

Family mealtimes reducing mealtime stress

WEEK 4

Food on the Move lunchboxes, food safety and label reading

WEEK 5

Feeding the family meal planning, budgeting and shopping



1.5 hrs per week

4 weeks

Online program

Parents can participate in a fully interactive online program from the comfort of their own home. Delivered over 4 weeks the same content as the face-to-face program is covered at each 1.5 hour session via Zoom. Participants are sent a pack of resources at the completion of the program.

Face-to-face program

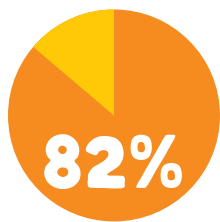
Run over 5 weeks, each 2.5 hour session includes 60 minutes of interactive activities with discussion and 60 minutes of hands-on cooking and eating together with their children. Participants are given a comprehensive education resource book that supports program content called Let's Feed the Family, recipe booklets, shopping bag and a child's healthy eating plate.

2.5 hrs per week

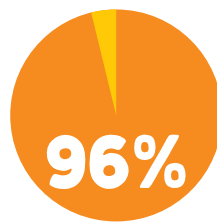
5 weeks

Why do we need a parent nutrition program?

Research shows Australian children are not consuming sufficient amounts of nutritious food.



OF CHILDREN AGED 2-3 YEARS DO NOT EAT THE RECOMMENDED AMOUNT OF VEGETABLES EACH DAY



OF CHILDREN AGED 4-8 YEARS DO NOT EAT THE RECOMMENDED AMOUNT OF VEGETABLES EACH DAY



1 IN 4 (25%)

OF CHILDREN AGED 2-4 YEARS ARE OVERWEIGHT OR OBESE [2]

Importance of the first 1000 days conception to five years

Good nutrition during early childhood, particularly in the first 1000 days, gives children the best start to life and is critical for optimal health, growth and brain development [1]. A healthy diet improves quality of life and wellbeing and reduces the risk of chronic disease. Parents' can influence a child's long-term eating patterns and health outcomes therefore it is essential they have the knowledge and skills for providing a healthy diet for their family. However, experts are supporting an extension to the first 2000 days for obesity prevention (from conception to five years).



Quotes from host organisations' group leaders:

Wonderful program that gave them more confidence and fresh ideas in the kitchen. Helping to combat fussy eating.

Our families absolutely love this program it is constantly requested & well attended.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Research by Dr Andrea Begley, Curtin University, 2020.

References:

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- Australian Bureau of Statistics. National Health Survey: First results 2017-28; Canberra, 2018.
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- Cormack, J.; Rowell, K.; Postăvaru, G.-I. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* 2020, 52, 646-651.

