



### The Children's Food Trust Eat Better, Do Better



Wales Food and Drink, Welsh Government  
**Food for the Future Conference - 25 February 2016**  
Dr Patricia Mucavele, Head of Nutrition



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### The Children's Food Trust

- On a mission to get **every child eating well**, wherever they are eating
- Spreading the **skills, knowledge and confidence** to cook from scratch
- **Helping everyone** who provides food for children to do a great job
- **Encouraging industry** to help children and their families make better food choices



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### What are children eating?

- ↑ - too much sugar, saturated fat and salt
- ↓ - too little fruit and vegetables
- ↓ - too little oily fish
- ↓ - low intakes of fibre
- ↓ - low intakes of some vitamins and minerals (e.g. vitamin A, riboflavin, iron, calcium, zinc) – particularly in secondary school-aged girls.



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### Children's health status

- more than a fifth of children are either **overweight** or **obese** by the time they join reception class, increasing to a third in Year 6 (Source: National Child Measurement Programme, 2015)
- **type II diabetes** appearing
- **poor dental health**
- young children and teenaged girls particularly at risk of **iron deficiency**



Let's get **cooking**

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### Helping children eat better at home

"...skills, and particularly the confidence to use them, could be an important determinant of health behaviour.....The state of cooking skills in contemporary British food culture is a challenge for health promotion policy."

Source: Lang et al, 1999: Cooking Skills and Health



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### Let's Get Cooking



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### Learning to cook in a fun relaxed way, helps...



Families spend quality time together cooking and eating good food



Build a sense of achievement and confidence



Developing positive links in the local community

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### Hungry children

"Three quarters of teachers say they regularly experience children coming to school during term time so hungry they lack energy and are unable to concentrate, and after a prolonged period of inconsistent eating over the summer, children's health and performance is likely to suffer more" (Source: National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers, 2014)



"14% of parents with a child under the age of 18 have fed a child (other than their own) during the school holidays because they weren't sure they were being fed properly at home." (Source: YouGov parental survey, 2011)

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### The message from parents

- Pester power
- Price of food
- Food labelling
- Marketing - TV & online
- How parents receive information and advice on children's weight



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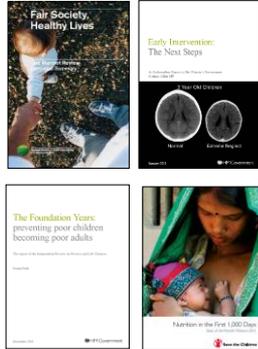


### Helping children eat better in childcare

*"The findings of the Child Measurement programme are worrying, but as we're looking at five year olds, it's something which can be addressed.*

*"As with most health risks, the sooner they're tackled, the easier they are to address, and the greater the long-term benefits."*

Linda Bailey, Public Health Wales



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### Eat Better, Start Better

- **National guidance** - Voluntary Food and Drink Guidelines for Early Years Settings in England
- **Accredited training** to help childcare providers use the guidelines
- **Evaluation tools** to monitor the outcome and impact of training
  - o practitioners knowledge and confidence
  - o setting's approach to and provision of food
  - o families eating habits



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### Helping children to eat better at school

- Powerful influence on children's eating habits
- Children eat at least one meal per day in school
- Value for families
- Contribute to educating and developing healthy eating habits in children
- Children influence the environment and behaviour of adults



**Enabling environment**  
*"Schools influence the lives of most children in all countries"*  
(WHO, 2004)

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### School Food Standards

- Pilot tested the standards
- Developed guidance and practical tools
- Offer training
- Undertake evaluation and research
- Provide advice - helpline
- Menu checking service for caterers
- Awards for schools



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### Helping children to eat better in the wider world

- Manufacturers
  - Reformulation
  - Portion sizes
- Eating out
- Planning policy
- Food advertising



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### Thank you



Would like to know more? Contact us



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