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Implementation of nutrition education programmes in schools: approaches from Turkey, UK and Spain

Nutrition education can provide individuals with the knowledge, skills and motivation to help them to make healthy dietary choices. Schools are an ideal setting for nutrition education because they are one of the main social contexts in which lifestyles are developed but schools are part of a network of influences which shape eating and activity patterns and attitudes. As an instance, school aged children develop behaviour through interaction with other pupils, teachers, parents, siblings and external influences such as the media. As well as nutrition education, schools also have many other means of contributing to good nutrition and health. School-based nutrition interventions can include learning experiences and other actions implemented by schools which make healthy nutrition a way of daily life, both at present and in the future. The Balanced Nutrition Education Project was established in 2011 by the Sabri Ülker Food Research Foundation in collaboration with the Turkish Ministry of Education's Elementary Schools General Directorate to contribute to developing healthy eating behaviors in school children in Turkey. The Balanced Nutrition Education Project is being implemented in 10 cities and 500 schools and in 4 different regions of the country and at present the 2017-2018 programmes is reaching 6 million students, teachers and parents (Figure1). The Food – a fact of life programme was devised by the British Nutrition Foundation (BNF) and originally launched in 1991. It provides resources to support food and nutrition teaching through a progressive learning framework, all of which are tested in schools. The programme also supports the professional training of teachers at primary and secondary school levels. In addition, BNF provides a healthy eating week for schools (and others) to help address whole school food issues – and in 2017, 9,681 schools registered representing 4.2 million children and young people (Figure 2). Programmes may lead to different outcomes in different countries, as a result of cultural differences and other factors; it is very useful to share experiences, which highlights the importance of networks such as BNF and Sabri Ülker Foundation to ensure communication and sharing of best practice.

Figure 2: Operational model of The Food - a Fact of life programme

References

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Biography

Stacey Lockyer worked in public health nutrition by the launch of the FSA's 5 A DAY campaign during her degree in Biology with Psychology at Royal Holloway, University of London and went on to study MSc Nutrition and Food Science at University of Reading, working on a human study looking into fish oil and vascular function for her dissertation. She spent the next two years as a Research Assistant investigating the effects of ApoE genotype and dietary fat manipulation on heart disease risk markers before starting her PhD studying olive leaf polyphenols, part of which involved a human study at Institute of Food, Nutrition and Human Health at Massey University in Auckland New Zealand. She was the Nutrition Society Student Member of Council for two years during her PhD which involved organizing conference events for student members along with writing for the Nutrition Society Gazette. After completion of her Doctorate degree, she worked at Royal College of Physicians as a Research Fellow, performing systematic reviews for t development of NICE Guidelines before joining the BNF as a Nutrition Scientist in June 2015.

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