




Let's Get Cooking Consultation Report

Royal Society for Public Health



*"Cooking should be seen as a right
for every child who wants it and in
my experience, most do."*

Teacher

Contents

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	4
Methodology	5
Summary of Consultation Results	6
Analysis of Responses	7
Main Conclusions	14
References	15
Appendix A: Consultation Structure	16
Appendix B: Consultation Questions	17
Appendix C: Constituency of Respondents	19
Appendix D: Summary of Closed Question Responses	20
Appendix E: Summary of Open Question Responses	22
Appendix F: Summary of Telephone Interview Responses	26

Executive summary

This public consultation was conducted by the Royal Society for Public Health on the Let's Get Cooking programme. It aimed to ascertain the level of demand and support for a national cooking club programme. It also sought views on the design and delivery of the proposed programme.

Quantitative and qualitative research was undertaken with young people, parents, school staff, health professionals and organisations through an on-line survey and discussion forums, focus groups, one to one surveys, telephone interviews and meetings. The process resulted in 762 responses widely dispersed across England consisting of 22% (169) young people aged 8-16 years, 16% (120) parents, 32% (243) school staff and 30% (230) health professionals.

The overwhelming majority of respondents strongly welcomed the proposed programme. There was tremendous demand and support for the Let's Get Cooking programme from young people, parents, school staff and health professionals.

Young people have a strong desire to learn cookery skills, discussions with young people highlighted; this is coupled with a burgeoning demand for cooking clubs indicated by oversubscribed but under resourced cooking clubs across England.

"The kids and parents/carers love them and demand outstrips our resources and capacity to supply!" (Health Professional)

Cooking clubs are needed was stated by 99% of all respondents.

A lack of cooking skills and knowledge about food preparation and what constitutes "healthy" on both the part of young people and parents was the most frequently stated barrier to healthy eating by parents and health professionals (24%); many young people highlighted their own inability to cook and identified this as a barrier to healthy eating.

"We are the second generation of 'non-cooks' with no time to teach their children and no skills learnt from their parents." (Parent)

Willingness to get involved was voiced by 88% of respondents with offers of time and skills to support this programme; 100% of parents would encourage their children to use new cookery skills at home; Health professionals identified nearly 50 different areas of support they could provide including promoting the programme and training club leaders.

Approval of the programme design was generally stated; a fun, hands-on approach targeting young people and their parents is endorsed by the majority of young people and parents as an effective approach; 97% of school staff respondents thought the programme would supply the required resources that are needed to run a successful cooking club; healthy schools programmes, the school curriculum and community groups were identified as the main links to the Let's Get Cooking clubs by school staff and health professionals.

Regulation challenges including health and safety were felt by school staff and health professionals to be the key area of concern. Sufficient training for adult leads was identified as being required to meet these regulations and provide expertise in nutrition.

Access to all was emphasised by parents as an essential part of the programme design; repeated suggestions were made to include how to manage a food budget in the programme.

"Cooking should be seen as a right for every child who wants it, (and in my experience, most do) and not for a lucky few." (Teacher)

Introduction

This paper reports on the public consultation conducted by the Royal Society for Public Health (RSH) on the Let's Get Cooking programme. It aims to ascertain the level of need, demand and support for a national cooking club programme and to consult with young people, parents, school staff and health professionals on the design and delivery of the proposed programme. The RSH would like to thank all of those who responded to this consultation for their helpful and constructive comments.

Background

Let's Get Cooking is a national programme developing a network of cooking clubs to give skills, confidence and inspiration to young people – through them, their parents and others in their local community – to prepare and cook good, healthy food.

The aim of the programme is, in five years' time, to have a national movement of over 4,000 cooking clubs, with 2.5 million children and their families involved, helping to revive national cooking skills and eat healthier, more nutritious food.

Young people will take the lead in establishing and running the clubs, with the support of parents, teachers and other interested community members. The programme for each club will be flexible to meet the needs of each individual, school and local community.

Participating young people will link up with others across England through a central website and will join in national, regional and local activities to share their experiences.

Let's Get Cooking will provide funding for equipment, materials and activities over three years. The clubs will receive a planning pack and attend planning days (for both children and adults) to get them started. Thereafter, they will receive regular support via a website, materials packs delivered each school term and a newsletter sent twice every term.

Participants will receive support and training to develop initiatives with the local community and businesses to ensure sustainability in the long term.

Let's Get Cooking is led by the School Food Trust in partnership with the British Nutrition Foundation, Business in the Community, the Improvement Foundation, Magic Outcomes, the Prince's Trust and the Royal Society for Public Health.

Methodology

This report summarises the results of consultation with:

- Young people
- Parents
- School staff including head teachers, teachers, school governors and school cooks
- Health professionals and organisations including healthy schools coordinators, nutritionists, food development coordinators, health visitors, related professional membership bodies and health related non-governmental organisations (NGOs)

The consultation was conducted by:

- on-line survey distributed to parents, school staff and health professionals
- publication of on-line survey on partner websites
- on-line discussion forum for parents
- on-line discussion forum for school leaders
- focus groups with young people at three pilot start-up days
- focus group with young people at two schools (facilitated by the Prince's Trust)
- focus group with young people xl* club coordinators (facilitated by the Prince's Trust)
- one-to-one survey at regional School Cooks Conference
- telephone interviews with health related organisations
- meetings with relevant national organisations including Department of Health, regional government offices, Food Standards Agency and existing cooking club programmes

See Appendix A for the detailed consultation structure.

Partner organisations and a selection of young people, parents, school staff and health professionals assisted in formulating the consultation questions. See Appendix B for the set of questions.

Announcement of the consultation was made by website launch and media release on January 29 2007 and ran for a period of three weeks.

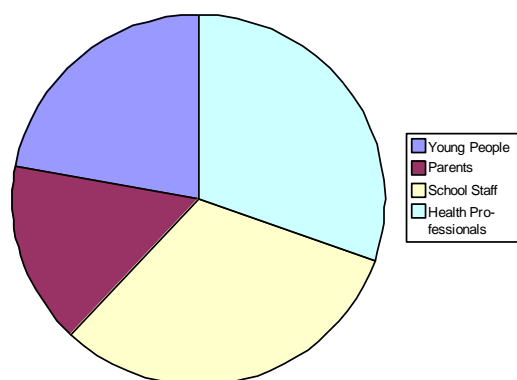
* xl clubs is a programme in schools for 14-16 year olds at risk of truanting, exclusion and underachievement. The clubs use a teamwork approach towards personal development, to improve students' attendance, motivation and social skills.

Summary of Consultation Results

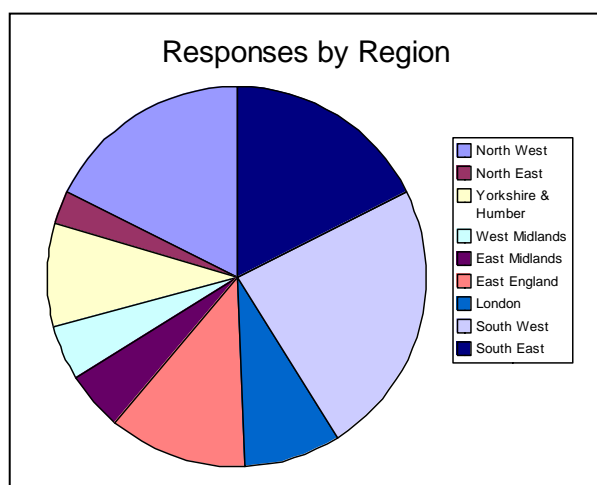
Distribution of responses

The consultation process resulted in 762 responses; Figure 1 shows the constituency of respondents. Respondents were widely dispersed across England; Figure 2 shows the geographical distribution of respondents. The 169 young people consulted spanned an age range of 8-16 years. See Appendix C for detailed breakdown of respondents.

Constituency of Respondents

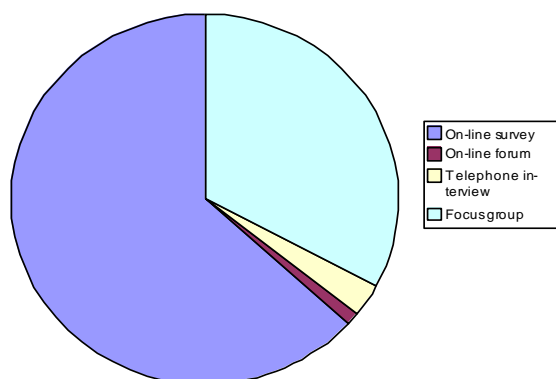


Responses by Region

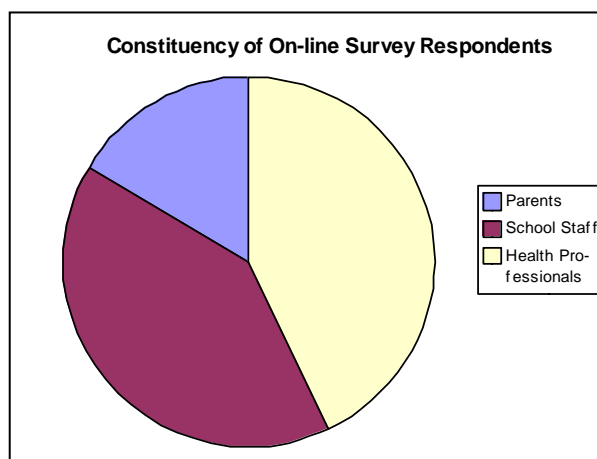


The response analysis is based on the 483 on-line survey responses, unless otherwise stated. Figure 3 shows the method of response and Figure 4 shows the constituency of on-line survey respondents. See Appendix D for closed question responses and Appendix E for open answer question response summary.

Method of Response



Constituency of On-line Survey Respondents



Common themes

The overwhelming majority of respondents strongly welcomed the Let's Get Cooking programme. Responses included the following common themes:

- desire to learn cooking skills among young people and parents
- cooking clubs are needed
- lack of healthy cooking skills and knowledge among young people and parents, which is a barrier to healthy eating
- very limited provision of cooking skills in school curriculum
- across-the-board interest in getting involved and supporting the programme through providing time, skills and resources
- approval of the programme design including areas identified where existing programmes could link in with Let's Get Cooking
- fun, hands-on approach targeting young people and their parents is endorsed
- ensuring sufficient training for adult leads to meet regulations such as food hygiene
- access to all

Analysis of Responses

1. Young people's interest in cooking

There was tremendous demand and support for the Let's Get Cooking programme from young people, parents, school staff and health professionals.

Discussions with young people at the Let's Get Cooking pilot start-up days revealed a strong interest from young people in cooking skills, which reflects the Active Kids Get Cooking survey¹ findings where 90% of the children questioned said they would like to learn more about cooking.

The high level of interest by young people in cookery skills was overwhelmingly reflected in 99% of parent and school staff responses.

"Just to affirm that in my experience children adore to cook and eat the results."
(School Governor)

A strong desire to learn cookery skills by young people is coupled with demand for cookery skills programmes. Several school staff respondents (15%) commented on the existence of cooking clubs within their schools which are in many instances oversubscribed but under-resourced and unable to meet demand.

"I already run a healthy eating lunch club. It is very popular, often oversubscribed. But money limits the number we can cater for. Our school is an inner-city school in a deprived area. Many of our students don't have the finances to attend additional sessions. Although we have a small budget allocated to our healthy eating lunch club it does not cover the expenses we incur. It would be great to supply students with exotic fruits and other ingredients that they haven't experienced, e.g. fish." (Teacher)

"The kids and parents/carers love them and demand outstrips our resources and capacity to supply!" (Health Professional)

The School Food Trust has already received nearly 50 expressions of interest from schools in setting up a Let's Get Cooking club, prior to any programme publicity.

"An after-school cooking club sounds brilliant – a good way to gradually introduce participation and highlight need for everyone to be aware of healthy balanced diet. It is exactly what our area of economic deprivation could do with. We would welcome the opportunity to participate." (Teacher)

Discussions with existing cooking club programmes indicate an abundant demand for cookery clubs: an example of 2-3 phone calls a week from people wanting to set up cooking clubs being received by one of London's leading cooking programmes.

School councils have been calling for cooking clubs as stated by several school respondents. The schools are currently not able to meet this demand and would welcome the help that the Let's Get Cooking programme would provide.

2. Healthy eating movement

Discussions with young people highlighted the substantial level of awareness amongst young people to the importance of healthy eating, although cooking skills were felt to be targeted at parents and school cooks, not students. The Meat and Livestock survey² illustrated the growth of health as the motivating factor in our food choices. Health has increased by 18% between 2002 and 2005 as a consumption driver in the home, while in the same period convenience has declined by 9%.

3. Lack of cooking skills

Interviews with young people demonstrated lack of cooking skills and knowledge about food preparation and what constitutes healthy eating.

The lack of skills and leaning towards convenience foods for our current generation of young people is demonstrated in the Active Kids Get Cooking survey, when the top foods cooked by children today were compared with those parents cooked in their own childhood. Children today are twice as likely to 'cook' by heating meals up in a microwave or by putting frozen chips in the oven, while today's parents, during their childhood, were more likely to know how to boil an egg, scramble eggs and bake a cake.

This topic was the most frequently stated barrier to healthy eating by parents and health professionals, with nearly a quarter (24%) of respondents on this presenting the lack of cooking skills and knowledge as a barrier to healthy eating. Several respondents emphasized the limited cooking skills and knowledge of not just amongst young people but also parents.

Numerous respondents identified the removal of cookery skills from the national school curriculum as a reason for young people's lack of skill and knowledge of healthy eating. This was a general cause for concern and several parents called for cookery and nutrition to be re-introduced into the curriculum.

"Since home economics was taken off the national curriculum within schools very few secondary schools teach this subject. Therefore pupils have lost the ability to be encouraged to cook using fresh ingredients. They are not taught the importance of eating a balanced diet containing a balanced mixture of carbohydrates, fats, protein, vitamins and minerals. As adults they turn to convenience foods to feed their families. These are often high in salt and fats. Convenience foods are very readily available for those short of time and for those who can't be bothered to cook and who also don't have the 'know how' to cook a simple nutritional meal." (Parent)

"There's a generation out there who are knowledgeable about food health and safety but don't know how to cook!" (Parent)

4. Obesity

Health professionals pointed out the link between poor cooking skills and obesity and it was felt a programme encouraging children to cook and eat healthy meals and decrease the use of convenience food is needed to improve overall health and wellbeing.

5. Benefits of healthy eating

Young people, through focus groups, identified body image as a benefit of healthy eating, giving examples of weight, skin (spots), nails and hair as affected by what you ate. A wider discussion on this area led to one young man talking of how his Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder was made worse by sugar and sweets so he tried to avoid them – though not all the time!

Teachers through discussion also noted cooking skills as a form of empowerment, giving young people more control in their lives and equipping them with the skills to cook for themselves when they leave home.

"Involving the pupils in the set-up and organisation would provide them with the wider experiences, and as a Business and Enterprise specialist school, this would fit well in our growing ethos." (Teacher)

"Cooking is an ideal, stimulating medium for developing practical and meaningful literacy and numeracy skills." (Head Teacher)

6. Lack of food experimenting

This research showed that many young people do not know what different foods taste like. There is a need to introduce young people to new and exciting food experiences and widen their food options. Feedback from pilot start-up days highlighted that young people react positively when given the opportunity to try new foods.

7. Lack of parental cooking skills

Parent respondents (99%) expressed a need for a cooking skills programme with 84% of these parents stating that they themselves would like to learn more about healthy cooking. The majority of those who did not feel this need stated they already had a satisfactory level of knowledge and experience about healthy cooking.

“I think parents think it’s too hard, time-consuming and costly before they even start, so they don’t try. I hear lots of mums who say “I can’t cook” and they just buy processed foods without realizing it’s just as easy to actually follow a recipe and create something simple than to follow the instructions on a packet of fish fingers!” (Parent)

The lack of parental cooking skills and family upbringing was the fourth most frequently stated barrier to healthy eating by parents and health professionals: illustrated by the example of a Mum regularly including a MacDonald’s Burger and cold chips in their child’s lunchbox and by a young person exclaiming *his* “mum can’t even open a packet.”

“We are the second generation of ‘non-cooks’ with no time to teach their children and no skills learnt from their parents.” (Parent)

“I think that some people don’t have the basic practical skills. I teach cookery to adults and I am often surprised when adults don’t recognise basic foods and have very poor practical skills.” (Parent)

8. Willingness to get involved

100% of parent responses stated they would support their child/children to join a cooking club and 86% of parents also expressed an interest in giving some of their time to help run a club.

“I would love to be part of a programme that gets families and children together to learn about food and nutrition as I think it’s greatly underestimated as a life skill.” (Parent)

Several comments were received offering support for the programme through time, skills, community links and opportunity to use new cookery skills at home (100% of parents said yes to this opportunity).

“I am a small local retailer of organic foodstuffs and products for specialist diets. I often have customers who come in wanting recipes or to know more about how to cook in a more healthy fashion. I would be delighted to be able to refer them on to a cooking club. This partnership therefore would definitely work both ways.” (Parent)

9. Provide skills & support

The vast majority of school staff responded that they would offer time and skills to support this programme.

“As a part-time specialist food teacher with over 25 years experience, and a DfES Food Partnership trainer, I am very keen to get involved. An initiative such as this is LONG overdue.” (Teacher)

The second most frequently identified area for provision of support to the programme by health professionals was training. A significant proportion of health professionals offered their nutrition, food health and hygiene knowledge and skills to train volunteers to run the clubs.

“We as dieticians could help with nutritional analysis, implementing projects locally, ideas for realistic healthy meals, taking into consideration cost and time as well as nutrition.”
(Health Professional)

Health professionals identified nearly 50 different areas of support they could provide. Out of the 345 comments received here they volunteered support through:

- raising awareness of the programme and refer individuals through links with the community
- advice on nutrition, development and sustainability
- links with healthy schools programme
- providing venues and equipment
- recruiting and supporting volunteers
- regional/area coordination

“Our organisation runs regular training sessions around healthy eating with professionals who particularly work with all members of the public. We would use this opportunity to signpost people to this available resource. We have experience in delivering cook and eat sessions, hence feel we could support a range of groups who wish to participate in the Let’s Get Cooking project. Our roles are very much about developing sustainability and sharing good practice, so we would do joint partnership working with these groups rather than solely go in and deliver the sessions ourselves from start to finish.” (Health Professional)

Moreover, discussions with a local authority representative body indicated local authorities are able to endorse and help the programme by promoting it, putting pressure on departments to give it priority and providing access to their networks of schools and community centres and their portfolio of properties.

10. Design of programme

Overall there was a significant level of approval in the design of the Let’s Get Cooking programme. All the young people at the pilot start-up days found cooking fun. The majority of parents interviewed at the pilot start-up days thought the programme approach will be effective or very effective and school staff respondents (97%) thought the programme would supply the required resources that are needed to run a successful cooking club.

Positive comments included approval of the funding provided, the involvement of parents and the support for working with local business to create a sustainable club.

11. Fun, fun, fun

A fun, hands-on programme design was favoured among respondents as demonstrated by the fact that the majority of young people respondents wanted to be active participants in the programme. Examples of activities that could be undertaken were;

- doing a survey in the community to find out about people's current eating habits,
- visiting primary schools on a healthy eating road show,
- competing with other schools or year groups in cook-off events,
- making food for school events,
- running tuck shops as part of enterprise projects,
- setting up their own cooking club and acting as demonstrators themselves.

The importance of the fun element of the programme design is highlighted in the School Food Trust³ findings that 100% of those young people who attended afterschool clubs did so because it was fun to learn new things.

In interviews several health professionals emphasized the advantages of kinesthetic and visual learning and a supportive environment without the pressures of assessment.

"I thought the Let's Get Cooking day was a great experience. It has really inspired me to become involved in Coombe Dean's cookery club and also to get other people involved too. It will help me to experiment with different types of foods, and especially vegetables that I have never heard of! My dream is to become a professional Chef. I had a lot of fun at this event." (Young Person)

12. Young people & parents

There was overwhelming endorsement of young people and parents learning to cook together and; 97% of parents thought this was important. It was pointed out the influence children can have on the family which has been seen with smoking cessation. The support of parents was seen as important if children are going to continue to cook in the home environment. Several parents mentioned that cooking together is bonding between parents and children. A repeated suggestion was to involve grandparents as they often have valuable cooking skills.

"Teaching the adults/parents good food and nutrition skills is as important as the kids." (Parent)

13. Links with existing programmes

School staff and health professionals provided over 350 proposals on how Let's Get Cooking clubs could link in with existing activities. Telephone interview findings emphasised the sustainability of Let's Get Cooking clubs could be increased by links with established programmes.

The main areas of linkage identified by both school staff and health professionals are:

- Healthy schools programme
- Existing cookery clubs
- Sports activities and afterschool clubs
- Food growing projects
- Extended schools
- Breakfast clubs
- Local food producers and retailers

School staff also highlighted the curriculum as an area to link in with the cooking clubs, through food technology and other core subjects, including organising visits to local food producers and eating establishments.

The area of linkage most frequently stated by health professionals (20%) was with community groups such as community centres and programmes, healthy living centres, Sure Start, family learning programmes, youth services and children's centres. Many health, active lifestyle and nutrition programmes run by PCTs, local authorities and community dietitians were also cited.

A further area of linkage specifically cited by health professionals was with their obesity strategy and weight management programmes.

"We run a childhood obesity group which would also benefit from a cooking skills club. We work with local allotments and educate children about growing which could link in with the practical cooking. We run a Young Fruit project which involves educating nursery-aged children about fruit and vegetables and it would be useful to link in with a cooking skills club to show the children the practical side to cooking." (Health Professional)

14. Programme design improvements

Various programme design concerns and areas for possible development were raised by respondents.

School staff and health professionals identified similar areas for improvement. Out of the comments received key areas of concern were:

- Health and safety, food hygiene, child protection regulations
- Sufficient level of training
- Limited facilities and equipment available
- Restricted school staff time
- Expertise of adult leads
- Limited funding
- Ensure consistent clear health messages
- Clear monitoring and evaluation

"I think that it is a great idea as long as those people running the cooking clubs have a good background knowledge of food and practical skills and are able to show children the best and safest way to prepare and cook food i.e. safe knife skills, food and personal hygiene etc." (Teacher)

Lack of time was mentioned as one of the major barriers for teachers supporting this programme. Suggestions for overcoming this barrier included involving parents, providing payment and a reward scheme for teachers.

"I love the idea of a cooking club at school, and would be willing to coordinate it happening at school, however as Healthy Schools coordinator, a member of management, the person who runs the garden, library and various other commitments I simply do not have the time to also run a club. Finding a way to involve parents in running something of this kind is a fantastic idea and would be a way around this problem, which I am sure many teachers face." (Teacher)

Parents in particular raised the need for the programme design to ensure accessibility to all, including:

- location
- public transport
- cost
- dietary requirements
- ethnic minority communities

“Many people willing to get involved with this sort of project e.g. parents, are usually the ones who make an effort already. It has to be something that all parents etc. can feel a part of and without the threat of feeling it to be too costly to implement, and in a user friendly way, without making parents feel that they are doing a bad job with what they are feeding their children. It has to be evolution not revolution. We have to educate children and parents not tell them what they are doing wrong and to change everything they are doing at once!”
(Parent)

Cost (actual and perceived) was in the top three of most frequently stated barriers to healthy eating by parent and health professional respondents. Repeated suggestions were made to include budgeting in the club programme.

There was overall demand and support for the Let's Get Cooking programme and respondents stated the need for this to be accessible to all.

“Cooking should be seen as a right for every child who wants it, (and in my experience, most do) and not for a lucky few.” (Teacher)

Main conclusions

The overwhelming majority of respondents strongly welcomed the proposed programme. There was tremendous demand and support for the Let's Get Cooking programme from young people, parents, school staff and health professionals.

The main conclusions that can be drawn from this consultation are:

- Young people have a strong desire to learn cookery skills which is coupled with a burgeoning demand for cooking clubs
- Cooking clubs are needed as stated by 99% of all respondents
- A lack of cooking skills and knowledge about food preparation and what constitutes “healthy” on both the part of young people and parents is a major barrier to healthy eating
- Parents, school staff and health professionals are willing to get involved in the programme whether it is by providing time, skills or resources; 100% of parents would encourage their children to use new cookery skills at home
- The fun, hands-on programme design targeting young people and their parents together is endorsed by the majority of young people and parents as an effective approach
- The programme design will supply the required resources that are needed to run a successful cooking club as stated by 97% of school staff respondents
- Let's Get Cooking clubs could link with established programmes such as healthy schools programmes, the school curriculum and community groups
- Regulation challenges including health and safety is a key area of concern and as such sufficient training for adult leads is required to meet these regulations and provide expertise in nutrition
- Access to all is an essential part of the Let's Get Cooking programme design

References:

‘Active Kids Get Cooking Report, Tickbox.net survey, December 2006

‘Let’s Cook Programme Testing Findings’, Ekta Malhotra & Nick Noble, The School Food Trust, October 6 2006

‘Health at the heart of the matter’ Meat and Livestock Commission

‘Consultation with Young People’ Sophie Wogan, The Prince’s Trust, February 2007

Consultation Structure

Who	Network for consultation	Method of consultation
Young People		
	Pilot club start up days (25 th & 31 st Jan & 1 st Feb)	Focus Groups
	Partner Organisations	Website link to on-line survey
	Prince's Trust	Focus Groups
Parents		
	Netmums	On-line discussion forum
	Pilot club start up days (25 th & 31 st Jan & 1 st Feb)	Focus Groups
	National Confederation of Parent Teachers Association	On-line survey link included in members e-newsletter
School Staff		
	National College for School Leadership	On-line discussion forum
	Association of School & College Leaders	On-line survey link included in members e-newsletter
	National Association of Head Teachers	Website link to on-line survey
	Pilot club start up days (25 th & 31 st Jan & 1 st Feb)	Focus Groups
	Design & Technology Association	On-line survey link included in members e-newsletter
	British Nutrition Foundation	On-line survey link emailed to food technology trainers
	British Nutrition Foundation	On-line survey link included in members e-newsletter
	Regional School Cooks Conference	One to one survey
	National Governors Association	On-line survey link included in members e-newsletter
	National Confederation of Parent Teachers Association	On-line survey link included in members e-newsletter
Health Professionals		
	Healthy Schools Coordinator network	On-line survey link included in members e-newsletter Telephone interview with National Healthy Schools Coordinator
	British Nutrition Foundation	On-line survey link included in members e-newsletter
	British Dietetic Association	On-line survey link included in members e-newsletter Telephone interview
	Community Practitioners & Health Visitors Association	On-line survey link included in members e-newsletter Telephone interview
	Royal College of Nursing Health Visitor Forum	On-line survey link included in members e-newsletter
	Royal College of Nursing School Nurse Forum	On-line survey link included in members e-newsletter
	Health Promotion Specialist network	On-line survey link circulated to members
	Faculty of Public Health	On-line survey link circulated to Obesity network
	Royal Society for Public Health	On-line survey link included in members e-newsletter Telephone interview
	Royal College of General Practitioners	On-line survey link circulated to members of Adolescence Task Group Telephone Interview with RCGP & RCGP Adolescent Task Group
	Stroke Association	Telephone interview
	Community Health Involvement & Empowerment Forum	Telephone interview
	National Children's Bureau	Telephone interview
	The Kids' Cookery School	Telephone interview
	Local Government Association	Telephone interview
	Institute of Health and Social Care, Anglia University	Telephone interview
	National Healthy Living Alliance	Telephone interview
	Hamara Healthy Living Centre	Telephone interview
	National Heart Forum	Telephone interview
	Community Service Volunteers	Telephone interview
	Improvement & Development Agency	Telephone Interview
	Child & Adolescent Health Programme, WHO	Telephone interview
	Cookery Club Programmes	Meeting
	Government Regional Offices	Meeting

Consultation Questions

1. Do you think it is important for young people to have the skills and knowledge to eat healthily? Yes / No
2. In your opinion would cooking skills have a positive impact on young people's dietary habits? Yes / No
3. Please rate the amount of practical food skills provided in the school curriculum.
None
Very limited
Limited
Sufficient
Excellent
4. Do you think there is a need for a cooking skills programme to improve children's nutrition?
Very much needed
Needed
Don't know
Not needed
Not at all needed
5. Would you support your child/children to join a cooking club if one was started in your area? (Parents) Yes / No
6. Would your child be able to use their new cookery skills at home? (Parents) Yes / No
7. Would you like to learn more about healthy cooking for your children? (Parents) Yes / No
8. Is it important for young people and their parents to learn to cook together? (Parents) Yes / No
9. Would you be interested in giving some of your time to help run a cooking club? (School staff) Yes / No
10. Do you think students in your school would be interested in learning healthy cooking skills? (School staff) Yes / No
11. Would you like to have a cooking club in your school? (School staff) Yes / No
12. Let's Get Cooking will provide:
 - club start-up day for adults (who will participate or run cooking clubs) and children where they will receive information about the programme, a planning pack and practice planning activities
 - demonstrator day for adults on how to lead Let's Get Cooking events
 - up to £500 equipment funding and £500 per year project funding
 - regular information via website, materials packs and newsletters
 - opportunity to apply for related events run by School Food Trust or its partners
 - support in obtaining partnership funding

Are these the resources that are required to run a successful cooking club? (School staff & Health professionals) Yes / No

13. Could your organisation contribute to or support this programme? (Health Professionals) Yes / No

14. In what way could your organisation contribute to or support this programme? (Health professionals)
15. What activities are there in your school or local area that could link in with a healthy cooking skills club? (School staff & Health professionals)
16. In your view what are the barriers to healthy eating? (Parents & Health Professionals)
17. Is there anything else you would like us to consider?

Constituency of Respondents

Constituency of Respondents

	Base	Percentage
Young People	169	22%
Parents	120	16%
School Staff	243	32%
Health Professionals	230	30%
Total	762	

Responses by Region

	Base	Percentage
North West	123	16%
North East	19	3%
Yorkshire & Humber	59	8%
West Midlands	33	4%
East Midlands	35	5%
East England	81	11%
London	57	7%
South West	162	21%
South East	122	16%
Not Known	71	9%
Total	762	

Method of Response

	Base	Percentage
On-line survey	483	63%
On-line forum	8	1%
Telephone interview	22	3%
Focus group	249	33%
Total	762	

Constituency of On-line Survey Respondents

	Base		Base	Percentage
Head Teachers	82	Parents	80	17%
Teachers	63	School Staff	195	40%
School Governors	23	Health Professionals	208	43%
Parents	80			
Health Professionals	208			
School Cooks	27			
Total	483		483	

On-line Survey Responses by Region

	Base	Percentage
North West	55	12%
North East	19	4%
Yorkshire &	59	13%
West Midlands	33	8%
East Midlands	26	6%
East England	55	12%
London	57	13%
South West	47	11%
South East	91	21%
Total	442	

Summary of Closed Question Responses

Do you think it is important for young people to have the skills and knowledge to eat healthily?

	All respondents %
Yes	100
No	0

In your opinion would cooking skills have a positive impact on young people's dietary habits?

	All respondents %
Yes	100
No	0

Please rate the amount of practical food skills provided in the school curriculum.

	All respondents %	Parents %	School Staff %	Health Professionals %
None	5	13	2	4
Very Limited	49	52	29	65
Limited	37	29	48	29
Sufficient	8	0	18	0
Excellent	1	6	3	2

Do you think there is a need for a cooking skills programme to improve children's nutrition?

	All respondents %	Parents %	School Staff %	Health Professionals %
Very much needed	73	85	62	81
Needed	26	14	37	17
Don't know	1	1	1	2
Not needed	0	0	0	0
Not at all needed	0	0	0	0

Would you be interested in giving some of your time to help run a cooking club?

	All respondents %	Parents %	School Staff %	Head Teachers %
Yes	88	86	88	100
No	12	14	12	0

Are these the resources that are required to run a successful cooking club?

	All respondents %	School Staff %	Health Professionals %
Yes	94	97	92
No	6	3	8

Do you think students in your school would be interested in learning healthy cooking skills? (School staff only)

	School Staff %
Yes	98
No	2

Would you like to have a cooking club in your school? (School staff only)

	School Staff %
Yes	99
No	1

Could your organisation contribute to or support this programme? (Health Professionals only)

	Health Professionals %
Yes	93
No	7

Would you support your child/children to join a cooking club if one was started in your area? (Parents only)

	Parents %
Yes	100
No	0

Would your child be able to use their new cookery skills at home? (Parents only)

	Parents %
Yes	100
No	0

Would you like to learn more about healthy cooking for your children? (Parents only)

	Parents %
Yes	84
No	16

Is it important for young people and their parents to learn to cook together? (Parents only)

	Parents %
Yes	97
No	3

Summary of Open Question Responses

Are these the resources that are needed to run a successful cooking club?

All responses	Base	Percentage
concerns about meeting the health, hygiene and safety child protection regulations and training including the costs involved	22	12%
kitchen facilities not available/limited and not enough funds to provide them/ need to check facilities are adequate	17	9%
more funding needed	16	9%
Time for staff including planning/shopping/setting up/cleaning	16	9%
expertise of adults/ must be qualified in nutrition, health, safety/teaching etc	14	8%
need to pay staff/don't rely on volunteers	14	8%
more training/regular training	12	6%
continuing support/help line/ more personal support/local mentor/technical support	11	6%
space for storage/equipment	8	4%
consistent clear health messages	7	4%
monitoring and evaluation	7	4%
good/excellent	6	3%
networking/links with other schools/regional forums to share skills learnt etc	5	3%
enthusiastic / charismatic leadership	4	2%
more support in deprived areas, especially for training	4	2%
club for adults/parents	3	2%
link to curriculum/whole school approach / local projects/local strategies extended services	3	2%
more	3	1%
recipes/ include balance and budget	3	1%
support from school cooks/head teachers	3	1%
already got club, we need input, equipment	2	1%
link with community through new Health Trainers Programme/ community food workers/nutritionists	2	1%
support via extended schools/local partnerships, health workers, food workers	2	1%
transport to get home	2	1%
Total	186	

In your opinion what are the barriers to healthy eating?

Parent responses	Base	Percentage
Lack of skills & knowledge of what is healthy	67	30%
Time: working parents; perception that healthy food takes a long time; too busy; homework	40	18%
Perceived Cost; low income	24	11%
Parents didn't cook or teach; upbringing; family breakdown	24	11%
Lack of motivation; lazy	17	7%
Convenience food: Easy option; less hassle from kids; perceived as normal; habit	17	7%
Not taught at school	9	4%
Fresh food does not keep so well; afraid of waste if kids don't like it; unknown taste	8	3%
Advertising promotes junk food/convenience food	6	3%
Do not realise the importance of healthy food	6	3%
Peer pressure	3	1%
Access	3	1%
Perceived difficulty; don't realise its easy	3	1%
Total	227	

In your opinion what are the barriers to healthy eating?

Health Professionals responses	Base	Percentage
Lack of skills & correct knowledge of what is healthy - to train, parents, young people	129	22%
Perceived Cost/low income	77	13%
Access	65	11%
Parents didn't cook/teach/upbringing/family breakdown	49	8%
Advertising promotes junk food/convenience food	46	8%
Time: working parents; perception that healthy food takes a long time; too busy; homework	40	7%
Convenience food: Easy option; less hassle from kids; perceived as normal; habit	37	6%
Not taught at school	26	5%
Perceived difficulty; don't realise its easy/less attractive option	19	3%
Do not realise the importance of healthy food	17	3%
facilities/equipment	17	3%
Fresh food does not keep so well; afraid of waste if kids don't like it/unknown tastes	14	2%
Lack of motivation	13	2%
Peer pressure	13	2%
confidence with food	11	2%
supermarkets/industry mixed messages	10	2%
poverty	4	1%
Total	587	

What activities are there in your school or local area that could link with a health cooking skills club?

School Staff responses	All Base	Percentage	Head Teachers Base	Teachers Base	School Governor Base
healthy schools/eating programme	32	23%	16	6	4
Already have a cookery club, high demand/oversubscribed and could do with more input/funds	26	18%	9	5	1
links with curriculum	22	15%	10	4	
Sports/after school clubs	20	14%	12	1	2
school gardening & allotments/farm	14	10%	7	1	3
extended schools	8	6%	5	1	2
breakfast club	6	4%	2	1	1
connections with local businesses	6	4%	2	3	1
links with community/fundraising	4	3%	1	3	
health week	4	3%	1	2	1
Total	142		65	27	15

What activities are there in your school or local area that could link with a health cooking skills club?

Health Professional responses	Base	Percentage
other community groups/youth centres/healthy living centres etc	42	20%
Already have a cookery club, high demand/oversubscribed and could do with more input/funds	35	16%
healthy schools/eating programme	30	14%
Sports/after school clubs	24	11%
extended schools	20	9%
school gardening & allotments/farm	18	9%
Weight management programmes	16	8%
breakfast club	7	3%
connections with local businesses/producers/supermarkets	5	2%
catering services	5	2%
Sure start	3	2%
5 a day programme	3	1%
health week/events	2	1%
links with curriculum	2	1%
partnership with PCT & LA	2	1%
Total	214	

In what way could your organisation contribute to or support this programme?

Health Professional responses	Base	Percentage
Promotion/publicity/referral	55	16%
Networking/Partnership/links with other programmes	55	16%
Advise on nutrition/recipes	49	14%
Training	36	11%
Advise on planning/development/experience of running similar clubs/sustainability	28	8%
Support	28	8%
Healthy Schools Programme	22	6%
Practical help with sessions/ start up/pilots	18	5%
find premises/provide venue/equipment	16	5%
recruit/provide/support volunteers	11	3%
Funding	7	2%
Lead/coordinate the programme (in an area)	6	2%
Monitoring/Evaluation/Impact	5	1%
Health and Safety/risk assessment/food hygiene	3	1%
Local Authority support	3	1%
Provide staff	3	1%
Total	345	100

Summary of Telephone Interview Responses

All of the interviewees felt that Let's Get Cooking was an excellent and important concept, and they were fully supportive. It was seen as timely in the context of Jamie Oliver's publicity in bringing the awareness of children's food to the general public, and the government.

A recent UNICEF Report (ref) has shown that obesity in the UK is among the highest in Europe. In the UK only 66% of children eat regular meals with their family, only 26% eat fruit every day, and only 57% of children eat breakfast.

A recent study by Daniel Kahneman showed that in France that the happiest people were those that regularly cooked and shared meals with family and friends. Cooking at home built rapport with children.

It was agreed that encouraging kids and families to eat healthily would affect obesity, health and wellbeing. Lack of cooking skills was said to be one of the main factors responsible for illness related to diet. The decline of cooking skills over the last 20 years, the loss of good food culture, and the change to fast convenience and snack food were seen as causes of poor diet. The reasons given were changes in the school curriculum away from Home Economics, lack of time, and advertising and promotion of convenience foods by the food industry and supermarkets.

Strengths of the programme:

- It is important for young people to have the skills and knowledge to eat healthily because habits are set early. Cooking skills can be used throughout their life.
- Practical learning is better than being told. Most children are kinesthetic and visual in their learning. Cooking increases confidence and concentration. It is therapeutic, it will bring social benefits and it is a good group activity.
- It is appealing and fun. They are volunteering to come so they want to learn; they are with their friends and this is helpful as they gain confidence working together. There are no pressures of assessment.
- Children do influence the family. Although teenagers can be difficult to engage, if you do get them involved they will be good advocates.
- Including the broader family is good because the parents can encourage the children at home and other children in the family get involved
- It is good opportunity to exchange recipes with other ethnic groups and vary their diet.

Programme challenges:

- Many schools don't have adequate cooking facilities and many teachers lack the required skills. Teachers don't have enough time, and it may be difficult to get committed staff. Staff may need to be paid. Child protection and statutory standards need to be met.
- Peer pressure can be alienating if it's not seen as acceptable or "cool".
- Many families don't have equipment and time and have lost the environment for eating and enjoying food. Parents may resent interference. Some people are intimidated to cook from scratch.
- Commercial interests in selling unhealthy food.

Suggestions:

- Use quick, tasty, attractive recipes which take half an hour maximum to prepare.
- Persuade kids that it is interesting. If it is made to be fun, the first ones that join will spread the word. Teach that they can accomplish a lot with little effort and with a small amount of skills, and it is easy to do in normal life. Think about what will attract teenagers.
- Complex interventions through community development outreach and peer support may be needed to reach young people in more deprived areas.
- Carry parents with you through Parent Teacher Associations. Involve grandparents and great grandparents as have cooking skills. Get dads cooking as mums are busy. Men and boys appreciate decent, hearty food.
- Find local champions who have charisma in the locality.
- The more it is linked with other programmes inside and outside of school the more established it will become.
- Set up a local multidisciplinary steering group from Local Authority and Health Authority to be a local support and keep up the momentum and focus. Local Authorities can promote it, put pressure on departments to give it priority, they have networks with schools and community centres, and they have their own portfolio of properties, centres and could host clubs, and have networks to parishes and town councils. Local authority advisory services could train and monitor.
- Continued regular updated training is important esp. for statutory requirements, environmental health, and food hygiene. There is a need for ongoing mentoring/support and quality assurance to keep the trainers following best practice. It's worth investing in training individuals who are passionate and committed. Inspect premises to make sure they meet the requirements. Take Public Liability insurance
- Use local radio. Community radio is a good link into ethnic communities
- Get the food industry and supermarkets involved
- Carefully monitor the effect the programme is having