



NUTRISKILL® HEALTHY EATING PROGRAMME OF LEARNING **RESULT OF INITIAL PILOTS WITH ENTRY LEVEL RESOURCE PACK**

Summary

By empowering teachers to change children's attitudes to learning about healthy eating, and by changing children's behaviours in relation to food choices, NutriSkill supports the *Healthy Schools, Every Child Matters* and *Healthy Lives Healthy People* agendas and addresses the government target of reducing the rising overweight and obesity trend in children, particularly targeting younger children.

The NutriSkill Programme was co-written by a Registered Dietitian in line with Government guidelines. It enables teachers to deliver and evaluate accurate, progressive lessons with no prior training, in a fun engaging way which brings in physical activity.

Learning outcomes of the Entry Level of the Programme -

- Recognise a given range of basic foods
- Correctly place the 5 food groups within the food group model
- Identify the average daily amount of each food group, which is recommended for a healthy balanced diet
- Correctly place a given range of foods within the 5 food groups
- Define preferred choices for a healthy diet, from a given selection of breakfasts

Outline of Pilots

Eighteen Year 1 classes in eleven schools from 2 different regions were recruited to take part in the NutriSkill® pilots. The Entry Level Resource Pack of the Healthy Eating Programme of Learning was used by the teachers during the autumn term of 2007. 482 children completed evaluations before and after using the resources (including 75 children in two control schools, where no lessons took place).

Results of pilots

NutriSkill® had a direct impact on the children's food and nutrition knowledge, regardless of their starting point. There was an improvement in all the school scores in a very short time, **up to 83% knowledge gain in as little as 7 weeks** (delivered for 30 minutes per week). Teacher feedback was positive and included observations of improvements in children's food choice behaviours, which can be built on through continued use of the NutriSkill® Programme.



Post evaluation feedback from teaching staff

- *'Some [children] are trying to make better food choices in the lunch-hall'*
- *'[There is] 'more awareness of food groups'*
- *'Children know about a balanced diet'*
- *'[Children are] 'asking for more fruit for their 5 a day'*
- *'Discussions were interesting – the children are definitely more aware of healthy food choices and the importance of a balanced diet'*
- *'[The most rewarding aspect] 'was to receive feedback from a parent about her two children during a supermarket trip-the children are now looking at food labels for information on fats and sugars and choosing foods with a low fat and sugar content'*
- *'[The children are] 'talking about what is in their lunch box and relating it to the model'*
- *'Before we had these resources, healthy eating was viewed by the children as any other subject, but after these resources arrived they were keen to get stuck in. The children's knowledge has come on so much and they have really enjoyed doing it. They picked up on it quickly and wanted to do it more and more'*
- *'[The most rewarding aspect has been] 'Seeing the children progress. They can give feedback regarding the sections' [food groups on the model]'*
- *'[Pupils have] 'a growing knowledge and awareness' [of food]'*
- *'[Pupils are] 'more aware of a healthy diet and are using the coloured sections to identify quantity'*
- *'Liked 'the quality of the resources and range of materials'*
- *'Loved the large floor mat. The children really enjoyed becoming actively involved in the activities. Large, clear photographs were very useful. Good quality resources'*
- *'Really good. Resources are fab! The foods look realistic'*
- *'Durable with many different uses, both games and written work. The children liked the resources as they are eye catching and include lots of foods they eat'*
- *'Practical resources which children could handle. Clear, detailed pictures which lead to some great discussion'*
- *'The Children's knowledge has come on so much and they have really enjoyed doing it. They picked up on it quickly and wanted to do it more & more'*
- *'Really good and valuable. I noticed that the children were taking in the information taught'*
- *'Very good resource for children in Primary Schools. Bright, clear resources – good photographs of food items. Versatile resources'*



- *'Children enjoyed the pictures and games'*
- *'The resources are so colourful and the foods look fantastic'*
- *'The resources are very good and enable teachers to present exciting and meaningful lessons'*
- *'Very clear, good pictures of a high quality'*
- *'Information is ready and easy to use'*
- *'The visual resources made it more exciting and interesting for the children'*
- *'The scheme is a fun resourceful pack for healthy eating'*
- *'There was a wide range of photographs that gave the children an opportunity to see some foods that were unfamiliar to them'*

In addition:

- Staff liked the opportunity to talk to children about food and one teacher stated that the most rewarding aspect of teaching this subject was helping children understand how they can make choices to improve their diet
- Teachers themselves had made changes to their behaviour with some now going into the dinner hall to support and help the children
- Teachers generally felt confident using the resource and this confidence grew with continued use
- One teacher commented positively on the opportunity to take teaching out of the classroom environment and for the children to be active
- Some staff supported the use of the food photographs with real food
- Comments such as [that the most rewarding aspect of teaching this subject was] 'the opportunity to talk to children about food and their understanding of food groups
- Alun Davies, Gateshead Healthy Education Adviser, Raising Achievement Service, Learning & Children stated 'The NutriSkill resource effectively supports teaching and learning regarding healthy eating and can be taught through a number of curriculum subjects. Learners enjoy handling the bright, glossy resource cards and working on the large mat; linking active, physical learning with knowledge testing'