



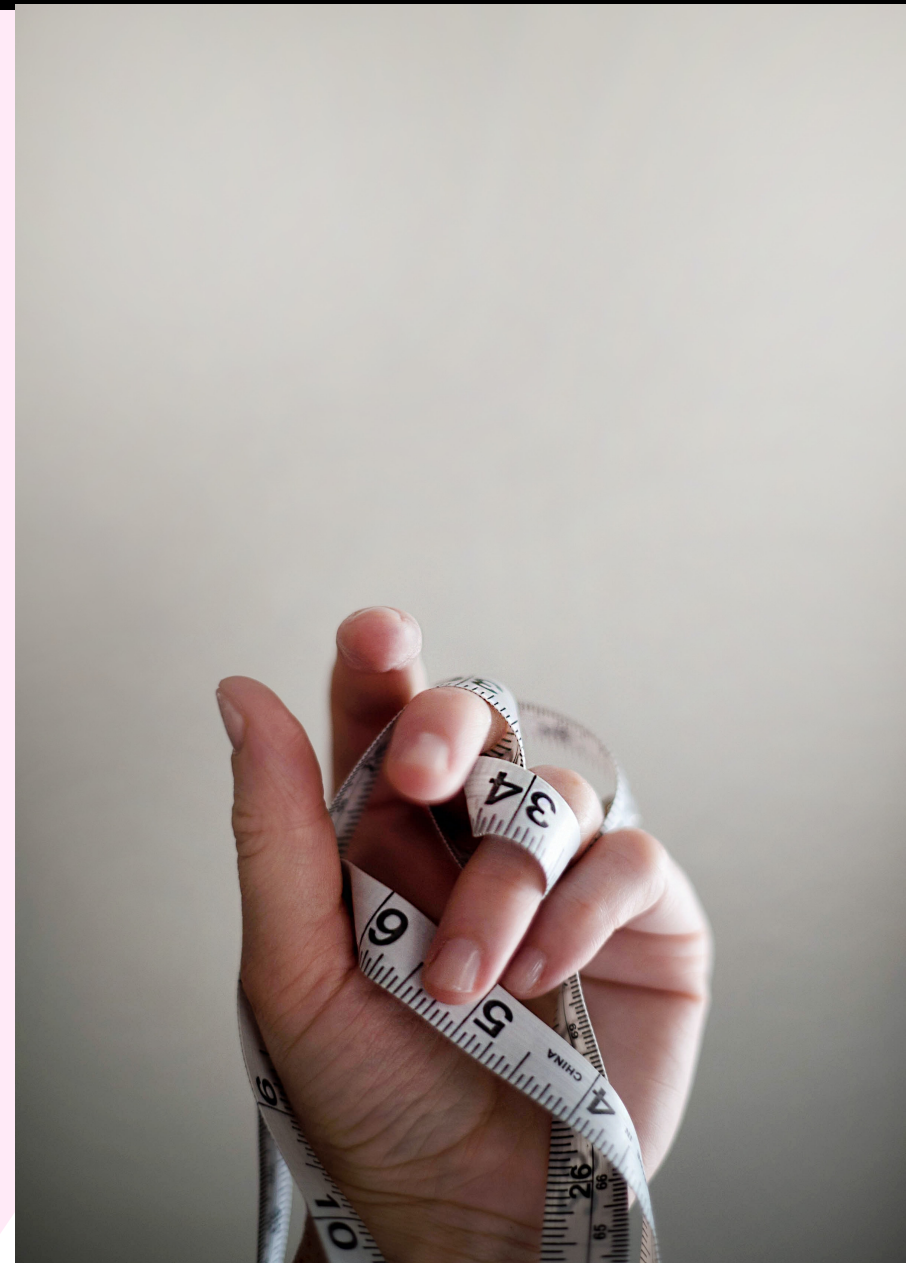
A recent study suggests that parents feel overwhelmed with online nutrition content about sugar and other dietary issues.

The study reveals that attitudes towards nutrition advice vary according to individuals' values, opinions and possibilities.

Below are recommendations on how to tackle nutrition issues among parents, considering their level of interest in dietary guidance.

Highly interested individuals

Parents who participate in (online) discussions about nutrition issues, declaring to be interested in a healthy lifestyle. They demonstrate a positive and open attitude towards dietary advice.



- **Maintenance** of healthful eating habits can be encouraged.
- Possible **side effects** of a too-restrictive approach (e.g. disordered eating) should be considered.
- Parents in this group demonstrate potential for persuading other parents to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

Medium interested individuals

Parents who do not participate enthusiastically in (online) discussions about healthy eating, but do not seem averse to nutrition advice.



Actions targeting this group should address:

- **Self-efficacy** for healthy eating
- **Cooking skills** enhancement
- Clarification of **confusing information** (e.g. safety of artificial sweeteners)
- Use of popular terms instead of scientific ones (e.g. table sugar rather than simple carbohydrates)

Individuals averse to nutrition advice

Parents who manifest a negative attitude towards nutrition advice (on social media), on the grounds of the overwhelming, contradictory and judgmental nature of dietary guidance



- Recommendations in terms of **foods** as opposed to nutrients (e.g. how many sweets a day as opposed to how many grams of free sugars)
- Consideration of individuals' prior nutrition **knowledge**
- Consideration of the high value given for the **hedonic aspects** of foods
- **Small** substantial changes over time

It is important to start a nutrition intervention/consultation by asking:

"To which extent are you interested in healthy eating?"
"What is your opinion about nutrition advice from experts?"

This way, approaches can be individualized to fit individuals' interests and profiles

Effective nutrition interventions targeting parents are pivotal for the promotion of healthy lifestyles and obesity prevention in childhood [1,2].

Parental nutritional habits may impact children's eating patterns for life [1].

The study was conducted as part of the project "Edulia-Bringing down barriers to children's healthy eating", which has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 764985.



More information on the research is available in the manuscript:

Moura, A. F., & Aschemann-Witzel, J. (2021). Perspectives on sugar consumption expressed on social media by French-speaking and Danish-speaking parents. *Social Science & Medicine*, 113636. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2020.113636>

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2. Birch, L. L., & Anzman, S. L. (2010). Learning to eat in an obesogenic environment: a developmental systems perspective on childhood obesity. *Child Development Perspectives*, 4(2), 138-143.