

Deliverable D7.4:

Report: Nudging study on parental and children's healthy eating behaviour

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BACKGROUND

Previous mixed-method cross-country research investigating parents shed light on the constraints to healthy eating in the family food environment. One of the biggest challenges reported by mothers was their partner and child's unwillingness to try unfamiliar food. We thus conducted a short intervention to address the issue through a nudge strategy involving the exposure of unfamiliar vegetables and spices to fathers and their children.

KEY FINDINGS

The online intervention involving picture book reading seems promising to nudge father and child's willingness to try unfamiliar foods. The positive attitudes towards unfamiliar foods seem to expand to foods beyond the ones chosen for the project. The favourable outcomes of the activities are worthy exploring in larger samples given the feasibility and relatively low cost of the intervention.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Using picture book (combined with one sensory session and home cooking) is a promising nudge (with potential to be a self-nudge) strategy to increase child and father's willingness to try unfamiliar vegetables and spices and the intention to keep including those foods in family meals. Although it should be further explored with quantitative and longitudinal methods, this nudge strategy appears as a low-cost simple alternative to optimize healthy foods' variety in the family food environment. The simplicity of the approach is an asset for its application virtually, not requiring high human resources and being suitable for the pandemic situation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

