

Obesity – Ready Steady Cook Summary

The Ready Steady Cook programme has been designed and developed to support people who have very little, or no, knowledge about cooking and eating healthily. Through specific targeting HALE has been able to work with people, who would not necessarily access community provisions such as, young care leavers, lone young Mums, isolated older people and families from local primary schools.

Each session is designed to meet the needs of the group and there is a strong participant led ethos. The sessions give participants the opportunity to try new foods, explore alternative cooking methods, develop cooking skills, design menus and gain knowledge on healthy eating, particularly healthy choices when snacking.

- 100% of attendees felt more knowledgeable about salt intake
- 98% of participants now eat more healthily than they did prior to the course
- 92% felt that the course had had a positive impact on their family
- 100% felt more confident about cooking following the course

Our impact

Through HALE's evaluation process we have found that course participants gain confidence in both cooking and identifying healthier choices. Through working together as a team the groups are able to develop weekly menus and all involved discuss ingredients and how to redesign recipes to demonstrate their new found knowledge of healthy eating. For some participants eating as a group is something they do not experience in their daily lives and many of the participants enjoy this aspect of the programme and this also creates further opportunities for participants to explore their eating habits and recognise when and where behaviour change can take place.

During the programme there is some focus on takeaways and a specific session is spent making a popular takeaway. The group decides if it is better than the shop bought one they would usually eat. From feedback after this session there is usually a 90 – 100% positive vote that the home made one is much nicer and they would definitely consider making their own in future instead of buying in. The Ready Steady Cook programme does not identify any foods as "bad" and recognises that it is important that everyone understands that all foods should be enjoyed in moderation. This programme gives participants the skills and knowledge to make alternative choices when looking at their nutritional needs.

Comments from participants

"I've never seen my kids try so many different stuff without moaning"

"Aww, do we have to stop coming?"

"I didn't like curry before, but now I LOVE IT!"

"I feel so much more confident cooking with S now. I used to just get on with it myself, because I didn't think she would be able to help. Thank you"