



**KEY FINDINGS FACT SHEET NO. 18**

**Results from the Western Australian Child and Adolescent Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey (CAPANS) 2003**



# Trends in the Types of Food Children are Eating 1985, 1995 and 2003

In 2003, the Premier's Physical Activity Taskforce, Healthway and the Department of Health commissioned the University of Notre Dame Australia to undertake a Statewide school-based survey to collect baseline data on child and adolescent physical activity behaviours, eating patterns and physiques.

This fact sheet describes the trends in the type and amount of food eaten by Western Australian children across 1985, 1995 and 2003.

### SURVEY SAMPLE

A 24-hour dietary record was completed by 1,494 students aged 8–15 years. Of the sample, 49.5% (n = 739) were male and 50.5% (n = 755) were female.

### THE FOOD GROUPS

- **The Core Food Groups** are cereals; fruit; vegetables; meat and alternatives including poultry, fish, eggs, legumes and nuts; and milk and milk products.
- **Non-Core foods** are not essential to provide the nutrients that the body needs and some contain too much fat, sugar, salt and energy.

### COMPARISON SURVEYS

The CAPANS data were compared with the following two surveys conducted in 1985 and 1995<sup>1</sup>:

- National Dietary Survey of School Children (aged 10–15 years) - Department of Community Services and Health, 1985<sup>2</sup>; and
- 1995 National Nutrition Survey - Australian Bureau of Statistics<sup>3</sup>.

The comparable sample is limited to 10–15 year old children.

### TRENDS IN CORE FOOD GROUPS INTAKE 1985, 1995 AND 2003

#### PROPORTION OF CHILDREN EATING CORE FOODS

Figure 1. Proportion of males consuming foods from core food groups 1985, 1995 and 2003

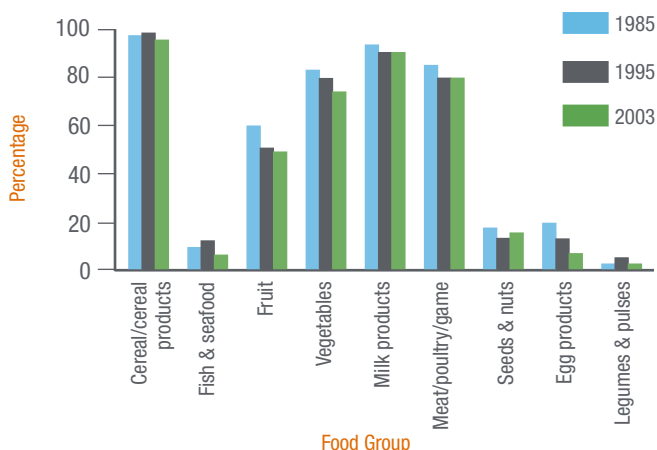
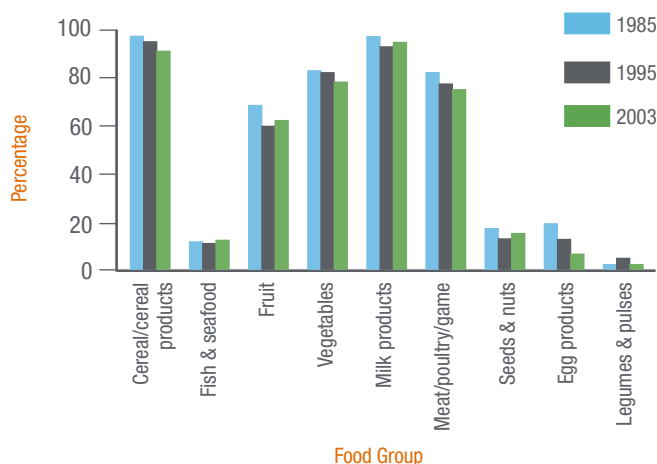


Figure 2. Proportion of females consuming foods from core food groups 1985, 1995 and 2003



### MEAN INTAKE

Table 1. Mean intake of core foods consumed by children in 1985, 1995 and 2003.

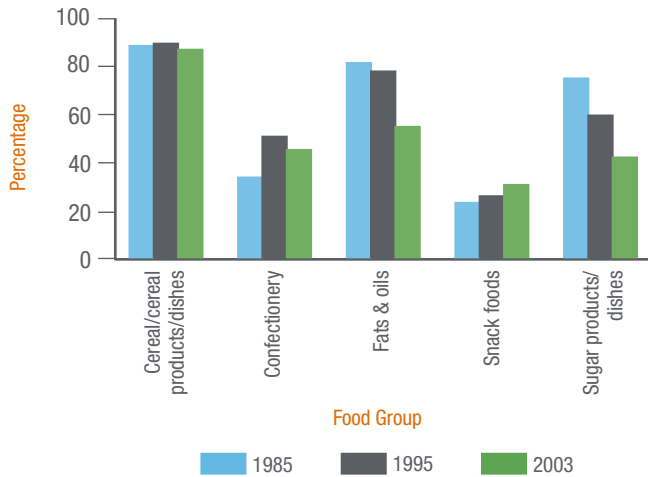
Core food	Mean intake (g)					
	Males			Females		
	1985	1995	2003	1985	1995	2003
Cereal & cereal products	214	237	229	134	159	145
Meat, poultry & game products & dishes	138	139	183	106	107	133
Vegetable products & dishes	194	203	158	161	181	159
Fruit products & dishes	126	125	119	123	128	139
Milk products & dishes	542	484	505	372	349	339
Fish & seafood products & dishes	9	17	8	8	15	24
Egg products & dishes	13	11	7	11	8	5



## TRENDS IN NON-CORE FOOD GROUPS INTAKE 1985, 1995 AND 2003

### PROPORTION OF CHILDREN EATING NON-CORE FOODS

Figure 3. Proportion of males consuming foods from non-core food groups 1985, 1995 and 2003



### MEAN INTAKE

Table 2. Mean intake of non-core foods consumed by children in 1985, 1995 and 2003.

Core food	Mean intake (g)					
	Males			Females		
	1985	1995	2003	1985	1995	2003
Cereal based products & dishes (e.g cakes, pizza, pastries)	110	161	186	85	124	146
Confectionery (including muesli bars)	16	25	23	15	21	22
Fats & oils	19	12	6	15	9	6
Snack foods (e.g. potato chips, corn chips)	12	12	20	12	12	14
Sugar products & dishes (e.g. sweet spreads, icipoles)	17	27	14	11	26	17

## NUTRITION RECOMMENDATIONS

The NHMRC Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia<sup>4</sup> recommend that children and adolescents should enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods and drink plenty of water. Daily food servings vary with body size and physical activity level but most children should aim for the following serves:

Children and Teenagers	CEREALS (including Breads, Rice, Pasta and Noodles)	VEGETABLES, LEGUMES	FRUIT	MILK, YOGHURT, CHEESE	LEAN MEAT, FISH, POULTRY, NUTS AND LEGUMES	EXTRA FOODS (Have no more than)
4-7 yrs	5-7	2	1	2	-	1-2
8-11 yrs	6-9	3	1	2	1	1-2
12-18 yrs	5-11	3	3	3	1	1-3

For more information on dietary recommendations visit:  
[http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/\\_files/n30.pdf](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/_files/n30.pdf)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Other key findings and recommendations, including levels of physical activity in children, can be found in the CAPANS report at [www.beactive.wa.gov.au](http://www.beactive.wa.gov.au) or by contacting the Physical Activity Taskforce Secretariat on 9382 5980.

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Premier's Physical Activity Taskforce  
Department of Health



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- For details of the results, design, methodology, data collection and data processing differences between the surveys please refer to the CAPANS Nutrition Technical Report available at [www.beactive.wa.gov.au](http://www.beactive.wa.gov.au)
- Department of Community Services and Health. (1989). *National Dietary Survey of School Children*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (1998). *National Nutrition Survey: User's Guide, 1995*. Cat. No. 4801.0, Canberra: ABS.
- National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). (2003). *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia incorporating the Infant Feeding Guidelines for Health Workers*. Canberra: Department of Health and Ageing.
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