



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

What Are Children Eating?

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 types of food from Core and Non-Core food groups eaten by Western Australian children in 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.

FOOD INTAKE BY MALES

The most commonly consumed foods for males aged 8–11 years were:

- cereals and cereal products (98%);
- non-alcoholic beverages (95%);
- milk and milk products (94%);
- meat, poultry and game products and dishes (77%); and
- cereal-based products (e.g. cakes, biscuits, pizza, pastries) (75%).

The most commonly consumed foods for males aged 12–15 years were:

- non-alcoholic beverages (96%);
- cereals and cereal products (95%);
- milk and milk products (91%);
- meat, poultry and game products and dishes (82%); and
- vegetable products and dishes (72%)

FOOD INTAKE BY FEMALES

The most commonly consumed foods for females aged 8–11 years were:

- cereal and cereal products (98%);
- non-alcoholic beverages (97%);
- milk and milk products (94%);
- cereal-based products (e.g. cakes, biscuits, pizza, pastries) (79%); and
- meat, poultry and game products and dishes (77%).

The most commonly consumed foods for females aged 12–15 years were:

- non-alcoholic beverages (97%);
- milk and milk products (90%);
- cereal and cereal products (90%);
- vegetable products and dishes (80%); and
- meat, poultry and game products and dishes (74%).

INTAKE OF FOODS FROM CORE FOOD GROUPS

- 95% of students ate cereals and cereal products.
- 90% of students consumed milk and milk products.
- 75% of students ate meat, poultry and game products and dishes.
- 70% of students ate vegetable products and dishes.
- 55% of students ate fruit products and dishes.
- 15% of students ate nuts and seeds.
- 10% or less of students ate eggs products and fish and seafood products and dishes.

Figure 1. Male intake of foods from core groups

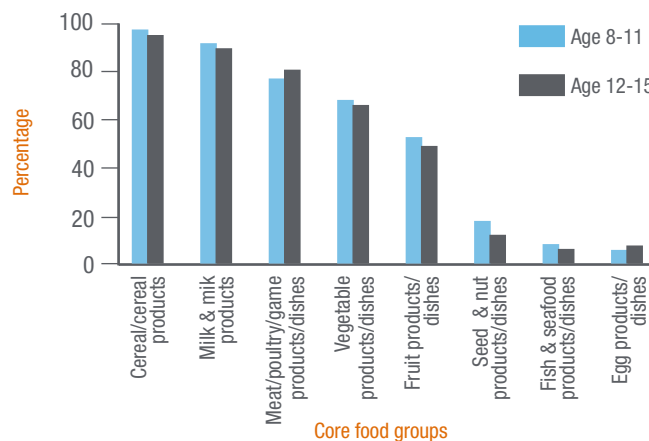
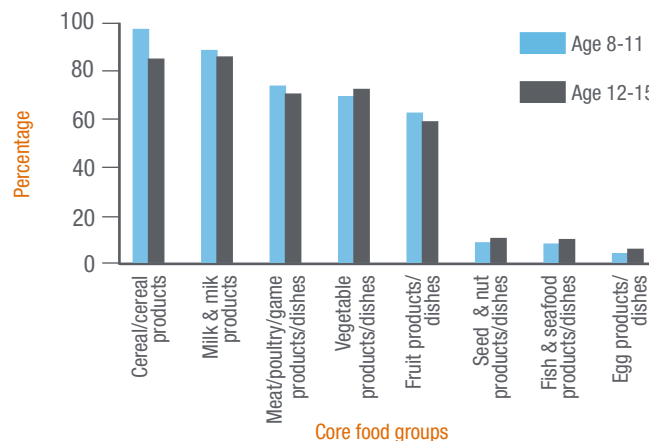


Figure 2. Female intake of foods from core groups





Gender Differences in Core Food Intake

For children aged 8–11 years:

- fewer males ate fruit products and dishes; and
- more males ate seed and nut products and dishes.

For children aged 12–15 years:

- more females ate fish and seafood products and dishes;
- more females ate vegetable and fruit products and dishes;
- more males ate cereal and cereal products; and
- more males ate meat, poultry, game products and dishes.

INTAKE OF MOST COMMON NON-CORE FOODS

- 70% of students ate cereal-based products (e.g. cakes, biscuits, pizza, pastries).
- 50% of students ate fats and oils.
- 45% of students ate confectionery (e.g. lollies, chocolates, snack bars).
- 45% of students ate other sugar products and dishes (e.g. sweet spreads, jelly, icy poles).
- 35% of students ate savoury sauces and condiments (e.g. tomato sauce, mayonnaise).
- 30% of students ate snack foods (e.g. crisps, popcorn).

Figure 3. Male intake of most common non-core foods

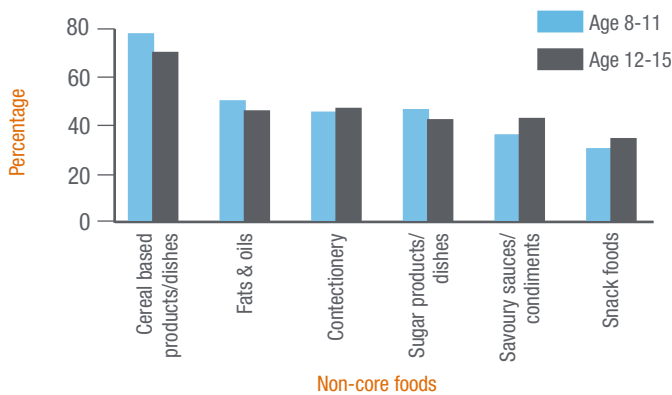
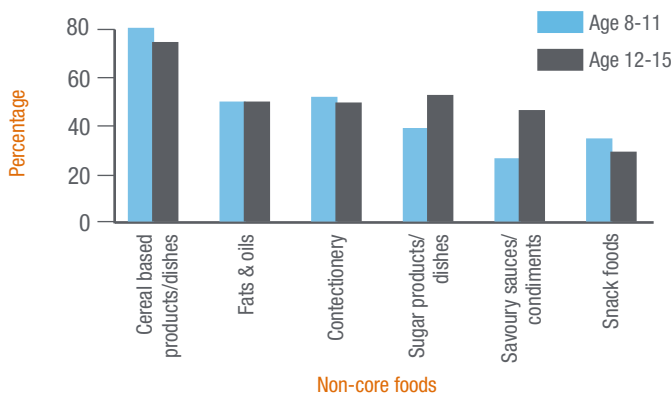


Figure 4. Female intake of most common non-core foods



Gender Differences in Non-core Food Intake

For children aged 8–11 years:

- more females ate snack foods;
- more females ate confectionery;

- more females ate cereal-based products and dishes;
- more males ate fats and oils;
- more males ate sugar and sugar products; and
- more males ate savoury sauces and condiments.

Compared with males aged 12–18, more females ate non-core foods, with the exception of confectionery.

NUTRITION RECOMMENDATIONS

The NHMRC Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia¹ 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:

For more information on dietary recommendations visit: http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/_files/n30.pdf

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

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 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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- 1 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.
- 2 Hands, B., Parker, H., Glasson, C., Brinkman, S. & Read, H. (2004). *Physical Activity and Nutrition Levels in Western Australian Children and Adolescents: Report*. Perth, Western Australia: Western Australian Government.