

a taste for independence:

using food to develop skills for life

*how to
do it*

*how it's
been done*

*where to go
next to get
more help*



community
food and health
(scotland)

community food and health (scotland)

Our overriding aim is to improve Scotland's food and health. We do this by supporting work within and with low-income communities that improves access to and take-up of a healthy diet.

Major obstacles being addressed by community-based initiatives are:

AVAILABILITY – increasing access to fruit and vegetables of an acceptable quality and cost

AFFORDABILITY – tackling not only the cost of shopping, but also getting to the shops

SKILLS – improving confidence and skills in cooking and shopping

CULTURE – overcoming ingrained habits

We help support low-income communities to:

- identify barriers to a healthy balanced diet
- develop local responses to addressing these barriers, and
- highlight where actions at other levels, or in other sectors are required

We value the experience, understanding, skills and knowledge within Scotland's communities and their unique contribution to developing and delivering policy and practice at all levels.

Community Food and Health (Scotland) was formerly known as the Scottish Community Diet Project.

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thanks

We would like to thank all 21 organisations whose grant evaluation forms, photos, reports or interviews all contributed to this guide and who work with a range of vulnerable groups from all over the country, from East Lothian to Easter Ross and from Alloa to Aberdeen.

A special thanks to those who provided case studies.

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**Community Food and Health (Scotland),
September 2007**



who this is for

This guide is for anyone who is interested in improving the independent living skills of the individuals that they work with, either as preparation for the future or because they need these skills now. It is based on the experiences of 21 organisations that used food to develop independent living skills.

Most of these organisations worked with vulnerable groups living on a low income, including people with learning disabilities or mental health support needs, young people experiencing homelessness, and young carers. But the guide will be useful for a range of people or organisations, from a youth club or a widowers' group to those who are thinking about how to co-ordinate or fund this type of work.

Food is an excellent vehicle for developing a range of life skills, particularly social skills and confidence. Some of the organisations also found that food activities were useful as a way of engaging with vulnerable participants, or as a way of encouraging them to participate in other activities (such as further education or volunteering).

The guide mainly uses information from projects that focused on food preparation or cooking activities. However, some also provided assistance with, or advice on, food shopping and budgeting. There were also three projects that developed food-growing projects as part of their programmes.

This guide will help you start thinking about how to develop food activities and will give you good examples of how others have achieved this, including their challenges as well as their successes. It will not give you all the practical information that you might require (i.e. lists of equipment that you will need, recipes and information on food hygiene instruction). There are already some excellent resources available (mainly free of charge and available on the internet) that provide these details. Information about these and other resources can be found in the signposting section of this guide. This guide roughly falls into four main sections.

The **first section** discusses why you should use food to develop independent living skills and relevant policy and research. It also outlines health and safety issues, and tells you how we gathered information for this guide.

The **second section** discusses how projects developed and ran food activities and what happened as the result of these activities.

The **third section** provides case studies from ten of the projects, and conclusions.

The **fourth section** provides website addresses for further background information and details on where you can find resources that will help you to carry out food activities. This section also has the appendices.



engage



SECTION ONE

why should you use food activities to develop independent living skills?

You may already work with a group of people who want to learn to live more independently and would like some help with their cooking, budgeting or food shopping skills. But whether this is the case or not, there are a range of Scottish policies that support the promotion of these skills, and research that shows that teaching these skills is both needed and effective. Further information on where you can access these policies and research, is in the signposting section of this guide.

Policies

Food activities cut across many areas of work and agendas; here is a very small selection of Scottish policies that show how food activities might complement your area of work or interest.

'The Same as You?' is a review of services for **people with learning disabilities** published by the Scottish Executive in 2000. This review stated that well-planned learning opportunities could help people with learning disabilities develop independent living skills so they rely less on others.

The **homeless** 'Code of Guidance' is a document for all local authorities, which promotes good practice. It states that some homeless people, particularly those who have been in an institutional setting or who have been sleeping rough, may need to learn or relearn independent living skills, if they are to sustain their tenancy.

As the main driver of **food and health** policy for a decade, The Scottish Diet Action Plan (1996) was concerned that four main barriers to healthy eating should be addressed. One of these was a lack of skills, such as cooking and shopping. Current food policies continue to focus on addressing health inequalities. Good cooking and food shopping skills can help individuals consume a healthy, balanced diet, but these skills are even more crucial if individuals living on a low-income are to have any chance of achieving this.

Research

The Food Standards Agency recently published a review of resources for **'first time caterers'**, (such as students, looked-after

children leaving care, homeless, prisoners, elderly widowed and people with learning disabilities) by Tasker, and others, (2005). The authors of this review met with groups of first time caterers and those who work with them with the aim of finding out their views. Their conclusions included that first time caterers would prefer practical help (such as cooking, budgeting and shopping activities) compared to written materials, (such as recipes) and that more help was particularly required with food shopping and budgeting.

... the shopping experience itself was difficult for many clients who had literacy problems... the value brands in particular from various supermarkets did not have any pictorial clue as to the contents inside... it was only more expensive brands which had photographs of the food inside.

Tasker, S.M. and others, 2005

The Cookwell project (2002) was a research project that aimed to increase consumption of 'healthy foods' (more fruit, vegetables and starchy carbohydrates and less fatty or sugary foods) amongst participants attending **cooking courses in low-income communities**. Participants did improve their diet slightly after completing a cooking course. Unfortunately, this improvement was not sustained six months after the course had finished. They did find however, that former participants were eating or tasting a wider variety of foods, were preparing meals from basic ingredients and were experimenting more with their cooking. The former participants reported that they had more confidence and a sense of pride about their skills. They also said that the barriers to cooking more often were because of family tastes and preferences and because of caring responsibilities.

Research of the effects of **food on mood and mental health** is at a relatively early stage, compared to other work on food and health. So far, the research has suggested that a balanced diet, particularly one that contains foods such as oil-rich fish, whole grain foods and green leafy vegetables are associated with good mental health (SustainWeb, 2007).



Before you start – health, safety, food hygiene and insurance

Groups who are considering any food activity need to assess the health and safety of the venue where they are planning to deliver activities as well as making sure that their current insurance will cover food activities. Local authority Environmental Health Officers can advise on what facilities you might need to deliver safe activities.

You will need access to a suitable, safe and clean kitchen. Although training kitchens are an excellent resource, you do not need a fully equipped catering facility in order to teach people to cook for themselves and a few friends. Using a domestic type of kitchen as a venue to teach cooking skills gives a ‘real life’ setting in which to develop independent living skills. However, participants will need access to a wash-hand basin so that they can wash their hands (i.e. not the same sink that will be used to wash food or dishes). Access to a nearby bathroom or toilet with hand washing facilities is sufficient.

A food hygiene qualification is strongly recommended for anyone who is considering delivering food preparation or cooking skills activities. With an appropriate qualification and knowledge, you will be able to safely instruct others in food hygiene. If participants

are planning to share their food with others, (i.e. they will share a meal at the end of a cookery session) they will need particularly close supervision to make sure that they have complied with food hygiene standards.

How we got our information

Small grant scheme

Community Food and Health (Scotland) operates an annual small grant scheme. Agencies and groups working with a low-income community are invited to apply for funding between £500 and £3000 to develop activities that will promote access to, and take-up of a healthy and balanced diet. Each year, we fund around 40 to 60 community-based projects throughout Scotland. Some of these projects will be delivering food and health activities for the first time; others might be expanding on existing food activities. Most groups complete and submit an evaluation report around six months after they receive funding. (A sample copy of an evaluation form is in Appendix One.)

Small grants scheme evaluation reports and other reports

This guide used 16 evaluation reports from recipients of our annual small grant scheme.

These were received between March 2005 and April 2007. All case study projects within this guide commented upon, and gave an update on their case studies, (between August and September, 2007). We also used a report from a research project as a case study. We used reports from two CFHS conferences, and a round-table discussion as background information. These were attended by a wide range of people many working within projects that deliver practical food skills.

Semi-structured interviews

Between November 2006 and August 2007 we conducted informal interviews with four additional projects. As well as staff members, participants were involved at two of the interviews.

Choosing projects

Choosing which projects to focus on was not easy. Many projects that we are in contact with that deliver food activities with low-income groups do not always use the terms ‘life skills’ or ‘independent living skills’. We chose to focus on projects that worked with vulnerable groups who were likely to be in the process of learning to live independently for the first time, or re-learning to live independently as the result of illness, addictions or after being in an institutional setting. Appendix Two has a list of the groups of projects that were involved in contributing to this guide.



SECTION TWO

what they did and what happened – learning from projects

Why they did it

Ideally, any community-based project would take a community development or participatory approach to developing independent living skills activities. That is, participants get involved in shaping activities.

The main reasons why the projects in this guide decided to develop food activities was because workers or partner organisations were concerned about the eating habits, food shopping, budgeting or cooking skills of the people that they worked with. However, twelve of the projects did actively involve participants in making decisions or shaping activities.

Mostly this involved giving the participants a choice of recipes or finding out what groups would like to learn to cook. Two projects encouraged participants to take part in deciding how they would like to learn cookery (i.e. in groups, preferred teaching methods). One group arranged a cookery course because the group had asked to learn to cook.

Five projects were involved in some budgeting or food shopping skills. If you are planning to deliver cookery sessions, it might be worth

considering how you could get participants involved in shopping and budgeting or finding out if they need help with these skills.

Funding

Most projects received some additional funding to carry out food activities. The costs varied a great deal and depended on the needs or ambitions of each group. Most also used core staff time, existing facilities or received help from volunteers. At least one project required the participants to use their own money to buy food for cookery sessions. Providing help with budgeting and food shopping, or preparing simple snacks used less resources than projects that provided cookery courses in hired venues.

Getting help from other people

Most of the projects received help from other agencies; this included funding or participant referral. Some also received nutrition or cookery advice from Dietitians, Health Centres, or colleges. Health Visitors were consulted or got involved with any work that involved weaning. Several people received help from volunteers or students. Agreement between

partner agencies or staff, before starting any food activities was crucial for ensuring attendance, giving consistent messages to participants, and helped with evaluation.

Who led the activities?

What skills do you need?

Eighteen out of the 21 projects gave information on who was responsible for teaching food-related skills. Most food activities were delivered by existing staff, many of whom worked on food, health or independent living skills issues on a regular basis. Three projects used or paid for specifically trained food workers to deliver food sessions, such as chefs, a dietitian and home economics tutors. One project said that a volunteer delivered some of their sessions.

Basically, food activities facilitators need to have the confidence and experience to deliver training, manage group dynamics (if working in a group) and deliver the food activities that they are involved in (i.e. cooking skills, gardening skills). They also need to give consistent food safety, health and nutrition

messages, by using information from credible resources. The signposting section of this guide has information on good sources of nutritional information. There are also details of a short, accredited food and health course.

Key skills for workers when delivering independent learning skills are:

- staff with experience – i.e. who are able to relate to participants and who have qualifications such as food hygiene
- good communication between workers and participants.

Delegates' views at a workshop on independent living skills and food, Community Food and Health (Scotland) Conference, September 2006.

Facilities and equipment

Seven projects in this guide had access to a training kitchen, such as in a school, college or community facility. The others ran cookery sessions in community centre kitchens, in hostel kitchens or in participants' own homes.

Some projects encouraged participants to learn how to use a wide range of equipment such as smoothie makers, juice machines, breadmakers and blenders. Participants may enjoy using a wide range of equipment, and this is particularly suitable for activities in snack

bars and cafés. However, projects need to consider whether participants are likely to use or buy this type of equipment for themselves.

Three projects had encouraged participants to develop an interest in food by starting gardening projects. One reported that the long distance to the garden discouraged participants from getting involved.

Working with parents with young children

Parents with babies or young children may not be able to attend food activities unless there is a suitable crèche facility for them to use. However, there are a growing number of food projects that encourage parents and children to learn to prepare and cook meals together; this can help families to taste and experiment with food.

Round-table discussion on 0–5: children and parents including infant nutrition hosted by Community Food and Health (Scotland) 2007.

Encouraging participants to attend

Nearly all of the projects either worked with existing groups, service-users or students or asked agencies to refer individuals to them. None of the projects charged an attendance fee, although one project relied on their

participants to bring their own food to their one-to-one cooking sessions.

How to be effective in promoting independent living skills:

- make sure that any food sessions are relevant to the individuals who will be attending;
- make sure that any food activities are suitable for the individuals who have expressed an interest in attending them (informal interviews and needs assessment);
- engage with people where they are – work with people in their own space.

Delegates' views at a workshop on independent living skills and food, Community Food and Health (Scotland) Networking Conference, September 2006.

Three projects gave participants a 'starter pack' (i.e. store cupboard ingredients or basic kitchen equipment and utensils) if they completed courses. Nine projects provided written recipes for participants to take home and some of these also included some cooking ingredients. Gardening projects offered produce to participants, and one or two also gave away herb or vegetable plants.

How the food activities were run

Length of group sessions

Courses varied in length from weekly sessions lasting two hours over a period of ten weeks, to occasional short sessions. Weekly drop-in support groups, such as those for people with mental health support needs or young parents, ran cookery sessions every several weeks in order to vary their activity programme.

How many participants in a group?

The number of participants working in groups varied between two and twelve. Large groups, such as those with six participants or more were often run with the help of assistants or volunteers. However, some smaller groups also received help from assistants or volunteers; this depended on the confidence and skills of participants.

Hands-on cooking or demonstration?

Nearly all of the food activities gave participants practical experience. One project that carried out food demonstrations gave the participants recipes and ingredients so that they could try cooking the dishes for themselves at home.

One-to-one sessions

Three projects delivered, or offered, one-to-one cookery sessions in participants' own homes

or supported accommodation. These were suitable for individuals who were uncomfortable with groups or who required tailor-made advice. These sessions were also used to develop food shopping and budgeting skills.

Teaching methods

All participants following the same recipe

Some projects found that this method made planning and shopping easier and it worked well with some groups. Other groups did not like it as 'it is too much like being at school'. Some had difficulties reading written recipes. Some individuals might not want to cook (and eat) particular foods, although most projects adapted to individual tastes.

Individual recipes

Many of the projects ran sessions where every individual chose for themselves what they wanted to learn to cook, either the week before a session or at the start of a course.

'Ready, Steady, Cook!' type format

Four of the projects said that they used this format (see explanation in box on page 12) for part of a course, particularly at the end, when participants had already built their skills and confidence. Ready, Steady, Cook! sessions created a friendly competitive atmosphere and suited some groups very well.

Varying the format

One project said that it had to vary the teaching methods in order to sustain the interest of participants, this included providing different games and food models to make sure that healthy eating information was given in an interesting way.



This food mat is popular for promoting healthy eating messages and is available from most NHS Health Promotion libraries.

Taking food home or sitting down to eat it together?

Participants at courses arranged by nine projects ate the meals together at the end of each session. Sometimes these were meals that they had prepared together or each individual had prepared their own meal. Eating together offered an opportunity to have informal discussions on food, health and cooking or just gave participants the chance to relax and be sociable. Some invited others

to join them and some participants enjoyed giving others a chance to try the food that they had cooked. Other participants took their food home. You will need to give instructions to participants on how to store and heat food properly if they take food home with them.

How to run a 'Ready, Steady, Cook!' type cooking session

Based on the TV programme of the same name, this format can be run with groups of participants (without an audience). Here is how one of the groups did it:

1. Two teams are given a bag of ingredients each, the contents of each bag suggest a particular dish (i.e. Thai curry paste and other ingredients for a Thai curry).
2. The teams are allowed to use some 'store cupboard' ingredients (such as oil, spices, stock cubes, etc) in addition to their bags of ingredients.
3. The teams can swap one of their ingredients with the other team.
4. Each team is given a fixed time to prepare their meal (i.e. 40 minutes).
5. One person, or a small group of people who are not involved in the sessions are invited to judge the dishes and decide who is the winning team.

Less confident participants were given assistance with recipes and food preparation.

Deciding what to cook

This will depend on both what the participants want to learn and the aims of the project. Participants may be more interested in being independent and being able to budget for food rather than learning about health and nutrition.

Fifteen projects taught participants to cook a selection of main meals, some of which included a few desserts, cakes, and healthy breakfast ideas. The six remaining projects taught participants to make snacks, soups or smoothies.

One project (who worked with young people living in bed and breakfast accommodation) was keen to emphasise the importance of considering what facilities that participants might have available to them; there was no point in teaching participants to cook complicated dishes if they only had access to a microwave or just a kettle.

relevant



A good way to work with groups who might not be interested in healthy eating is to encourage their interest in learning to cook before introducing any discussions about healthy eating when participants seem ready for this.

Other delegates encouraged healthy cooking skills by simply ensuring that the food that they taught people to cook was both healthy and popular - 'Pile up a pizza up with vegetables, so there's hardly any room for the cheese.'

Delegates' views at a workshop on food and homelessness. Community Food and Health (Scotland) conference, November 2005.

How were the food activities evaluated?

In order to carry on with your work, improve it, or seek funding for it, you will want to be able to show that the work has made a difference to participants' behaviour or habits. Ideally, finding out the result of the food activity would involve finding out what participants' habits are before they start activities and finding out whether they changed their behaviour by the end of the food activity (or at a later date). Finding out their opinions on how the food

activities are being run can also help improve the delivery of these food activities.

Projects used a variety of methods to evaluate their work, from giving out **questionnaires** (although one project highlighted that these were unsuitable with their participants, because of their poor literacy skills), informal or more formal **verbal feedback** and discussion with participants, staff or key workers, **reflective staff diaries**, to more participatory methods such as encouraging group discussion by using statements or pictures and asking for comments. A few projects said that they used **quizzes, game and models** to teach skills, however, these could also be useful to find out what participants have learnt.

The signposting section of the guide has information on where to find out more about participatory methods of evaluation as well as some of the tools mentioned here.

What happened?

All projects reported some successes. Most also had to overcome some challenges.

Seven projects reported problems with **attendance**, either encouraging people to start courses, or encouraging them to complete them. These projects all involved young people or people experiencing homelessness. Attendance was less of a problem where projects had provided transport

for participants or when food activities were incorporated into other activities. Those working with young mums, people with learning disabilities, or delivering one-to-one work were less likely to report problems with attendance.

Three projects said that they had problems with **poor group dynamics**. This occasionally resulted in some participants choosing to leave courses. However, only one project (who worked with a group of six young people) reported that they had to cancel their course because of challenging behaviour. One project said that encouraging the group to set 'ground rules' at the beginning of the course was useful.

Only two projects said that they always or sometimes had difficulties with **encouraging participants to try new foods** that they had cooked for themselves. Finally, all projects here reported that participants had **enjoyed** food sessions.



We found that participants who were normally difficult to engage, enjoying getting involved in the kitchen, they got into making soup and baking bread.

(Member of project staff)



I have learnt to meet people, and I have started to enjoy cooking.

(Cookery session participant)

Impact – what were the effects of these activities?

Seventeen projects reported at least one or a selection of the following benefits. The remaining projects had either just finished sessions or were still in the process of running them, so we were unable to find out whether their projects had made any differences to their participants food-related behaviour or skills.

Increased food-related independent living skills

The six projects who had stated that the main aims of their work was to enhance life skills or independent living skills around food, reported that these skills had increased amongst their participants or participants said that they had increased.

Increased interest in food and healthy eating

Twelve projects reported that participants were more interested in healthy eating or cookery. They reported that participants were either: experimenting more with their cooking; were buying a wider range of foods; were more interested in eating a healthy balanced diet; or were swapping recipes and helping each other with cooking or shopping. Two projects working with young mothers reported that their participants were keen to learn about healthy eating for their children. Eleven projects said that participants had said that they felt more **confident** about preparing food, cooking or food shopping.

Social benefits/resettlement benefits

Five projects emphasised the social benefits of delivering food activities in a group setting. This was most likely to be reported when participants sat down and ate meals together after cooking, either alone or with invited guests. Another of these projects thought that encouraging the participants to invite a friend round to share a meal that they had assisted them in cooking, helped participants settle into their new home. Two additional projects thought that one-to-one cooking sessions delivered by a participant's key worker was a useful and non-threatening way of building a relationship with the participant.

confidence



The aim of our work was to help these young people develop flexible cooking skills that would suit their weekly food budgets of around £15. We wanted them to have the skills to buy foods that would last them most of the week and to have the skills to turn a few basic ingredients into balanced and tasty meals.

(Member of project staff)

Increased engagement in services

Four projects found that participants involved in one food activity, became more interested in other activities. One project said that a few of their participants started attending extra cookery courses held at a different venue. Another project reported that two out of five young parents on their cookery course began to, and continued, to use the project's fruit and vegetable stall. The same project also said that these two young parents were keen to get involved in shaping another cookery course.

One of these projects reported that two participants experiencing homelessness got involved with **volunteering** for their project, one for six months, and another continues to do so. Another project reported that the young travellers that they escorted to a **college** catering course, asked for and completed, an additional (higher grade) catering course. (Most of these young travellers had never been in a college environment before, and also had attended school on an irregular basis.) Another project's participant planned to use recipes that they had learnt at the coffee shop where he was employed.





SECTION THREE

case studies

The case studies that follow have been gathered from CFHS grant recipient's evaluation forms, from interviews or from a research report. Some of these projects have used funding to deliver a one-off activity, or to pilot an idea, others continue to deliver these activities.

People with learning disabilities/mental health support needs

WEA Reach Out Project, Aberdeen

Cookery sessions, preparation of healthy snacks and an allotment

Key learning points

- gardening space needs to be accessible
- cookery skills classes helped to build the confidence of students enough to enable them to invite friends round for meals.

Who was it for?

This adult education centre works with around 40 adults who have a variety of issues including learning disabilities, mental health and alcohol and/or substance misuse.

Why did they do it?

The workers at this centre were aware that their students depended on high levels of sugary and fatty foods and ate few fruit and vegetables. They had provided healthy eating activities in the past and had found that these were successful, particularly if they adopted a subtle approach to healthy eating.

Who was involved in running it and organising it?

WEA Reach Out project worked with several partners and used funding from the Health Improvement Fund and their own core funding to deliver these projects. They received a further £1000 from CFHS to pay for the food, gardening materials, training kitchen and cookery tutors.

How they organised it

The project hired a community training kitchen in Aberdeen. They ran seven **cookery** sessions, each lasting two hours. One of these was a 'Ready Steady Cook!' session. All participants prepared their own meal using the same recipe, and sat and ate their meals together at the end.

A selection of **healthy foods** was made freely available at the centre so that students could make themselves snacks and drinks. The project already had an **allotment** and wanted to extend the use of this; they grew produce that could also be easily grown at home on a windowsill.

What happened and achievements

Seven students completed the **cookery** sessions. They all cooked a variety of meals with several themes including Chinese and Scottish cookery. Everyone enjoyed these

sessions and said that they would like to do more of them. Sitting down together to eat a meal at the end was particularly appreciated. As the result of their new cookery skills, some of the students developed their confidence enough to invite friends round to their homes to share a meal.

Making **healthy snacks** and smoothies was a popular activity at the centre. Some of the students experimented with some unusual combinations. However, some students said that this was too expensive for them to do at home.

Despite the distance to, and the poor facilities at the **allotment**, four students regularly got involved in this gardening activity. The produce from the allotment was available to others at the project as well as those attending the allotment, and was sometimes used to make juices.

What happened next?

The project continues to offer the opportunity to students to make healthy snacks and drinks. Sometimes the students are very interested in making these and at other times they are not. The popularity of the cookery sessions led the group to seek and obtain funding from CFHS to improve the centre's own kitchen facilities to enable them to run cookery courses from their own premises.

Until their kitchen is completed they have been using kitchens in other organisations to run cooking sessions. Both staff and volunteers have been involved in facilitating these.

Unfortunately, the distance to the allotment resulted in giving up the gardening activity, but the centre still hopes to find a more suitable site in the future. Overall, the centre has reported that students are more interested and knowledgeable about healthy eating and say that they use their new cookery skills at home.

Contact details

WEA Reach Out Project

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”

The cooking was great fun; we made loads of really fine stuff, then sat down and ate it all together. I've tried some of the recipes at home now – they are great!

(Student)



Hamilton Connect, Aberdeen

Cookery demonstrations

Key learning point

- giving participants ingredients and recipes to take home helped them try out recipes that they had been shown in the group.

Who was it for?

Hamilton Connect supports people with mental health problems. Cookery sessions were developed for members of a weekly men's healthy living group. Most of the men have enduring mental health problems or a history of alcohol misuse.

Why did they do it?

The Hamilton Connect service offers home support (such as help with shopping, budgeting, cooking and cleaning) and group activities to those that use their services. They aim to help service-users to develop household skills, improve their quality of life and to help ensure that they are able to sustain their tenancies. They run a support group for men each week. This group had enjoyed a group

session that had focused on healthy eating and included a demonstration on preparing soup and fajitas. The participants in the group were keen to have more of these sessions.

Who was involved in running it and organising it?

Hamilton Connect co-ordinated the sessions and paid a facilitator to deliver each session.

How they organised it

The project had use of the kitchen at the centre that they hired for the weekly support group. They ran the healthy eating session every fourth week. Each one consisted of a cookery demonstration and tasting, as well as a discussion about food hygiene and healthy eating. The men were given the recipes and ingredients so that they could cook the dish themselves later at home, either on their own or with help from their support worker.

The project also bought a 'DIY Food and Mood workshop pack' (website information on this is in the signposting section) for the staff and the men to refer to.

What happened and achievements

The sessions were very popular; attendance was high on the days that these were run. Approximately 12 men attended each session. Generally, feedback was positive. At a healthy

breakfasts demonstration, one man enjoyed trying lots of different types of porridge, (with fruit, with milk, etc). At his next weekly supported shopping venture, he bought porridge for the first time in many years. This man's typical breakfast normally consisted of several packets of crisps and a fizzy drink, so having a bowl of porridge instead of the crisps was quite a result. Another man said that he is now less dependent on his local take-aways and bakery. He reported that he now cooks several meals for himself each week as the result of his new skills.

What happened next?

When the Hamilton Connects' women's group heard about these sessions, they were keen to take part. As a result, the men's and women's groups have been combined to form one well-being group. Once the demonstrations are finished, staff from their partner organisation, the Richmond Fellowship, will start delivering occasional sessions on Food and Mood to this group.

Contact details

Hamilton Connect

Tel 01698 455532

Email Hamilton@trfs.org.uk

Homemaker project, Deeside, Aberdeenshire

Independent living skills programme

Key learning point

- a neutral space such as a 'training flat', is ideal for people with learning disabilities learning independent living skills. It helps the participant to focus on learning a new independent role for themselves.

Who is it for?

People with learning disabilities.

Why do they do it?

Social services has been running an 'Independent living skills' programme for people with learning disabilities in the Aberdeenshire area for the last five years. The overall aim of the Scolty Centre, where this project is based, is to help adults with learning disabilities develop the skills that they need in order to live independently, either to be more independent in their family homes, or because they will eventually live in their own tenancy.

Who is involved in organising it and running it?

The Scolty Centre refers most of the participants. An NHS dietitian provides information and advice on nutrition. The local authority provides access to a 'training flat' (which is actually a respite care flat in sheltered accommodation). The homemaker is responsible for planning and delivering independent living skills sessions. The homemaker occasionally has access to small amounts of money for 'store cupboard' ingredients or to replace cooking equipment, otherwise the participants pay for the shopping themselves.

How they organise it

The aim of the programme is to develop a range of skills, including the ability to use local facilities such as the bank or library as well as household tasks such as shopping and cooking. The homemaker writes an individual training programme for each participant, which is regularly reviewed and discussed with them. All sessions are delivered on a one-to-one basis and the length of each programme varies according to individual assessed needs. Each session lasts half a day and always includes shopping for, preparing and eating lunch. Occasionally the training flat is unavailable, so

the session is run from a local authority 'bedsit' accommodation instead. Participants either get to the training flat on public transport or the homemaker takes them in her car. Their mode of transport depends on their ability to use public transport.

What happens and achievements

The programme is very popular and has a long waiting list. No one has ever dropped out of the courses. By the end of the sessions, participants are able to shop for, and cook a meal for themselves as well as wash-up afterwards, all without assistance from the homemaker. They are also encouraged to undertake some household duties at the same time, such as having a load of washing in the machine. Although participants are given a choice about what they learn to cook, they are encouraged to try new foods. The programme emphasises cooking healthy foods on a budget, as most participants will be living on a low-income. Each individual is given help and advice on eating a healthy diet; the homemaker finds that participants need particular help with establishing suitable food portion sizes.

The training flat is an ideal venue. One of the main benefits is that it is a 'neutral' space; neither attached to the Scolty

Centre or the family home. This helps the participant focus on their work and not be distracted by other activities or help from family members. The occasional lack of access to the training flat also has an unexpected benefit; using the bedsit also helps participants adapt to different circumstances.

What happens next?

Due to the high demand of this programme, these sessions have been extended from once to twice a week.

Contact details

The Scolty Centre

Tel 01330 823046

practical

Young people

Pilton Community Health Project, Edinburgh

Cooking and health information

Key learning points

- cooking skills are an essential part of lifestyle skills
- it is important to provide reliable and valid health information for vulnerable young people to use
- building self-esteem and personal confidence skills needs to take issues relating to body image into account.

Who was it for?

This initiative was for a group of young vulnerable girls (aged between 16 and 18 years old) living in a disadvantaged community. Some also had challenging family circumstances, such as siblings or parents with disabilities or mental health support needs. Two of the girls were pregnant.

Why did they do it?

As part of a research project, the principal aim of these sessions was to help vulnerable young

people develop independent living skills, with a particular focus on cooking skills and health information.

Who was involved in running it and organising it?

Staff from Pilton Community Health Project, Sharon Tweedale (who has an interest in health and nutrition education for children and young people) and Mike Titterton (an independent researcher and consultant) were involved in running, organising and delivering the programme. Workers from local participating agencies also got involved and attended some of the sessions.

How they organised it

A programme of six sessions was provided for young people, comprising of a mix of culinary skills and information relating to diet and health. This was based on 'lesson plans' for the programme, agreed in advance.

Food tasting sessions were held to allow participants to taste a range of fruits, including more exotic fruits. Each week a different dish was prepared, followed by everyone sitting down to taste the results at the end of the cooking. Health and diet information was

imparted during these 'sit-down tastings'. Mike ran a special session on body image and health, in order to allow the girls a chance to participate in discussion of issues relating to diets, health awareness and perceptions of self and the body.

What happened and achievements

The group had been meeting for over a year as part of a regular Friday evening youth session. The group was well established, which helped in the running of the programme. A steady group of between eight and ten teenage girls attended regularly.

The evaluation revealed that the young participants valued the sessions, obtained useful information and learned valuable skills from the programme. It also built their confidence.

What happens next?

A report of this research project will soon be available.

Contact details

Pilton Community Health Project

Tel 0131 551 1671

Email admin@pchp.org.uk

Web www.pchp.org.uk

Young Carers Club, Oban

Healthy snacks and cookery sessions

Key learning point

- project staff found that the young carers particularly enjoyed, and benefited from the social side of sharing a meal together.

Who was it for?

The young carers club is a weekly support group for children and young people who are responsible for the care of their parents or siblings. This group delivers a variety of activities for young carers as well as providing them with a break from their carer's role.

Why did they do it?

Workers running this club were keen to deliver healthy eating sessions that were relevant to the young people's roles. They were keen to develop the young people's cooking skills, particularly for those dependent on small local shops or convenience food. They also provided recipes for the young people to take home.

Who was involved in running it and organising it?

The club were based in a venue where they were able to use the kitchen facilities. Club staff lead the sessions.

How they organised it

The club had £900 from CFHS for 20 sessions and this was used to buy kitchen equipment as well as plates and cups. Each week, the club staff prepared healthy snacks for the group with help from some of the young carers. The staff and young carers also discussed healthy eating and food hygiene. Once a month the group got involved in preparing a meal, which they sat and ate together around a table.

What happened and achievements

Most of the young people were happy to get involved in either preparing the weekly snacks or monthly meals. They made snacks such as smoothies, fruit, and filled rolls. An unexpected result was the sociable and open atmosphere at the monthly meals; the young carers relaxed and opened up to conversation.

What happened next?

The group continues to prepare meals and snacks together from time to time.

Contact details

Young Carers Club

Tel 01631 564432

Email nargyll@carers.net

Romany Youth Action Group, West Dunbartonshire

Catering course at local college

Key learning point

- accompanying the whole group to the local college helped to allay any fears that group members might have about attending an environment that they were nervous about.

Who was it for?

A young traveller group, (all girls) aged between 12 and 25 years old.

Why did they do it?

This existing young travellers group was set-up by the Youth Information and Support Network to help develop the young people's educational and creative well-being. The group had little or irregular experience of formal education; so did not receive the kind of health information and skills that other young people receive in school. Their unstructured days also contributed to irregular eating habits and reliance on take-away food. They had usually been unwilling to try new foods. Some were

responsible for cooking and cleaning at home. However, the group loved to learn and had already expressed an interest in attending cooking sessions.

Who was involved in running it and organising it?

The Support Network worked with Clydebank College to set up 12-week long accredited basic catering course for this group. The group were taken to the college each week in a mini-bus and the group's youth worker stayed with them throughout the sessions.

I thought that the cooking class was really good – chef is funny and he likes to have a laugh. I've had a good time and learned a lot – I'd go back again.

(Young traveller)

How they organised it

The chef taught the girls a variety of cooking and food preparation techniques such as chopping vegetables, pastry-making, main meals and sweet dishes. In the first week of the course the chef asked the girls what types of foods that they would like to cook. Each week



the group cooked the same food although, as one girl was vegetarian, meals were adapted to suit her requirements. The girls took the food home at the end of each session.

What happened and achievements

As the result of this course, most of the girls had their first experience of a college environment. Being transported and attending together as a group helped the girls to feel confident in this new environment. The girls also wore traditional catering uniforms throughout the course; (which they had to clean and care for themselves) which helped them 'fit-in' around the college. By the second week, the girls were confident to wander around the college by themselves in the break times.

Ten girls started the course and nine completed it and received an SVQ certificate. All nine girls said that they enjoyed it.

What happened next?

The project organised another (higher grade) catering course for this group and again escorted the girls to college, as the girls said they still did not feel confident enough to attend college on their own. This course was successful and well attended. One of the girls then went on to become a 'Skillseeker' with the catering industry. The majority of the young people involved have responsibilities at home and reported that they use a great deal of the new skills that they have learned through the college course. When the adults' section of the action group heard about the activities, they were keen to have a similar course and learn more about healthy eating. This course was arranged and has also been successful.

Contact details

Y Sort It Youth Information and Support Network

Tel 0141 941 3308

I was really nervous at first as I had never attended college before but Tracy (member of staff) was with us and that made me feel a bit better. (Young traveller)

Young people experiencing homelessness

'Cook & carry oot', Perth

Cookery sessions

Key learning points

- varying the teaching methods each week helped maintain participants' interest
- the most popular teaching method was 'Ready, Steady, Cook!'
- the participants preferred small groups of just two individuals.

Who was it for?

Young people living in a hostel for people who had experienced homelessness.

All the young people involved had low levels of literacy and complex behavioural problems.

Why did they do it?

A local nutritional audit and needs assessment with homeless projects showed that lack of cooking skills was one of the main barriers to eating a balanced diet.

The aim of the programme was to promote independent living skills and healthier eating.

Who was involved in running it and organising it?

The project was set up and managed by an NHS dietitian and delivered and jointly evaluated by a home economist. Key workers at the hostel also helped facilitate the sessions and encouraged the residents to attend.

How they organised it

This six-week cookery course received £587 funding from CFHS, which paid for the home economist's time, food supplies, resources and kitchen 'starter packs'. They had the use of a hostel kitchen which had two cookers. The sessions provided a hands-on cookery experience. Each session lasted about two hours and thirty minutes. Participants did not get involved in shopping and they did not contribute to any costs. Participants who completed the course were given a 'kitchen starter pack', this included knives, chopping boards, plates and pans.

The project tried several methods of running cookery sessions. Firstly, they encouraged the participants to work in pairs, with the aim of building team skills. This did not always work very well, either because residents did not work well together or because of erratic

attendance. The team also tried different methods of teaching. One week the facilitator gave out recipes for the young people to follow. Another week she encouraged the participants to blind pick ingredients from a list using the 'balance of good health' food groups which resulted in some strange recipes! The 'Ready Steady Cook!' format worked well and participants enjoyed these. This method encouraged friendly competition and hostel staff and residents were invited to attend at the end of the session to judge the dishes.

The team used various methods to evaluate the sessions, including questionnaires. However, the young people had poor literacy skills so this did not work very well. The most successful method was reading out statements about the sessions e.g. 'I have more confidence in cooking' and asking the young people to 'agree or disagree' with each statement. The facilitator also wrote a 'reflective diary' of each session and photographed each recipe.

What happened and achievements

Poor attendance was an issue with this group; two out of the five original participants completed the course. Enthusiasm for the cooking sessions varied and depended on what else was going on in the young people's lives.

Changing the format of the sessions every week did help to maintain the young people's interest. The facilitator found that giving recipe sheets out for the young people to follow limited choice and dampened enthusiasm. The facilitator needed to be aware of the young people's varying interest and concentration each week. Sometimes the young people wanted more control over the sessions, others times they wanted more support. Their enthusiasm of tasting the food that they had cooked for themselves also varied.

Overall, the two young people who completed the course believed that they had learnt something, had enjoyed the sessions and were more interested in food. One of the participants decided to go to college to complete a cookery course and the other is using the recipes in the coffee shop where he works. Both said that their self-confidence had increased. Other residents and staff occasionally got involved by tasting food or sharing a meal. As the result of this work, staff and residents now have a shared meal each week.

What happens next?

The project plans to deliver more sessions in another two hostels. They plan to use the 'Ready Steady Cook!' format and will just teach groups of two people at a time. They will

run the course for four or five weeks and will use games and models to introduce nutrition messages.

Contact details

Lyndsey Renfrew,
Dietitian in Public Health Nutrition

Perth Royal Infirmary

Tel 01738 473507

Email l.renfrew@nhs.net



The Calman Trust, Inverness and Easter Ross

Cookery sessions and independent living skills

Key learning point

- staff at the Trust learnt that the sessions needed to be relevant, accessible, and targeted at individual needs to ensure that young people gained optimum confidence and skills.

Who was it for?

This charity provides housing support and life skills training for young people (aged between 16 and 25) who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The Calman Trust works with more than 140 young people each year. The cookery sessions were open to any young person who uses the charity's support service. Most of the young people were aged between 16 and 18 years. Many of the young people had complex needs, lacked family support; some were also pregnant or already a parent.

Why did they do it?

The Calman Trust supplies a support service for young people who are about to

receive, or are waiting for their own tenancy. Their experience of working with young people showed that they often lack suitable equipment and skills to cook themselves balanced meals. In addition, once the young person has moved into their new tenancy they often experience isolation and lack motivation to look after their health or prepare food. The young people already responded positively to the Trust's regular support service. The Calman Trust wanted to include an option of learning to cook in their regular support package, as well as developing group cookery sessions for the young people and young parents.

Who was involved in running it and organising it?

The Calman Trust staff developed and delivered the cookery sessions. One-to-one sessions on independent living skills were delivered by the young person's own support worker.

How they organised it

The project had a kitchen refurbished in their Easter Ross centre in order to deliver group cooking skills work. They ran 'taster cookery sessions' before inviting young people to sign-up for an eight-week course. Crèche facilities were available for those with babies or young children. In the first session the project used a number of informal techniques to find out what

was important to the young people and to find out what they wanted to learn to cook. The first course ended with cooking a Christmas dinner. After running one pilot eight-week course, the Trust consulted with their wider service users in Easter Ross. As the result of this consultation they revised their programme and delivered supported one-to-one cookery sessions at the centre, followed by a repeat meal in the young person's new tenancy (to be shared with a friend if they wished). Young people in this rural area were transported to and from sessions; this ensured attendance in an area with poor public transport, and the inclusion of young people who at this early stage lacked the confidence or ability to use public transport.

After these pilot sessions, the Trust included cookery sessions in two of its other programmes; one is an eight-week programme that prepares young people for their own tenancy the other is a programme with a partner service that prepares young people for becoming parents. The parenting courses included information and advice on weaning.

What happened and achievements

Four out of five young people completed the pilot cookery course. Most participants in this group stayed in temporary accommodation

such as Bed and Breakfasts and liked the social aspect of the group as well as the cooking. Eleven young people, mainly those already in their own accommodation preferred the support of the one-to-one cookery sessions. Four young mums attended parenting sessions that included cooking skills. Six young people attended the eight-week course on preparation for a tenancy, which also included cookery sessions.

Feedback showed that the young people learnt new skills that they can use in the future. In addition, one-to-one work with a support worker helped to establish a constructive working relationship. One-to-one sessions carried out at the young person's new home helped them settle in to their new home, particularly when they invited a friend to share the meal that they had cooked.

What happened next?

The Trust will continue to incorporate cookery sessions in the regular tenancy preparation courses and in the parenting courses while also responding flexibly to the needs of individual young people receiving housing support. They will also offer the service to those that attend their new service in Inverness. They have plans to develop peer-led work focused on cooking, and will encourage young people to share hints and tips on cooking and healthy eating through

the young people's magazine *The Exchange* and their website.

Contact details

Calman Trust Ltd

Tel 0845 095 6110 or 01463 248630

Email info@calman.org

Web www.leavinghomeinthehighlands.org

I found out what to make for my baby when it's born. I didn't know I shouldn't put salt in its food.

(Young mum-to-be)

”

support



Adults experiencing homelessness

Edinburgh Cyrenians, 'Cooking at Home'

Cookery classes in hostels

Key learning points

- some of the hostel residents particularly enjoyed sharing their food with other residents or staff; this helped increase their feelings of achievement and pride
- good partnership working between staff at hostels and the cookery tutor achieved the best outcomes.

Who was it for?

Residents at two local hostels for people experiencing homelessness. One hostel specifically catered for young male offenders, the second hostel was an older group of residents experiencing homelessness and working towards obtaining their own tenancies.

Why did they do it?

Edinburgh Cyrenians deliver the 'Good Food in Tackling Homelessness' programme which includes four distinct food and health services. Edinburgh Cyrenians Cooking at Home

classes aim to inspire people moving into their own tenancy to eat well on a budget, and to enjoy the social benefits good food can bring – eating, talking and enjoying good company together with friends and family. The 'Cooking at Home' classes had been piloted at the Good Food premises resulting in planned expansion in delivering classes at a variety of local homelessness projects.

Who was involved in running it and organising it?

Members of the Cyrenians staff team were involved in organising and delivering the Cooking at Home classes. They had access to hostel kitchens and encouraged staff working in these locations to become involved in encouraging attendance and supporting residents through this new experience.

How they organised it

The cookery courses consisted of two-hour sessions, once a week for ten weeks. After the first few sessions, participants became involved in choosing dishes to cook the following week. They cooked a meal together and shared this at the end of the session. As well as cooking, there was also appropriate

input on food hygiene, basic nutrition and the use of different ingredients. A two-course meal was prepared at each session which everyone involved shared.

What happened and achievements

The hostel for young offenders had between three and five residents involved in the sessions. Two of the residents consistently turned up for each session, enjoyed working with the Cyrenians tutor and made progress not only with their cooking skills, but also in their involvement with washing up during and after each session. They soon developed confidence to undertake different tasks and a key element of this achievement was the interaction with the tutor, resulting in enjoyment and confidence building. Foods that the group were not very enthusiastic about were tried



I would like the classes to come back so we can look forward to something.

(Hostel resident)



and enjoyed, and foods that they thought they did not like were acceptable when they were included in a dish. Participants liked learning to use new pieces of kitchen equipment, such as pestle and mortar, garlic press and a blender. They also really enjoyed asking others to see and eat what they had cooked. The hostel staff were pleased with the residents' progress and involvement in the classes.

The second mixed hostel had good facilities including two cookers and plenty of space to work in. The classes were very popular with both the residents and staff at the hostel. They were well attended (in total seven residents took part) and the meals were appreciated even by those who were not taking part but hanging around on the periphery. Some participants said that there were improvements in their awareness of healthy eating, kitchen hygiene and safety, cooking on a budget and cooking techniques. Some of the residents have been asking for the classes to start up again and the manager is keen for the initiative to carry on and plans to continue to strengthen this area of their service in the future.

What happened next?

The cookery sessions were delivered in another three hostels, two of which were equally successful. Three former participants

started volunteering for the Cyrenians FareShare Project. One of these volunteered for six months and the other two have maintained their volunteering and interest in basic cooking. This voluntary work included getting involved in preparing lunch for a group of 40 people. One participant attended further cookery courses at the Cyrenians Good Food in Tackling Homelessness Depot. All of the hostels that have been involved have said they would like the classes to continue but this was obviously subject to funding. Staff at one of the hostels wanted to continue one-to-one cooking sessions and planned to organise this as a follow on to the classes.

Contact details

Edinburgh Cyrenians

Good Food in Tackling
Homelessness Programme

Tel 0131 554 3900

Email jeanie@cyrenians.org.uk

Web www.cyrenians.org.uk

I can't believe that is all you have to do to get soup!

(Hostel resident)



Prisoners

HMP Noranside, Angus

Pre-independent living skills programme

Key learning point

- incorporating health and food hygiene information informally during cookery sessions worked well.

Who is it for?

Male prisoners in an open prison who are preparing for life outside prison by living in an 'Independent Living Unit'.

Why do they do it?

Some of the men will have been in prison for many years and all will be used to having their meals prepared for them. Cooking and shopping were identified several years ago as important skills that prisoners either need to learn (or re-learn) if they are to live independently after being in prison.

Who is involved in running it and organising it?

Catering staff, independent living skills staff and the learning department were all

involved in setting up these sessions and putting together a programme. The learning department tutors are responsible for delivering and evaluating these sessions.

How they organise it

The men are required to attend a 'Pre-Independent Living skills course' before they move into the independent living unit. This course is two weeks long, and includes four hands-on cookery sessions and three sessions on healthy eating, food hygiene, budgeting and shopping. These are delivered to groups of four men and last two or more hours.

The courses aim to be flexible; the facilitator plans to teach all the men to cook the same dish, although as individual tastes are catered for, the men will sometimes cook a meal with slightly different ingredients to the others. They usually cook main meals, but may also learn to cook a healthy dessert or a healthy cooked breakfast. The facilitator gives tips on healthy eating, food hygiene, food budgeting and shopping during the cookery sessions.

Once the men have attended these sessions they are responsible for shopping, and for preparing their own meals. Each week they are

given £20 and are transported in small groups to a small selection of shops. The men are not accompanied to the shops so rely on each other for advice on what to buy or use the information from the 'shopping and budgeting' session. The cooking tutor uses the same shops that the men will use for the cookery sessions and tells the men about any 'special offers' or price differences between the shops.

What happens and achievements

For many of the men, being able to **cook** their own food is a welcome change from prison meals. After the course, and while living in the independent living unit, some of the men might go on to buy convenience foods for themselves. However, many others will cook their own meals. Some will cook and shop together in small groups; others will help each other swap recipes.



One prisoner couldn't press the buttons on the microwave when he came in (to the independent living unit) but within weeks was cooking for others.¹

(Member of prison staff)

I made a curry on my last home leave and everybody was really impressed. My wife wants me to teach her how to make it!²

(Prisoner based in Independent Living Unit)



For some, the first **food shopping** trip and **budgeting** can be a challenge. Many will spend more than £20 in their first week, (they can also use their own money) and many will come back from the shops without some basic ingredients. This is not surprising as they will be starting life in the independent living unit with no basic ingredients, such as cooking oil or stock cubes and may find it difficult to remember everything that they need. Some will not have had to shop for themselves for many years. The tutor believes that the men would not like to be accompanied by staff for their first visit, even if they thought they would have difficulties.

What happens next?

The sessions will continue as they are considered essential for those preparing for a life outside prison. The tutor is also considering developing cookery sessions for men who might not go on to live in the independent living unit. She is also considering starting another

Conclusions

Whether the aim of your work is to improve healthy eating or to help people to live more independently (or both) it is clear from the experience of these projects that practical food activities can have an impact on, not only food related skills, but also independent living skills.

Some individuals who might be reluctant to get involved in services or other activities are more likely to take part, and enjoy food activities. Many also appreciate and benefit from the social aspect of eating together at the end of a session. These practical activities build their **skills and confidence**,

project for fathers with primary school aged children in order to help these men learn to cook together with their children. This will help them establish themselves back into family life as well as helping them to develop cooking skills.

Contact details

HMP Noranside

Tel 01356 665329

1 and 2: Quotes from 'Independent Living Unit HMP Noranside' section in Mackay, D. 2006. An Evaluation of Independent Living Units in Scottish Prisons. Scottish Prisons Working Paper. Scottish Prison Service, August 2006.

which can be used in other areas of their lives as well as with food.

The projects also showed that if these activities are seen as **relevant** by participants and they are involved in shaping food activities, this involvement can boost confidence and will encourage them to continue to be involved in the activities and to use these skills afterwards.

Many of the projects here worked with individuals on inadequate incomes. Good shopping and cooking skills are crucial if these individuals are to have any chance of consuming an acceptable and balanced diet.

Food-related **life skills** can easily be built into other activities, such as thinking about ways of encouraging members of a group (e.g. support group, youth club etc) to prepare a snack or meal for themselves (with help if necessary) rather than staff providing snacks. Several projects here found that the people they worked with enjoyed making smoothies and healthy snacks.

Finally, the case studies particularly demonstrate that small investments with small groups of some of Scotland's most 'hard to reach' (or rarely listened to) groups can **make a huge difference to individual lives**. The confidence and skills that come from cooking and sharing a meal can improve an individual's skills for life, their **independence** and **wellbeing**.



SECTION FOUR

signposts to further help

There are two parts to this section. The first section will lead you to some background information on community-based work on food and health, policy and research information, as well as any work referred to in this guide.

The second section provides practical help for those who want to get started on food activities. Here you will find information about resources aimed at people planning to run food activities as well as information on where to find out more about healthy eating, affordable healthy recipes, where to find out more about evaluation and food hygiene.

All information can be downloaded from the Internet, unless stated otherwise.



learning

Background on community based food and health work, policies, research and references

Information on community based food and health activities

- **Community Food and Health (Scotland)**

0141 226 5261

www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk

This website provides a comprehensive range of information, including: Scottish based community food initiatives, policy, downloadable publications (including a quarterly newsletter) and links to other organisations.

This website also has the following CFHS referenced documents:

Bridges, a workshop based conference connecting communities, crossing boundaries and spanning agendas. September 2006.

On Track: an opportunity for those tackling food access and health inequalities to ensure that policy, planning and practice are travelling in the same direction. November 2005.

Round-table discussion on 0–5: children and parents including infant nutrition hosted by Community Food and Health (Scotland). May 2007.

- **Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming**

020 7837 1228

www.sustainweb.org

This website provides information on food policy and UK based community food projects, downloadable resources, and links to other organisations. Sustain has a number of projects and campaigns including the Food Access Network and a food and mental health project.

- **Food projects and how they work**

Joseph Rowntree Foundation

McGlone, P., Dobson, B.,

Dowler, E., and Nelson, M., 1999

A summary of this publication is available from: <http://www.jrf.org.uk/Knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/pdf/F329.pdf> (Accessed 7 September 2007).

Background on community based food and health work, policies, research and references (continued)

Policies

Food and health

- <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/health>

This website has food and health policies, including:

Eating for Health: A Diet Action Plan for Scotland (1996), and *Eating for health, meeting the challenge, 2004*.

- www.healthscotland.com

The NHS Health Scotland website has information on food and health policy, including the *Review of the Scottish Diet Action Plan*.

Homelessness

- **Code of guidance**

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Housing/homeless/guidance>

This code provides practical guidance to councils and other organisations on how homeless legislation and related policies should be implemented.

People with learning disability

- **The same as you?**

www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/care/VAUnit/LearningDisabilities

A review of services for people with learning disabilities, 2000.

Research

Food and health

- **Food Standards Agency (FSA)**

020 7276 8181 (Information centre)
www.food.gov.uk

The Food Standards Agency has produced the following research papers:

Wrieden, W. et al, 2002. *Assisting dietary change in low-income communities: assessing the impact of a community-based practical food skills intervention*. (CookWell). A summary of this report is available from the FSA website. (Put N09011 into the search facility.)

Tasker, S.M. et al, 2005. *Review of existing resources designed to assist first-time self-caterers*. Report prepared for Food Standards Agency. Available on the FSA website.

Food and mental health

- **Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming**

020 7837 1228

www.sustainweb.org

Sustain's website has information on food and its effect on mental health. It also has links to mental health organisations who are involved in food and mental health work.

- **Food and Mood Community Interest Company**

www.foodandmood.org

This website provides support, information and sells publications.

Scottish Prison Service

- **An Evaluation of Independent Living Units in Scottish Prisons**

Mackay, D. Scottish Prisons Working Paper. Scottish Prison Service, August 2006. This paper is not available from the Internet.

Practical information

Funding

Contact local authorities, NHS Boards and Community Health Partnerships in your area to find out if they have sources of funding available.

- **Community Food and Health (Scotland)**
0141 226 5261
www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk
This website has information on and links to funding sources.

Food hygiene courses and food safety

Your local authority Environmental Health department will be able to provide information and advice on suitable kitchen facilities.

- **The Food Standards Agency (FSA)**
020 7276 8181 (Information Centre)
www.food.gov.uk
The FSA website has information on food hygiene.
- **The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS)**
0131 225 6999
www.rehis.org
REHIS is the award body for qualifications in food and health safety. They have several levels of food hygiene qualifications. They can tell you where these accredited courses are available.

Developing and running a cookery club/course

Although some of the resources listed here are aimed at specific groups, they all contain a wealth of information that will be useful for a wider audience. It will also be worthwhile finding out if your local NHS Health Promotion Library or resources department has produced their own guides or have some of these available.

- **The CookWell Book**
For cookery with adults
The Food Standards Agency (FSA)
020 7276 8181 (Information centre)
www.food.gov.uk
Based on a research project by the Food Standards Agency, this resource pack provides information for tutors and a wide selection of recipes. The FSA website also has information on how this work was evaluated, including a questionnaire that can be used for evaluating cooking sessions.
- **Cyrenians good food in tackling homelessness handbook**
For cookery with people who are, or are in danger of, experiencing homelessness
www.cyrenians.org.uk
This resource pack includes a wide selection of recipes, some information on

shopping and budgeting, store cupboard ingredients, food safety, equipment, tips for cooking classes and information on promoting health with people experiencing homelessness.

- **Get Shopping, Get Cooking**

For cookery with adults

0800 0686 727

www.co-operative.co.uk

This pack is based on a project first set up in the 1990s. It has been revised and updated a number of times, most recently by The Co-operative in July, 2001. It is also available on request in Braille and large print. This resources pack has information on setting up cookery sessions, including advice on equipment, store cupboard ingredients, shopping, food hygiene as well as a range of recipes.

- **Confidence to Cook**

For cookery with adults

To request a copy, email
JGascoine@aberdeencity.gov.uk

This publication costs £30 for postage and packing from within the UK.

This 200-page pack produced by Aberdeen City Council, NHS Grampian, and supported by the Health Improvement Fund,

Practical information (continued)

provides a wide selection of information on setting up cooking sessions. It includes information on healthy eating, evaluation and some information on food commonly used by black, minority and ethnic groups. It has a large range of recipes, including microwave and vegetarian cookery.

- **Get Cooking!**

For cookery with young people
020 7276 8181 (Information centre)
www.food.gov.uk

This resource pack developed by the Food Standards Agency (Wales) includes information on setting up cookery sessions, including a six-week training plan, ingredients, equipment and a selection of recipes.

- **What's Cooking?**

For cookery with children
020 7276 8181 (FSA Information centre)
www.continyou.org.uk

This guide by ContinYou and the FSA is aimed at those setting up and running community and school food clubs and has some recipes. The Food Standards Agency (Scotland) is preparing an updated, Scottish version of this guide. *What's Cooking?* will be distributed to all schools in Scotland and will be available on the FSA website in late 2007.

- **The Community Food and Health (Scotland) Recipe Book, 2007**

www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk

This (downloadable only) recipe book is a compilation of tried and tested recipes contributed by community food initiatives in Scotland.

Food and health training

- **Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS) elementary food and health course**

0131 225 6999

Email Graham Walker gw@rehis.com

This REHIS accredited course takes approximately six hours and is designed to provide candidates with a basic knowledge of the link between diet and health.

Resources on healthy eating

Your local NHS Health Promotion library or resources department will have general information on healthy eating as well as leaflets and other resources that you could use with your project.

- **The Food Standards Agency**

020 7276 8181 (Information centre)

www.food.gov.uk

www.eatwell.gov.uk

These FSA websites have resources that are suitable for many types of groups and include healthy eating games, quizzes, downloadable leaflets, and information on food safety.

- **Healthyliving**

0845 278 8878

www.healthyliving.gov.uk

This website is a joint collaboration between NHS Health Scotland and the Scottish Government to promote Scotland's healthyliving programme. Healthyliving provides resources (for individuals), advice and support on healthy eating and physical activity.

- **British Nutrition Foundation**

www.nutrition.org.uk

This website provides healthy eating information, resources for schools, news items, and recipes.

- **British Dietetic Foundation**

0121 200 8080

www.bda.uk.com

The website has downloadable food fact sheets.

Information for people with a learning disability

- **Scottish Nutrition and Diet Resources Initiative (SNDRi)**

0141 331 8479

www.caledonian.ac.uk/sndri/

SNDRi are planning to produce a leaflet on healthy eating for individuals with learning disabilities. This will be available in late 2007. There is a charge for SNDRi materials.

Community gardening

- **The Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens (FCFCG)**

0131 623 7058

www.farmgarden.org.uk/

FCFCG is the representative body for city farms, community gardens and similar community-led organisations in the UK. They produce information on setting up a community garden and give details of community gardens in Scotland (and the UK). There is a charge for some FCFCG material.

Evaluation and assessing needs

There is a wealth of views on, tools for, and approaches to evaluation. Here is a very small selection, including some that were used by projects in this guide.

- **The CookWell evaluation**

The Food Standards Agency

020 7276 8181 (Information centre)

www.food.gov.uk

The FSA website has information on how their CookWell project was evaluated.

There is also an evaluation questionnaire that can be downloaded which was used during this project.

- **LEAP for Health/LEAP Support Unit**

0141 248 1964

<http://leap.scdc.org.uk>

www.healthscotland.com

The LEAP framework is a toolkit designed to support a partnership approach to achieving change and improvement in the quality of community life. It describes both an approach to change and a 5-step planning and evaluation cycle that can be used to implement this approach. Information on the Leap for Health model is available from the Leap Support Unit and the Leap for Health model is available from the NHS Health Scotland website.

- **Evaluation Support Scotland**

0870 850 1378

www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk

This charity provides specialist support across Scotland to voluntary organisations and their funders to help them evaluate and learn.

- ***Fruitful Participation: involving people in food and health work***

0141 226 5261

www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk

This Community Food and Health (Scotland) publication provides a snapshot on how community food and health projects used participatory approaches (including visual and active techniques) to encourage people to get involved in decision-making, shaping and changing activities.

Appendix Two

Groups of projects who submitted evaluation reports or took part informal interviews

Groups working with young carers (A young carer is a child or young person under the age of 18 carrying out significant caring tasks and assuming a level of responsibility for another person)	2
Young people (aged between 16 and 25) experiencing or who have experience of homelessness (including some young parents) or who are in Care	4
Prisoners	1
Young people living in a low-income community	3
Young travellers (aged between 12 and 25)	1
Adults with learning disabilities and / or adults with mental health support needs and / or alcohol / drug dependency	7
Adults who are experiencing homelessness	1
Young mums	2
Total number of projects	21



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