



community
food and health
(scotland)



farechoice

The quarterly newsletter for Community Food and Health (Scotland)

Issue 58 Dec' 2011

Shelf life

It is becoming increasingly common to see local communities highlighted in the media, tackling local concerns and responding to the immediate needs of those worst hit by the economic crisis. However welcome this exposure is, there is always the danger of the sector being treated as the flavour-of-the-month or portrayed as a sticking plaster. Whilst initiatives are making every effort to respond to increased demand, many are also involved in identifying underlying causes and pursuing long-term solutions. It is just as important that policy makers do not lose their focus on delivering long-term sustainable change (see page 2).

National efforts to tackle obesity and improve maternal and infant nutrition will face even bigger challenges with the state of the economy and public finances, but there are no shortage of examples of local responses which have immediate benefits, develop practice, and inform policy (see page 8).

Whilst there is understandable pressure on

meeting immediate and local challenges, these are rarely unique and often require long-term (see page 10) and even transnational solutions (see rural retailing page 13).

Current policy priorities (see page 6) are being pursued with a recognition that long-term fundamental change is required, not knee-jerk or superficial responses. It was therefore very welcome to receive confirmation from the Scottish Government

of its intention to fund CFHS for a further three years. With uncertainty confronting not only many individuals in our society, but also many of the organisations they rely on, it is more important than ever to ensure that we have an effective and sustainable community and voluntary sector, which can both respond to immediate need and contribute to long-term policy development and delivery.



The Retailing in Rural Regions project concludes in Iceland (see page 13)

In this edition:

"I really enjoyed today, it was nice to spend time with my daughter and for her to help with the cooking." Family Learning Action Group food workshop participant (see page 8).

About us . . .

Our overriding aim is to improve Scotland's food and health.

We do this by supporting work within 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 getting to 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 them and highlight where actions at other levels, or in other sections 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.

CFHS is funded by the Scottish Government and based within Consumer Focus Scotland.



What's cooking?

Spotlight on a hot topic.

In this edition of Fare Choice we have asked Martyn Evans, Chief Executive of Carnegie UK Trust, and Des Ryan, Chief Executive of Edinburgh Cyrenians, for their perspectives on the particular challenges facing community food initiatives created by the current economic crisis.

Martyn Evans: The Carnegie UK Trust has a longstanding interest in food and health. In the late 1930's we funded John Boyd Orr¹ to carry out the groundbreaking Rowett Carnegie Survey. Our Trustees described this as "the largest empirical inquiry hitherto attempted in Britain into the relationship between health and diet." It seems so obvious now that poor diet leads to poor health. However only a couple of generations ago there was a sheer lack of evidence about the relationship between diet and health.

The survey's evidence on food consumption at different income levels was critical in evolving wartime food policy and effective rationing. Boyd Orr himself observed that, "In spite of the acute food shortages, the women and children of the poorer classes were healthier at the end of the war than at the beginning of it."

When food rationing ended in the 1950's the authors of the survey sounded a note of caution, concerned that the end of food rationing might mean that "income will again become one of the chief determinants of levels of nutrition."

Here we are in a new century and still concerned about poor nutrition and those on low incomes. In many ways the issues are more complex now, with cheap processed food containing high levels of salt, fat, and sugar. It is now the obesity crisis that has an income related aspect.² Among the poorest sixth of society 62% of men and 63% women, 35% of boys and 35% of girls are obese.

For those who like slogans as the driver for change, then 'Food Poverty' has a lot of appeal. In a recession it encapsulates simple and effective stories about families living on food handouts. It is linked to our appalling food waste culture and the efforts to recycle some of that perfectly good food for those in need. These are great projects and long may they continue while the need is there.

However, addressing the symptoms is necessary but not sufficient. We need to take on the root causes. These issues are of the availability, acceptability and affordability of food. Who best to tackle any one or all of these, but local community food initiatives. They can and do define their own objectives and work together for impact. Top down solutions are often ineffective and expensive. Top down interventions can 'raise the floor' in public services through standard setting and scrutiny, eg. by setting national nutritional standards for school meals. However, that alone is not enough. We also need to 'raise the ceiling'. To push the boundaries of what is possible and test new ways of working.

We can 'raise the ceiling' by small scale experiments, by

¹ John Boyd Orr (1880-1971). Nobel Peace Prize 1949

² FSA Low income and diet 2007

innovations generated by community groups. This way we test what is possible and unleash people's enthusiasm and ambition for themselves, their families and communities. The unglamorous but critical work of tasting sessions for kids, food trains for less mobile families and yes (speak it quietly in some circles!), campaigns to bring supermarkets, with their lower prices and greater choice closer to poorer communities, is at the heart of the revolution in food consumption we need.

If we genuinely want to skew public funds to preventive spend, as the Christie Commission advocated, and to raise the ceiling, then in food and health policy the place to expand is community food initiatives and their very effective champion Community Food and Health (Scotland), with its mission to ensure that everyone in Scotland has the opportunity, ability and confidence to access a healthy and acceptable diet for themselves, their families and their communities.

Des Ryan: Cyrenians had a call recently asking if we wanted a contract for taking referrals from Jobcentres for people needing emergency food packs. I'm still a bit shocked by it. I'm not sure why I'm feeling shocked. We said no without really thinking too hard. It felt wrong. Other charities have now agreed to do it. As the biggest supplier to the community of surplus food, we're now getting requests from food banks springing up out of humanitarian concern that many of our neighbours can't feed themselves. How should we respond? What's the right thing to do?

I think it's time to have an honest and informed conversation about how to meet the growing need of people in our communities across Scotland who can't afford to eat, let alone eat well. There is already a crisis for some. It is going to get worse and affect more people.

Do I need to explain? Gradual and accumulative welfare 'reform', reduced real incomes, higher living costs – including fuel and food prices – unemployment, higher rents, and abolition of crisis loans... Life on the margins is getting more fragile by the month and more people are getting pushed onto the edge. I'm not a gloom merchant – this is how it is and how it's going to be.

A charity has to be pragmatic. Our *raison d'être* is to meet need. But the real challenge is to meet immediate need in a way that takes people forward in their lives. (It's that thing about the fishing rod rather than the fish). Better still, can it deal with the causes as well as the symptoms?

Cyrenians introduced FareShare to Scotland back in the last century – 1999 – as a means of accessing more and better food for community services feeding the homeless and others in need. We faced a storm of criticism. I remember the flak coming across the table at a meeting convened at Royal Exchange House by Community Food and Health (Scotland). Things like FareShare were regressive. Taking surplus justified systemic over-production. It was patronising. People should get proper benefits rather than hand-outs.

Largely, I agreed. The criticism was really useful. It helped us determine how FareShare would be delivered. Thanks to honest conversations we made sure that everything about Cyrenians FareShare would be made to work as a hand-up, not a hand-out.

Cyrenians is currently planning a major scale up of our FareShare activity in Scotland in sourcing and distributing donated surplus food for community meal services. The issue for us is how to deliver that to a wider constituency of people in need – not just the homeless – in an acceptable and progressive manner that does not create dependency and which helps people forward in their lives. A hand-up, not just a hand-out.

By delivering exclusively through signed-up Community Members we can ensure that people receive food as part of a package of help: including benefit checks, advocacy and personal support. We also integrate the offer of accredited learning and training, plus cookery groups – over 200 classes last year – and opportunities for people to help and benefit from participating in every aspect of the activity. Over 70 people a year benefit as trainees, with many moving into employment.

Not just shocked, I'm appalled that we're approaching 2012 having to tackle a rising need for basic food for people deep in poverty. Hence we are setting a place at our dinner table for anyone who wants to have a conversation about the best way of doing that.

As a community food sector, can we meet the pressing need in a way that takes us to a better place? Are there opportunities here? Rather than regressing to the food banks and soup kitchens of the past, can we create new pragmatic solutions that recognise the economic realities of the day but promote dignity, community and opportunities for customers to progress beyond their need for help?

You can also read Des Ryan's recent blog about the growing need for emergency food access at <http://edinburghcyrenians.wordpress.com/2011/10/03/a-hand-up-not-a-hand-out/>



Team Talk

An update on our recent / forthcoming work.

'Summer promotion' update and January promotion

Again, CFHS is impressed by the imagination and ingenuity displayed by community food initiatives. Community food co-ops, stall and barras that took part in a Scottish Grocers Federation's healthy living programme's, training session were invited to apply for very small amounts of funding to promote their sales of fruit and vegetables during the summer. This coincided with a 'Summer Promotion' run by the SGF 'healthy living' programme with many of their convenience store members.

While some activities were (unavoidably) run later than expected, there has been a positive impact on sales or number of customers: Orbiston Neighbourhood Centre set up a fruit and vegetable stall in a nearby amenity housing complex for older people; Sauchie Active 8 promoted its new fruit and vegetable stall at the local gala day; Tullibody Fruit Barra purchased branded tabards and fleeces for staff and volunteers to promote the Barra and Broomhouse Food Strategy Group ran a 'street café', at which they sold half-price 'healthy bags.' A report about the programme will be available on our website shortly.

We will fund several more to promote their work in January, a challenging time for many retailers. Details will be available in spring 2012.



Social enterprise network

The new community food social enterprise network met for the third time on 16 November. Supported by Senscot and CFHS, the purpose of the network is to provide opportunities for community and health organisations that are, or are aspiring to be, social enterprises; to share good practice, learn from each other, develop working links and promote their work to policy makers.

The next meeting will be held early 2012, with video conferencing facilities available and details will be widely circulated. **For more details in the meantime, please contact Anne.**

Learning and development programme

Two new dates for your diary:

1 March 2012 - Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland's (REHIS) Elementary Food and Health course, Inverness

This six hour course is accredited, and provides participants with a basic knowledge of the link between diet and health.

16 February 2012 - Equality and Diversity, Glasgow.

This one-day course will help organisations ensure that their services and activities are reaching everyone living in their community.

Both courses are fully funded. Booking forms can be downloaded from our website, or contact Anne. The closing date for bookings for both is Friday 13 January.

Are you thinking about outcomes?

With the assistance of the Scottish Community Development Centre, CFHS is developing a report to celebrate ways in which community and voluntary food initiatives contribute to local outcomes.

The report will look at how local outcomes are decided and defined; show ways in which community food and health initiatives can work with local government and others to design outcomes; and show how the work of these initiatives can help make outcomes a reality.

The development of the report is already under way, however if you have any experiences or examples you would like to share in the report, please contact Stuart Hashagen on 0141 222 4846 or at stuart@scdc.org.uk or Stuart.Hashegan@consumerfocus.org.uk

Feasibility study – produce supply chain

CFHS commissioned Blake Stevenson to research the feasibility of establishing a produce supply chain, linking community growers in Edinburgh with community retailers and community cafés. The research concludes that it may be feasible to establish a produce supply chain in Edinburgh, and that this could play an important role in reducing costs, increasing income, and developing closer links between community food initiatives in the city.

The researchers identified and assessed four different options for establishing and running a produce supply chain.

The research also includes 18 recommendations on the next steps required. CFHS has begun discussions with some of the key stakeholders to take the research forward. The feasibility study can be downloaded from our website.

For more information about the research, please contact Anne.

Putting Healthy Start on the Map

CFHS and NHS Forth Valley are working jointly on a pilot that supports activities to improve and promote infant nutrition, Healthy Start, in the Falkirk Braes and Camelon areas of Falkirk. Two training and awareness sessions were held in Camelon Community Centre and the Grange Centre in Brightons in October and involved area community learning and development workers, family centres, nurseries, learning centres, voluntary and community organisations.

All the stakeholders met for an update and networking lunch at Camelon Community Centre in early December. A report on the pilot to date will be available soon on our website.

Some readers contacted CFHS to let me know about work they are doing around Healthy Start. Please let Ger know if you would like your work shared on our website and with others.

Fare Futures

Our annual networking conference in early November focused on 'where food sits within the wider health improvement and health inequalities agenda'. The conference brought communities together to make connections and links with others around community food and health.

Two speakers from community projects gave an insight into how policy can influence practical actions; and, how practical actions can influence policy both locally and nationally. **You can download the presentations from our website by visiting the current work section.**

'Linking Thinking' in Inverness

'Linking Thinking' was a food and health regional networking opportunity organised by CFHS and the Food and Health Alliance (NHS Health Scotland) and held at Merkinch Community Centre on 26 October 2011.

Participants included people who have a role or interest in food and health across the whole of the food sector in the Inverness area of the Highlands.

Presentations from the event can be downloaded at www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk/about/currentwork.php (scroll down to 'Linking Thinking'). A report on the event will be available shortly.

Small grant scheme

We received 156 applications to our small grant scheme this summer and after much deliberation, the grants panel awarded a total of £100,000 of funding to 52 of the groups. Grant recipients from across Scotland plan to deliver activities over the next year, including weaning initiatives, community café loyalty voucher schemes, parent and child cookery classes, a diabetes cookery group and community gardens developed by people with learning disabilities. A full list of successful grant recipients will be shortly be available on our website.



Policy

Scotland

Mental Health Strategy 2011- 2015

The Scottish Government has issued a consultation document on the Mental Health Strategy for Scotland 2011-2015. Responses are invited by 31 January 2012 and we would encourage groups working on food and mental health to make a response.

The document outlines 14 high level outcomes across mental health improvement work, mental illness prevention work and improvement of mental health services. Actions to date and key challenges for the next four years are covered for each area, together with a series of 35 questions for your comment.

Key issues for organisations that are working with food in relation to mental health are all highlighted in q 6; qs 14-18; and qs 22-24.

If you do make a response to the consultation and cover your food work, we would welcome sight of your submission to inform our future work planning.

The full consultation document is available at www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/09/01163037/

CFHS is planning a national event focusing on food and mental health in the spring. **If you are interested in being involved in the planning of this event contact Sue.**

Investing in Scotland's health

In November the Scottish Government announced that over the next three years £200 million will be spent preventing ill-health caused in part by alcohol misuse, smoking and obesity.

£10.5 million will be invested in delivering weight management services, including child healthy weight, aiming to change and improve how children eat and take part in physical activity. The healthy living award for caterers and the Healthy Living Programme will benefit from an investment of £7.5 million on projects to encourage healthy eating. Work with the manufacturing industry is also underway to reduce the calories and salt content of food.

For more information visit www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2011/11/04165309

UK

Welsh consumers want easy access to food hygiene reports

Research from Consumer Focus Wales shows that from those surveyed 90% thought that consumers should have easy access to food hygiene inspection reports. The survey also showed that 94% of people in Wales think that it should be compulsory for food businesses to display their food hygiene rating score. The Welsh Government is proposing to make a new law enforcing this next year.

For more information visit www.consumerfocus.org.uk/wales/news/welsh-consumers-want-easy-access-to-food-hygiene-reports

Europe

Public health role for the Common Agricultural Policy

Alongside a lengthy official public consultation around the future of the Common Agricultural Policy (http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-post-2013/debate/index_en.htm) the European Public Health and Agriculture Consortium held a summer conference specifically on the role of public health in the CAP. (www.epha.org/a/4601).

“...we need to continue to develop ideas that create access to foods of high nutritional value for all members of society including those on low incomes. Linking production and consumption policy can be a driver in creating necessary change.”

Oana Elena Antonescu MEP

Meanwhile the European Public Health Alliance has been less than complementary about Westminster's most recent response to obesity.

“The UK simply cannot afford to keep tip-toeing around the food industry and avoiding the elephant in the room. It has some of the worst adult obesity levels in the whole of Europe and yet is coming a poor second in its policy decisions.”

Monika Kosińska, Secretary General of EPHA (www.epha.org/a/4784)



Scoff

An insight into the world of research provided by the members of the Scottish Colloquium on Food and Feeding ... incorporated within the British Sociological Association's food study group (www.food-study-group.org.uk).

Community cookbooks and the culture of recipe sharing

The question of how recipes and food habits are collected, recorded and shared is an interesting issue. Printed books remain important even though the internet is now a significant source of recipes. Sharing recipes through books, websites, blogs or just conversation has been described as an 'act of trust between women' which can tell as much about the women involved and their lives as the recipes they share.

There is a longstanding division in literature between fiction and non-fiction. In a sense, recipes cannot be 'fiction', as they must work and therefore are real, but the story constructed around them may be idealised or incomplete, a collection of "best food" which shows food and life as the author would like it to be. The stories in community cookbooks too are best called 'communal partial autobiographies', while they tend to tell stories of many authors coming together to create recipes, they reveal only a small and often rose-tinted glimpse of their domestic lives.

Community cookbooks are an interesting form of writing, born out of the cheaper printing processes of the late nineteenth century. They were produced, then as now, usually within a town or village by a community group, often a church or the Women's Institute, usually to raise funds for a project. The books were published by small local printers in short runs. Normally the contributors were women, and the recipes reveal issues around how food was viewed, as well as wealth and class and geography. The largest sections are usually for cakes, biscuits and pastries, which were the types of food where girls were encouraged to show off their cooking ability in school, which continued into later life. It also reflected the kind of food that was regarded as 'appropriate' for women - sweet and dainty. This idea was established by the domestic science movement in the nineteenth century and was promoted through cookery publishing from Mrs Beeton onwards and remains in the domestic goddesses of today.

Following the Second World War, there was a significant change in the content of the cookbooks, with the introduction of 'continental' recipes which were often heavily altered for local tastes. There was also an increasing awareness that some of the recipes that were reproduced within the body of the cookbooks pre-war had a local identity, and new sections started to appear for 'traditional recipes'. This is cultural evolution which continues today as community cookbooks continue to develop in form and content. Those focussing upon simple and healthy recipes are now most prominent as communities try to encourage new approaches to health and developing cooking skills.

The community recipe book was one of the few outlets for women's writing in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. They represent a unique record of women's lives: their identities, families and relationships as well as uncovering a wealth of cooking skill and knowledge. Sadly these books are too often regarded as trivial and thrown away. Ironically, the ones which were most used; splashed and stained with the pages annotated with cook's notes, are the ones least likely to survive. But within those that do, there are not just the names of the contributors, but also a record of their social life and the foods that they made within their lifetimes.

Tess Baxter is now at Southampton University, undertaking a PhD looking at the influences on the decisions of parents of children under 2 years of age. tess.baxter@soton.ac.uk





A Flavour of

Community-based food and health activity

Family Learning Action Group

Thirty-three members of the Family Learning Action Group (FLAG) have been busy delivering food workshops within 23 schools and community settings in the last six months. The group, all volunteers who aim to improve the quality of life for families within the John Ogilvie High School and Calderside Academy communities in Lanarkshire, completed nutrition training delivered by Motherwell College. Home School Partnership Workers provided support to the group to deliver healthy eating workshops and taster sessions; parent and child cookery courses; healthy packed lunch workshops; and food information sessions to families in the area. So far, over 650 children and adults have benefited from their activities. Good partnership links and volunteer commitment have been crucial to the group's success. The Home School Partnership Workers and their links with the head teachers helped ensure that the volunteers had suitable training, had completed

Disclosure forms and had approval to work in the schools. They also supported the group to set up activities in community centres and family centres and helped secure their training and meeting venue free of charge at the Burnbank Family Centre.

The recipes used in all of the workshops used ingredients that could be bought in local shops, and the cookery sessions used recipes that were affordable as well as healthy. The parent and child cookery workshops helped families work together and enabled children to get involved in preparing family meals. The volunteers used games and quizzes to get across healthy eating messages in a fun way and to encourage children to try new foods. The families said they found new foods in the taster sessions that they would be prepared to buy. The parents and volunteers were also keen to develop a website so that they could share recipes and they hope to have completed the website by December.



“I really enjoyed today, it was nice to spend time with my daughter and for her to help with the cooking.”

Parent and child cookery session participant

Since starting the workshops, the volunteers have continued to build their skills by taking part in a wide range of training programmes that will be useful for all their activities. They plan to deliver more food workshops and other activities in the area in the future and the food workshops have helped attract further members to take part in the group. Members of the group have also been successful at sourcing fresh fruit and vegetables at low cost from one or two of the local supermarkets, so hope to continue the food activities with just small amounts of funding which they are currently seeking.

For more information, contact Lesley McKinlay
familylearningactiongroup@hotmail.co.uk
The new website will be available at
www.familylearningactiongroup.co.uk

“I can cook!”- exploring evaluation methods for cookery courses

Last summer North Lanarkshire Community Food and Health Partnership's Development Officer, Kirsten Fullerton, and Glasgow University Student, Fiona Chia, developed a range of evaluation processes for the partnership's Mobile Community Kitchen Programme.

As part of this project, the Mobile Community Kitchen programme ran two cookery classes for parents in the Wishaw and Motherwell areas. Each cookery session lasted two hours over five sessions. The main goal of the evaluation project was to develop a feasible and relevant qualitative evaluation tool, to measure the efficacy of the programme in promoting cooking skills and developing confidence amongst the parents. All the participants were mothers with children under the age of five years. The primary objective was to obtain baseline information on the following: the participant's motivation to attend the programme; attitudes and barriers to healthy eating and cooking; nutrition knowledge; self-perceived cooking confidence; and dietary and grocery shopping preferences and habits. The second objective was to test the developed evaluation tool to see if it could be replicated easily elsewhere.

The following tools and activities were developed and used:

- Informal interviews with participants
- Observational note taking by the student
- Mood charts
- A mini tea buffet
- Building an eatwell plate
- Verbal charades
- 'Better shopper'
- 'Cook off'

The informal interviews and observational note taking were the most successful methods. These were easy to use and can be used without asking participants to complete questionnaires, which some groups have difficulties with. The participants enjoyed some of the tools, particularly the 'better shopper' and building the eatwell plate. Perceived confidence could be translated into action when they were all able to cook up a dish at the end of the program during the 'Cook off'.

The mini tea buffet and mood chart tools did not work as well as the other tools. Participants were not comfortable about eating the snacks that had been provided and brought in their own to share. The mood chart was acceptable initially, but lost its novelty effect as the program progressed.

On an interesting note, one group performed better on nutrition knowledge and cookery confidence than the other group. The better performing group was also found to be more motivated to make dietary changes and try new foods. The two areas were similar in terms of area and income, however, a possible reason is because these parents knew each other already as they attended other activities in the same community nursery. With hindsight it was felt that that more time could be spent ensuring the group get to know each other better as part of the cookery sessions.

For more information contact Fiona Chia,
fionachiaying@gmail.com or Kirsten Fullerton
healthycookinglcfhp@hotmail.co.uk



Take Stock

The Early Years Food and Health Project

Background

The Early Years Food and Health Project is supporting the development of early years food and health work across the city of Edinburgh. It aims to target and build the capacity of staff working in early years establishments and focus on parents and families of young children living in areas of deprivation.

The project takes forward health promotion work in partnership with NHS Lothian, the City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) and the voluntary Sector, Edinburgh Community Food (ECF) and is specifically focused on early years and food and health inequalities within communities across the city. ECF already had experience of early years work in Edinburgh through the Happy Jack Pack, the PIP Project and Little Leithers.

The programme objectives of the project include:

- to increase uptake of healthy choices within organisations working with young children in areas of deprivation
- to develop and support skills and knowledge of staff in early years establishments
- to increase uptake of healthy choices by children and their families by providing healthy eating practical sessions
- to co-ordinate a more effective use of early years resources

This work also supports the implementation of the 'Nutritional Guidance for Early Years — Food Choices for Children Aged 1-5 Years in Early Education and Childcare Settings' document (www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/01/18153659/15) and highlighting work with early years and families as a city priority.

What is being provided?

The Early Years Food and Health Project has developed and delivers training with a capacity building approach with early years staff and parents to:

- support, increase and sustain early years food and health activities;
- promote and improve nutrition and health; and
- influence food choices

The project delivers training and practical activities to early year's staff and parents in two separate programmes.

Staff

The central aim of working with early years staff is to cascade knowledge and learning from staff to parents and families. Working area by area, staff are invited and recruited from all early years settings including local authority nurseries, child and family centres, private nurseries and catering staff.

Training focuses on an early years diet from the age of one to five years, using the early years guidance as a clear and consistent resource in the dissemination of accurate messages in relation to nutrition and health. All relevant nutritional resources, including infant feeding, are signposted to staff in the training sessions. During the sessions staff are able to explore food groups, as well as issues around fussy eating, food labelling, and sugar, fat and salt. Training is a combination of practical and informative elements.

Parents

In order to ensure that messages are kept consistent, the project developed a parent programme to complement staff training.

Parents of young children attending early years establishments are invited and recruited (with the help of staff) to practical cooking classes. This approach is used to maximise staff team engagement with food and health activities following training and their ability to champion the benefits of healthy eating and nutrition.

Practical sessions for parents are run over six weeks. The first session focuses on the differences between adult and child diets, what is a healthy balanced diet and the barriers to a healthy diet. The five sessions that follow include a weekly nutritional input similar to that offered to staff covering, eg.

- ways of reducing amounts of fat, sugar and salt in the diet
- the role and importance of vitamins and minerals
- healthy snacks and how to make healthier snacks
- fussy eating and the best way to cope with it

This input is followed by a cooking class aimed at cooking food suitable for an early years diet. Some establishments provided ingredients that parents could take away and try at home as well.



The project can offer tailored support for specific parent groups and are working with local community projects to ensure they reach a wide and diverse range of parents, eg. families from minority ethnic communities.

The sessions are supported by appropriate information (eg. eatwell plate), materials and recipes providing parents with:

- knowledge, information and support;
- opportunities to raise confidence and self-esteem; and
- opportunities to develop or enhance cooking skills.

Some learning

The project started delivering the programme in North Edinburgh and having covered the whole city, is due to finish in West Edinburgh by spring 2012. There have been some challenges along the way that contribute to continual learning and assisting the programme to evolve and develop according to the needs of staff and parents in different areas.

All areas are responding well over time, with some requiring more or less input according to size, spread and previous activities, driven by local activity supporting early years work. Additional learning has been added, eg. oral health; play; physical activity; and reading with children.

All staff and parent workshops are evaluated pre and post training. More qualitative methods of evaluation are intended to explore and evidence the impact of the project with parents.



Benefits of the project include:

- awareness raising and improvements in thinking about the importance of early years nutrition
- parents feeling more effective around food
- understanding that food activities at home can be fun; good for parent and child interaction; improved parenting skills as well as improved nutrition.

The experience of three organisations working in partnership is very positive and is helped by the willingness of all to work together to achieve joint priorities and outcomes. All having the same agenda to improve early year's nutrition across the city was not only cost-effective, but pulled a large and diverse knowledge and skills base together. Having a community organisation involved increased the project's ability to target specific groups and areas. Its knowledge of local initiatives and supports to signpost staff and parents increased the sustainability of the project's outcomes. There were fewer incidences of isolated work and reduced confusion about roles and consistent messages to early years staff and parents.

Future steps

A number of factors will influence future direction, priorities and activities:

- potential larger evaluation with academic partners;
- an update of Early Years nutritional guidance and changes within the new Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCSWIS); and an Early Years logic model (Edinburgh) is being developed.

For more information about the Early Years Food and Health Project contact:
Shelley Tuchewicz, Health Promotion Specialist Food and Health Early Years (NHS Lothian/the City of Edinburgh Council), shelley.tuchewicz@edinburgh.gov.uk
Sonya Kaila-Tierney, Food and Development Worker (Edinburgh Community Food), skaila@edinburghcommunityfood.org.uk



Bitesize



Happy 10th birthday to North Glasgow Community Food Initiative!

North Glasgow Community Food Initiative (NGCFI) celebrated its 10th birthday this year with events throughout the summer and also at its recent AGM.

The initiative was set up by students from Glasgow University in the summer of 2001 in order to support newly arrived asylum seekers and refugees and the existing local community to come together through the medium of food activities. They worked together to address the challenge in an area of limited access to affordable fruit and vegetables by setting up the North Glasgow Food Co-op. This was run entirely by volunteers for over a year until it received further funding to set up NGCFI.

In its 10th year, NGCFI continues to enjoy the support of over 40 volunteers. In the last year it has supported 12 fruit 'barras', delivered 15 cookery courses attended by 107 individuals, and worked with 17 primary schools to run healthy eating sessions. The two community gardens are actively used, whilst another community garden is being developed with the help of volunteers from other agencies such as the Prince's Trust.

Over the next year NGCFI hopes to build on its work by developing a community café and employing a community chef and community

nutritionist. It will also continue to develop its work around weaning and the use of Healthy Start vouchers and volunteer work.

**For more information visit www.ngcfi.org.uk.
You can also contact Greig Sandilands on
0141 558 2500 or email manager@ngcfi.org.uk**

East Lothian Young Chefs

Pupils from five East Lothian secondary schools put their culinary skills to the test in front of distinguished judges in the final of the East Lothian Young Chef of the Year 2011 competition recently. The teams of two S4 pupils had 90 minutes to prepare a two-course meal based on local ingredients, working under the scrutiny of a team of judges. All ingredients had to be predominantly fresh, and from East Lothian and/or Scottish. The Preston Lodge High School team won the award.

One of the chefs, John Paul McLaughlin, was so impressed with the high standards of the food that he will treat every finalist chef and their home economics tutor to a meal and a tour of the kitchen at his restaurant in the Marine Hotel in North Berwick.

**For more information, contact Marjorie Shepherd, Development Officer, Food and Health,
01620 827236 or mshepherd@eastlothian.gov.uk**



‘Easy Cooking for You’ – tried and tested community recipe book

The Health Improvement Nutrition Network (HINN) in Glasgow recently complemented its regular ‘Get Cooking, Get Shopping’ cookery courses by producing a recipe book for participants that have completed a course. Currently there are around a dozen of the six-week courses running in Glasgow, which initially started in South West and East Glasgow, but which has now expanded to other parts of Glasgow. Participants were keen to have access to a wider range of recipes than could be learnt on a six-week course. HINN worked with a range of partners to run focus groups with community groups to help find out what kinds of recipes people wanted and which would still meet their criteria of promoting a healthy balanced diet. Staff from the University of Glasgow Human Nutrition Department became important partners in this work after meeting John Casey, Health Improvement Practitioner with Glasgow City CHP from HINN met at last year’s CFHS annual networking conference. A Masters student from the University – Elisa Vargas Garcia, carried out a nutritional analysis of the recipes; found out the cost of recipes; and evaluated how easy the recipes were to read and use.

The average price of each recipe is around £1 per person. The book includes pictorial instructions on chopping vegetables and there are health messages throughout the book. It has over 60 tasty easy-to-read recipes ranging from chicken tikka and homemade burgers to banana muffins and popcorn. In the near future HINN, which consists of Health Improvement staff from Glasgow City CHP and East Dunbartonshire CHP, plan to make the recipes available on the ‘Health in My Life’ website www.himl.org.uk.

The recipe book is currently available for groups working in Glasgow and East Dunbartonshire. Groups involved in community cookery from other areas of Scotland are welcome to contact John Casey to find out about purchasing the book for other areas. John.Casey@ggc.scot.nhs.uk



News

Loch Arthur Creamery – Best Food Producer

Loch Arthur creamery has won Best Food Producer category in the BBC Radio Four Food and Farming Awards 2011. The Loch Arthur Community in Dumfries is part of Camphill Community Trust, a registered charity that offers people with learning disabilities an opportunity to live and work together. There are nine houses in which altogether more than 70 people live, including about 28 people in supported tenancies, as well as a farm, a large garden, a creamery, a bakery, a wood workshop, a weaving workshop and a thriving farm shop.

For more information visit www.locharthur.org.uk

Change in store

Sustaining retailing in rural areas has long been highlighted as a priority for the local communities affected and as an important issue across Scotland but recently it has been highlighted as a challenge for the whole of northern Europe.

The Northern Periphery Programme’s Retailing in Rural Regions project has been covered in previous Fare Choices but has recently been sharing what the trans-European action research has learned.

A Scottish dissemination event took place in Inverness in September, organised by the Community Retailing Network, Scotland’s partner in a project that has also involved Finland, the Faroe Islands and Iceland, alongside both Northern and southern Ireland.

At a busy event, chaired by CFHS, a broad range of participants, from Scottish Government officials and shop managers to business advisors and local volunteers heard a range of speakers outlining the varied dimensions that must be considered if remote communities are to retain or even revive such an essential service. Taking on additional functions such as postal services, exploiting tourist potential, involving the local community, utilising new technology, accessing training and appreciating the contribution shops make to a community’s health and wellbeing, were just a few of the issues covered.

"It's not just about saving shops, it's about saving a way of life."

Peter Couchman, Chief Executive of the Plunkett Foundation

When the international dissemination event for the project took place in Iceland in November it was appropriate that the Scottish delegation included representatives from community-owned shops from Uig (Lewis), Eriskay, Papa Westray (Orkney) and Hillswick (Shetland). The experience of Scotland was a major component of the project's findings and this was reflected on the day with both Elaine Newton (Uig community store) and Eric Calderwood (University of Stirling) making key presentations to an audience from Denmark, the Faroes, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and both northern and southern Ireland.

"Our shop is vital to a community living on the edge...as the community changes so must we."

Elaine Newton, Manager, Uig Community Shop, Isle of Lewis

Notes and presentations from each event are available at www.communityretailing.org.uk along with a recently completed Scottish report on the project. Final reports on the entire project will be available in the summer.

Edinburgh Community Cafés film

Edinburgh Community Cafés network has produced a short film that aims to promote the work of the 30 cafés that are members of the network. **The film can be viewed at www.edinburghcommunitycafes.org.uk.**

Top chef opens Dr Bell's Cook School

Dr Bell's Family Centre's new Cook School was officially opened by local chef Martin Wishart on 16 November. The aim of the School is to encourage local families to eat healthy, fresh, and home-cooked meals together in a bid to boost wellbeing. The school, which is based in Stanwell Nursery, will provide local people with the opportunity to learn and develop their cookery skills and learn healthy eating messages. The development of the school was made possible through funding received from a number of local and national funders and charitable trusts. More details about the Cook School can be found at www.drbellisleith.org.uk.

Edinburgh Food and Health Training Hub launches newsletter

Edinburgh Food and Health Training Hub launched its new bi-monthly newsletter at their showcase event held on 22 November. The newsletter will contain information about the work of the Hub and organisations that it works with.

The showcase event highlighted some of the work that the Hub and its members have been delivering since its launch two years ago, including with young carers and community cafés. The showcase was also used to launch a new resource that complements training sessions for groups in Edinburgh working on food and health with older people, 'Eating for Health and Wellbeing – Recipes, information and guidance on healthy eating for older people'.

To receive copies of the newsletter, or for more information about the older peoples' training sessions, contact traininghub@edinburghcommunityfood.org.uk.

Just Enterprise

The Just Enterprise programme is now open for new applicants. The programme, which has now been operating for six months, offers a range of support to social enterprises, or groups wanting to set up as a social enterprise. This support includes client management advisory services, feasibility studies, business planning, marketing, financial management, procurement and developing their sustainability.

To find out more about Just Enterprise, contact John Hughes on 0141 425 2909 or visit www.justenterprise.org.uk

3rd BSA Food Study Group Conference

The Food and Society conference will be held at the British Library Conference Centre, London on 2-3 July 2012.

The conference is calling for abstracts of presentations for consideration to be presented at the conference. The deadline for abstracts is Friday 27 January 2012. Abstracts for 20 minute papers (300 words max.), panel proposals (750 words max.), and alternative formats (750 words max.), are welcomed.

For more information visit www.britsoc.co.uk/events/food



Publications

Well nourished

"The ethics of food and drink are at the heart of the debate."

Richard Lochhead, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Environment

Information and photographs from September's Nourish conference, held in Glasgow, is now available. The two-day conference covered everything from global food speculation and the Common Agricultural Policy to community bakeries and eco schools.

See www.nourishscotland.org.uk

The Scottish Health Survey: Topic Report: Obesity

A very useful and comprehensive 'topic report' has been produced, using Scottish Health Survey data, looking at adult obesity, including behavioural, socio-demographic and economic factors.

See <http://scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/10/25091711/0>

Meanwhile, although weak in terms of Scottish content, WHO (Europe) has created a fascinating database containing policies on nutrition, obesity and physical activity across the continent. Visit <http://data.euro.who.int/nopa/Search.aspx>

Healthy eating messages involving people with learning disabilities

The Scottish Consortium for Learning Disability 'Food for thought' DVD is now available to watch online. It shows people enjoying healthy eating, cooking and spending time with family and friends, without too much emphasis on 5-a-day or giving up all treats. It also shows how eating a healthier diet has made a difference to the lives of those in the DVD. www.sclld.org.uk

Growing up in Ireland report

A four year study on the eating and physical exercise habits of nine year old children in Ireland was released in November. The study highlighted that many children are spending more time watching television and playing computer games than engaging in exercise. As a result the government intends to promote recreational activities and sport, control the availability of fast foods near schools, and consider marketing and labelling of foods aimed at children.

To read the study and its recommendations in full visit www.growingup.ie/index.php?id=225

Formula feeding: how to feed your baby safely

NHS Health Scotland has recently published 'Formula feeding: how to feed your baby safely'. This resource has been approved by UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative and the NHS Scotland Central Legal Office to ensure compliance with the 'Infant Formula and Follow-on Formula (Scotland) Regulations 2007' and so should not be routinely given to women during the antenatal period. This resource aims to provide the most up-to-date information on safe preparation and storage of formula milk.

The most important change to advice is that formula feeds should be made up one at a time and should not be stored unless absolutely necessary. This information will also be included in the revised 'Nutritional guidance for early years' and 'Adventures in Foodland', due for publication in mid 2012.

To download a copy, visit www.healthscotland.com. For further information, email katie.baird@nhs.net





Diary

JANUARY

Farmhouse Breakfast Week

22-25 January 2012

Annual campaign run by to raise awareness of the benefits of eating a healthy breakfast.

More info: www.shakeupyourwakeup.com/

FEBRUARY

The Gathering

29 February and 1 March 2012

Scotland's free event that brings together all parts of the third sector SECC, Glasgow

More info: www.gatherscotland.org.uk

MARCH

NHS Health Scotland Early Years Conference 2012

1 March 2012

Stirling Management Centre

More info: www.maternal-and-early-years.org.uk/early-years-conference-1st-march-2012-call-for-abstracts

Soil Association Annual Conference

2 March 2012

Facing the future: innovation in food and farming

Royal Horticultural Halls, London

More info: www.soilassociation.org/conference

National Food and Drink Policy Conference 2012

7 March 2012

Perth Concert Hall

More info: www.scotland.gov.uk/food

3rd BSA Study Group Conference

2-3 July 2012

British Library Conference Centre, London

More info: www.britsoc.co.uk/events/food



CFHS now has a facebook page. Log in, take a look, and if you like us you'll get to hear all our news.



**community
food and health**

(scotland)

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For updates on community food and health between issues of Fare Choice, please visit our website to sign up for our monthly e-bulletin

www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk

