

Submission ID: 8 – listed as day 2 1115-1230

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The school setting as an opportunity for achieving behaviour change

Rationale

Funded by the UK Prevention Research Partnership to explore opportunities for intervention and innovation in the UK School Food System, the Generating Excellent Nutrition In UK Schools (GENIUS) network has brought together key stakeholders over the last four years, with the aim of working towards a more health promoting food and nutrition system in UK schools. Membership includes academic researchers currently active in school food research across a range of disciplines, alongside major non-academic stakeholders in school food, as well as local government, policy development and public health bodies.

Health and dietary intake data suggest that the diets of children do not meet current dietary guidelines and rates of overweight and obesity are high. Food provided in schools and the broader school food environment have a major influence on the quality of children's diets and have the potential to reduce inequalities in dietary intake between children according to their socio-economic background. The quality of diet in childhood has been shown to impact on future development, educational achievement, health and well-being outcomes, and also influences diet in adulthood, as well as disease risk (e.g. obesity, diabetes, heart disease) in later life. There are differences in how schools arrange their food provision, what they serve, and their school food policies and environments, both between schools and between countries in the UK, and this variation is not well understood.

This symposium will present key outputs that have come directly from the GENIUS network (priority setting of research questions according to methods from the James Lind Alliance, systems mapping of the school food system). Other work from network members will also be presented, which includes analysis of opportunities in terms of eating occasions during the school day where healthier options might be encouraged (NIHR-funded FUEL study in secondary schools, exploring breaks versus lunchtimes). Finally, a consideration of the financial sustainability of education-focused initiatives, which should always be included in schools to support a whole school approach alongside environmental intervention, will be presented.

Aim

The aim of this symposium is to demonstrate the latest research regarding systems-, place-based and education-focused interventions to promote behaviour change in schoolchildren.

Suggested programme track:

- Behavioural and Public Health (main suggested track)
- Childhood and Adolescent Obesity (potential alternative track)

Suggested speakers (all have agreed to speak and provided agreed titles):

Dr Miranda Pallan and Dr Marie Murphy, University of Birmingham - Food consumption at break and lunch times in schools: a comparison of nutritional intake from school-provided foods vs. foods brought into school

UKCO 2023

Member-led Symposium Submissions

Dr Niamh O'Kane, Queen's University Belfast - Factors driving food choice in a secondary school food setting: mapping the system

Ms Leila Fathi (PhD student), University of Queensland - Applying the Integrated Sustainability Framework to explore the long-term sustainability of nutrition education programs in schools: A systematic review

Chair - Professor Jayne Woodside (will include brief presentation of the research priorities produced by the GENIUS school food network)

Descriptive outline

Chair introduces session and presents school food-related research priorities developed by the GENIUS network (10 minutes)

Three speakers have 15 minutes to present (45 minutes)

Question and Answer session (15 minutes)

Session close (5 minutes)