

Profile of nutritional status of children and adolescents

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Profile of nutritional status of children and adolescents

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Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Board Chair

Hon. Peter Collins, AM, QC

Director

Penny Allbon

Any enquiries about or comments on this publication should be directed to:

Ilona Brockway

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

GPO Box 570

Canberra ACT 2601

Phone: (02) 6244 1127

Email: Ilona.brockway@aihw.gov.au

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Children and adolescents need sufficient nutritious foods to grow and develop normally	4
Eat plenty of vegetables, legumes and fruits.....	5
Eat plenty of cereals (including breads, rice, pasta and noodles), preferably wholegrain ..	6
Include lean meat, fish, poultry and/or alternatives	7
Include milks, yoghurts, cheese and/or alternatives.....	11
Choose water as a drink	12
Limit saturated fat and moderate total fat intake (low-fat diets are not suitable for infants).....	13
Choose foods low in salt	14
Consume only moderate amounts of sugars and foods containing added sugars.....	15
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Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AGHE	Australian guide to healthy eating
AI	adequate intake
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
EAR	estimated average requirement
EER	estimated energy requirement
KEKP	Kids Eat, Kids Play
NDSHS	National Drug Strategy Household Survey
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
NHS	National Health Survey
NNS	National Nutrition Survey
NRVs	nutrient reference values
RDI	recommended dietary intake
WHO	World Health Organization

Symbols

g	grams
kJ	kilojoule
mg	milligram
–	zero or rounded down to zero, includes null cells

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Highlights

- This report compiles existing nutritional data for children and adolescents relevant to the dietary guidelines. These analyses form a baseline in preparation for the results of Kids Eat, Kids Play (KEKP) – a national children’s nutrition and physical activity survey which commenced in February 2007.
- Recent data suggest that some concerning behaviours are evident – in 2004–05, only one-quarter of adolescents reported usually eating the recommended three serves of fruit per day, and less than one-third the recommended four serves of vegetables. Less recent data suggests that children and adolescents are eating too much fat and sugar.
- Positive trends in breastfeeding rates appear to be continuing; 88% of children aged 3 years and under had ever been breastfed in 2004–05.
- The majority of children were consuming sufficient iron, calcium and zinc in 1995, when data are compared with the new nutrient reference values. However, for the older age groups, more than half had inadequate intakes of calcium, a high proportion of older males had inadequate zinc intakes, and more than 30% of older females had inadequate iron intakes.
- Relying on 1995 data for preparing baseline measures, this report highlights the lack of recent data on children’s nutritional status. The KEKP study will largely fill this gap.