

Is your brain full?



So what have we learned?



**There's so much
good work
happening!**

**And so much work
to do...**

**How can we work
together?**

The age of collaboration: don't hold on to what you know



You all have the same goal! (right?)





TrueHealth
INITIATIVE



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A global consensus on lifestyle as medicine.

MISSION

THE PROBLEM

THE SOLUTION

COUNCIL

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Truth →

WANT HEALTH? TRY THE TRUTH



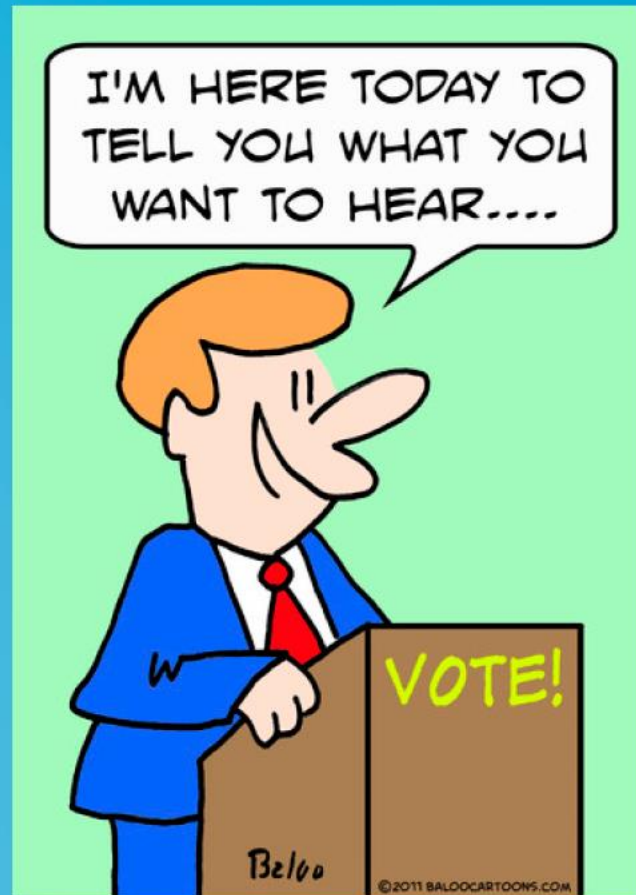
LIFESTYLE AS MEDICINE: CULTURE, COLLUSION AND PSEUDO-CONFUSION



THE CASE FOR A TRUE HEALTH COALITION

healthyfood
GUIDE

Opportunity: election year!



how to make your vote count

With the upcoming election drawing near, HFG editor Niki Bezzant asks the political parties about their policies on obesity and nutrition.

The issues

OBESITY
New Zealand is the fourth most obese nation in the OECD. One- and-a-half million Kiwis are overweight, and more than 1.3 million Kiwis are obese.

The causes of this problem are complex. According to the NZ Medical Association's recent report *Tackling Obesity*: "Key drivers include the increased availability of cheap, palatable and energy-dense foods, persuasive and pervasive food marketing, and reduced physical activity. This has led to an 'obesogenic' environment in which making the healthy choice has become increasingly difficult and expensive."

Obese people have medical costs 30 per cent higher than those with normal weight. About 4.5 per cent of the total healthcare expenditure in New Zealand (\$686 million) can already be attributed to obesity, and that cost can be expected to rise.

DIABETES, CANCER AND HEART DISEASE

Being obese significantly increases our risk of other diseases. The number of Kiwis with diabetes has almost doubled in the past 10 years. If we can't stop this trend, it has been estimated that by 2021 nearly half a million New Zealanders will have type 2 diabetes, costing the country more than \$1 billion a year. And we can't assume this doesn't apply to us. The University of Otago found last year that almost one in five of those aged 35-44 and almost 45 per cent of those aged 55-64 had pre-diabetes. Increases in weight also mean increases in cancer risk. It's been estimated that excess weight and obesity cause approximately 20 per cent of all cancer cases.

Heart disease is the most common cause of death in our country, accounting for 90,000 years of life lost each year to disability and premature death.

Things that could help

Health experts acknowledge that solving the obesity crisis is not just the responsibility of the government. But there are some policy suggestions on the table that might help.

♥ TAX ON SUGAR-SWEETENED BEVERAGES

A growing group of experts is lobbying for a 20 per cent tax on sugar-sweetened beverages. There's some evidence a tax could work: in Mexico, where a 12 per cent tax was recently introduced there has been a seven per cent reduction in sugary drinks consumption in just a few months. A study conducted by Auckland University found the tax could generate up to \$40 million in new tax revenue each year, which could be invested in programmes to improve population health. (For more on this issue, see HFG June 2014).

♥ NO GST ON FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

This is a strategy that some health experts propose as an incentive for people to buy more healthy food.

There is some evidence this could make a small but significant difference to Kiwi households. In 2010 the University of Otago published research showing an 11 per cent increase in purchasing of fruit and vegetables when 12.5 per cent was taken off the price. This equates to about half a kilo more vegetables and fruit per household each week, or about six extra servings.

♥ FOOD IN SCHOOLS

Although nutrition is taught to some degree at school, it's often undermined by the fact that the foods available in schools are not as healthy as they could be.

In 2009 guidelines for healthy food in schools were scrapped, meaning high salt and sugar junk foods could once again be sold in school canteens.

A report published in the New Zealand Medical Journal in 2010 said: "The healthy food policy had the potential to directly benefit the 56 per cent of children and 62 per cent of adolescents who buy food from school canteens". While there are currently guidelines for schools on healthier options these are not mandatory and in many schools poor-quality, sugary and salty foods dominate the tuck shop.

♥ COOKING IN SCHOOLS

Many health experts are concerned that children are growing up without basic culinary skills or food knowledge, which in turn is contributing to obesity.

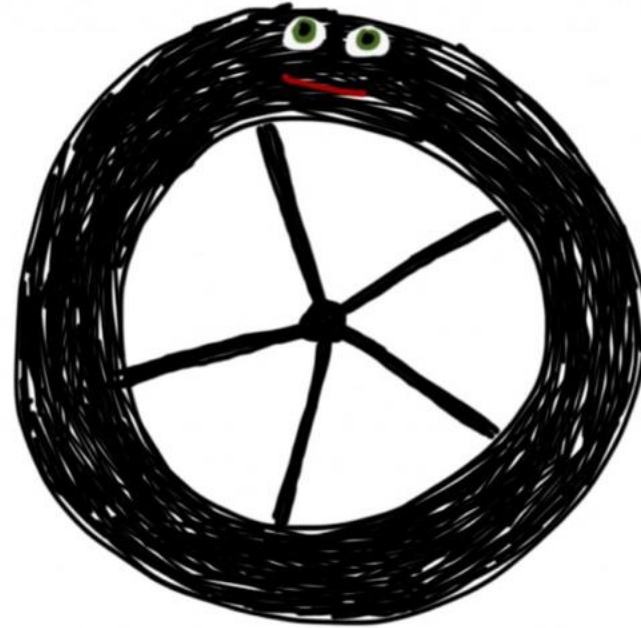
When we don't know how to cook it is much harder to source and eat a healthy meal. The schools curriculum includes elements of nutrition, food preparation, and food technology. However, cooking is not being taught consistently.

There's evidence that when kids learn basic 'hands-on' cooking, they become more interested in food and eat more vegetables. A Massey University evaluation of Garden to Table, a programme in primary schools where children learn to grow and cook food, found: "Since participating in the programme most children indicated their willingness to try new foods. In most schools, children were cooking at home sometimes or often, they were helping to shop for food and were trying out recipes they had made at school." 



Let's make some noise

I AM WHEEL. HEAR ME SQUEAK.



Challenge:
Let's make this an
election issue

#workingtogether

#inspiringchange