

Improving Health in Early Childhood Settings

*How the Healthy Heart Award supports healthy
eating and activity in preschoolers.*

Jasmin Jackson

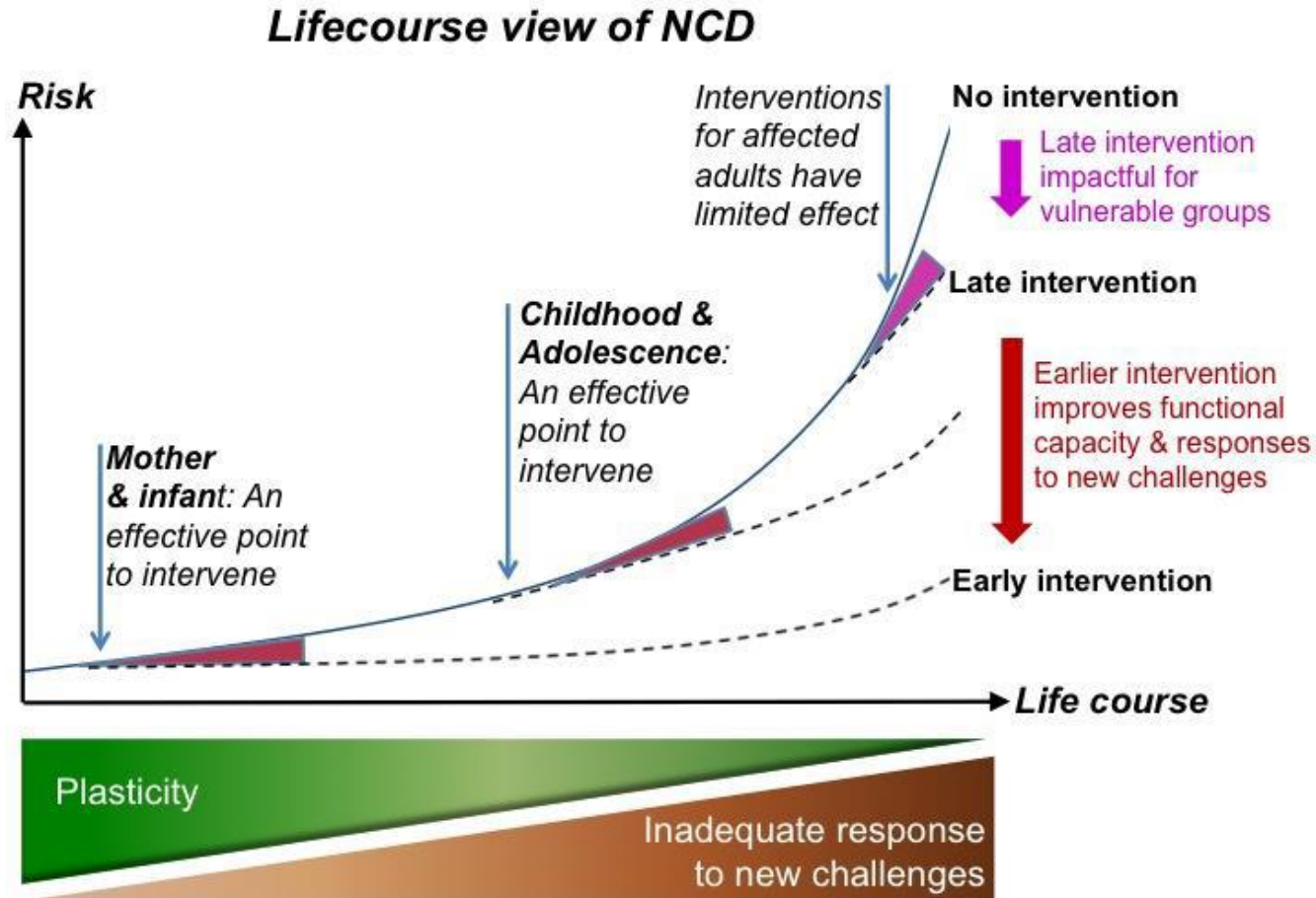
BSc (Human Nutrition), BA (Psychology), PGDip (Human Nutrition)

Health Promoter – Heart Foundation Rotorua



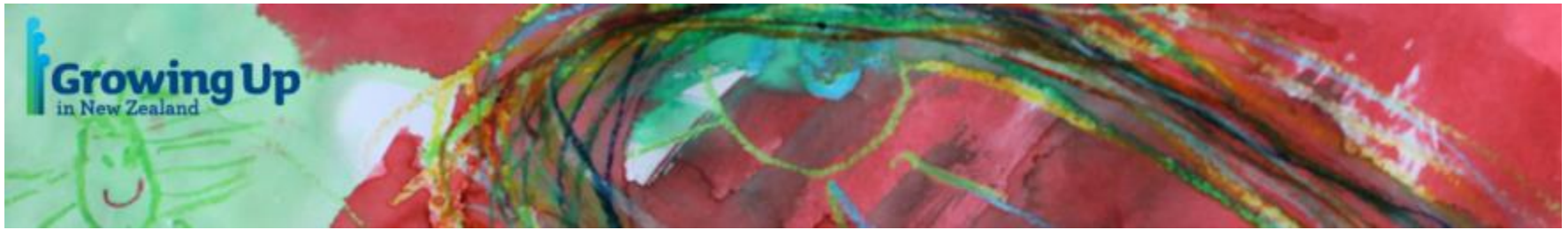
**Why is nutrition in early
childhood so important?**

The importance of the early life period





Kai Time in ECE



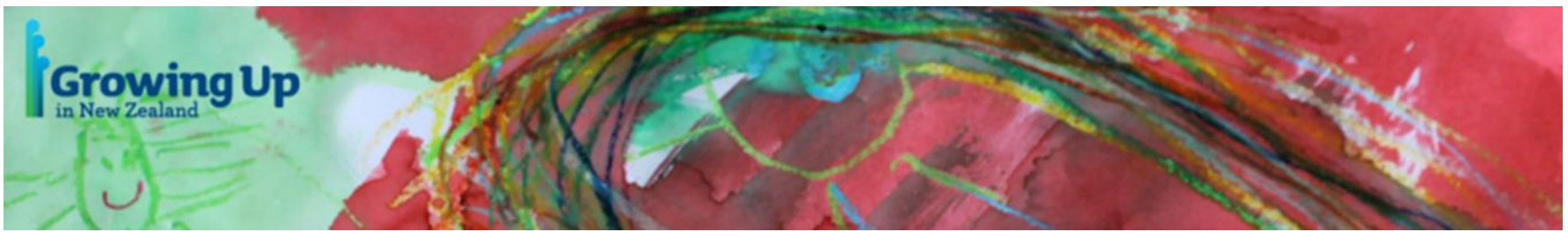
Although the majority of child-care services (82%) had a written nutrition policy, many were not comprehensive and contained statements that could be difficult to action.

- **Most services promoted some healthy eating behaviours:**
 - edible gardens (90%)
 - not using food in punishments and rewards (96% and 95%)
 - serving family-style meals, with adults seated alongside children.
 - Encourage water consumption (84%)



Gerritsen, S., Wall, C., & Morton, S. (2015). Child-care nutrition environments: results from a survey of policy and practice in New Zealand early childhood education services. *Public Health Nutrition, First View*(Supplement -1), 1-12. doi:10.1017/S1368980015002955





- **Other widespread practices were seen that may encourage children to overeat & form unhealthy food preferences:**
 - Serving sugary, salty and fatty foods at celebrations
 - Selling unhealthy food at fundraisers
 - Pizza, pies, sausages or sausage rolls were the most common foods for fundraising (54%), followed by cupcakes, cake, croissants or biscuits (49%).
 - Hurrying children to finish eating
 - Not checking with children if they are full before offering more food
 - Only 27% ‘most of the time’ or ‘always’ eat and drink the same things as children.



The Healthy Heart Award

Award levels

The award names are representative of the life cycle of Harakeke (New Zealand flax, Phormium), and reflect a continuous sustainable empowering journey of growth and development from a firm foundation.

Pā-Harakeke

The Pā-Harakeke award provides recognition of your ECE service's flourishing healthy eating and physical activity environment, extending it beyond your immediate ECE setting into the wider community.

Whānau

The Whānau award recognises the strengthening of your ECE service's healthy eating and physical activity knowledge base, as well as further engagement with your ECE community.

Rito

The Rito award recognises your ECE service's commitment and achievement in founding an environment which promotes healthy eating and physical activity.





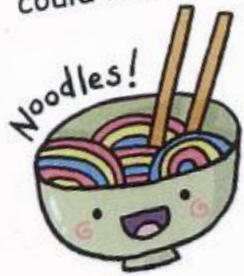
Central Kids Homedale

Getting Whanau On-board



More Fruit, Less Noodles

Kia Ora, this term we have been getting an over load of noodles! An idea has been suggested that we could have a "noodle day" one day a week, where children have the opportunity to bring noodles for their lunch. What do you think? Or do you have any other ideas?



Brilliant Idea!!
Great Idea ☺

Fantastic idea
Wonderful idea.

Does this mean you
can only bring noodles
in on a certain day?

A noodle day would mean bringing
noodles on a certain day a week.
We are just getting everyone's feedback
and ideas at the moment ☺

Kia Ora, this term we have been providing fruit for the children everyday and this has been a great success. As some children leave their fruit in their lunch box or may not eat a whole piece of fruit, how do you feel about having a fruit bowl at kindy where you could contribute fruit (1-2 pieces) and have shared fruit throughout the day? This of course would be optional for families/whānau. Please share your ideas! Any feedback would be much appreciated.



Brilliant Idea!!
Great Idea ☺
Excellent idea

Fabastic Idea
good idea
Great idea
Awesome!!!



Awesome!!



Reader's Photo

APPLAUSE: This photo was sent to us by Central Kids Homedale teacher Amy Bray. The kindergarten have had a Healthy Heart Focus and received their first Healthy Heart Award. This was followed by a Duffy Book presentation where each child was presented a book to take home. Thanks for the photo, Amy.

■ If you have a photo which you would like to share, email it to readers@dailypost.co.nz.



From Next Week! Kindy provides 'Spaghetti Monday'!

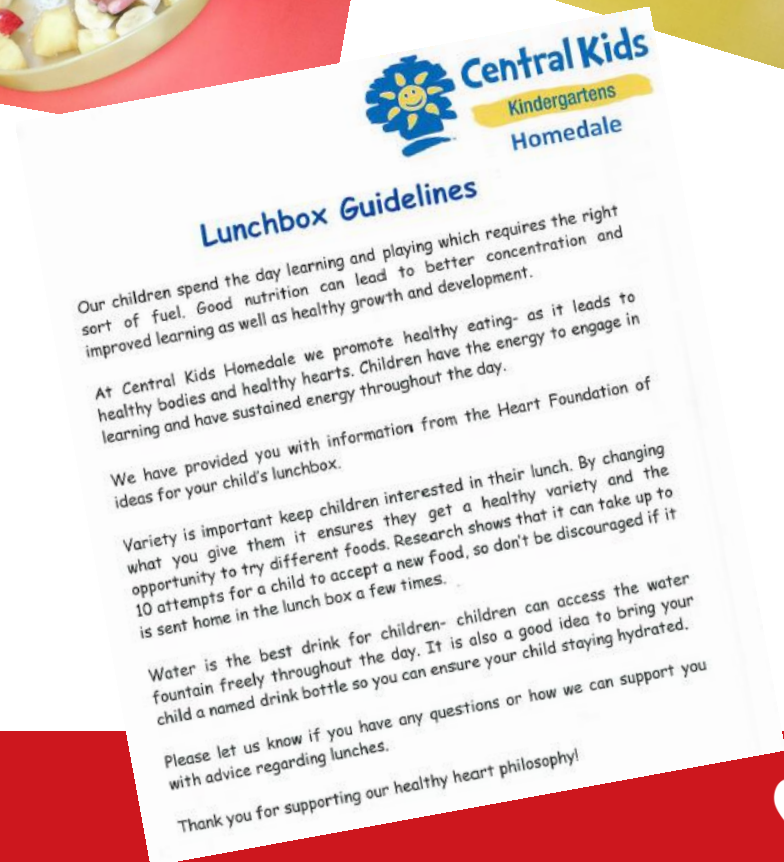
Kia Ora Whānau,
From this Monday we have made changes to our noodle Monday! Kindy will now provide spaghetti noodles! This is so all children have the opportunity to have some if they choose.

Please bring lunch boxes as normal.
Remember also we always have fresh bread at kindergarten so let us know in the morning if you need us to make your child/children a sandwich.

If you have any questions about 'Spaghetti Monday' please see a teacher and we are happy to help!



- Improved their nutrition and birthday celebration policies & procedures
- Developed lunch box guidelines specific to their kindergarten
- Taught children about nutrition and healthy eating every week (sometimes every day)!
- Continued with shared fruit



What the teachers say

“We are now a noodle-free zone... We don’t get pies coming in very often anymore. I love seeing children put spinach, capsicum and mushrooms on homemade pizza and still really want to eat it!”

– Amy Bray, Teacher

“Before this, our children would sometimes come in with whole pieces of fruit, take one or two bites, and throw the rest away.

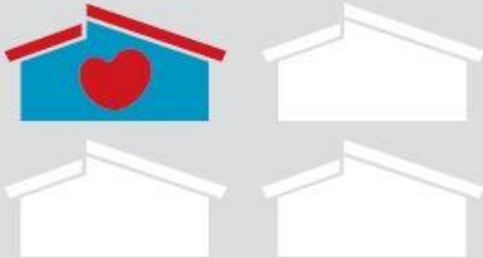
Now, parents donate a few pieces of fruit which the teachers cut up and serve to children at morning and afternoon tea.

This has resulted in reduced food waste, reduced costs to parents, and an increase in the amount and variety of fruit children are eating.”

- Central Kids Homedale Manager



Malatest Independent Evaluation



1 in 4 early childhood education services in NZ are participating in the Healthy Heart Award



1/2 of families/whānau from Healthy Heart awarded early childhood education services give their child healthier food compared to a **1/4** of those from other early childhood education services



4 out of 5 early childhood educators say they gained knowledge about healthy eating by participating in the Healthy Heart Award

90% of early childhood education services say the Healthy Heart Award encouraged them to teach their children about nutrition



ECEs that participate in the HHA are more likely to teach children about nutrition



Malatest Independent Evaluation



x 2

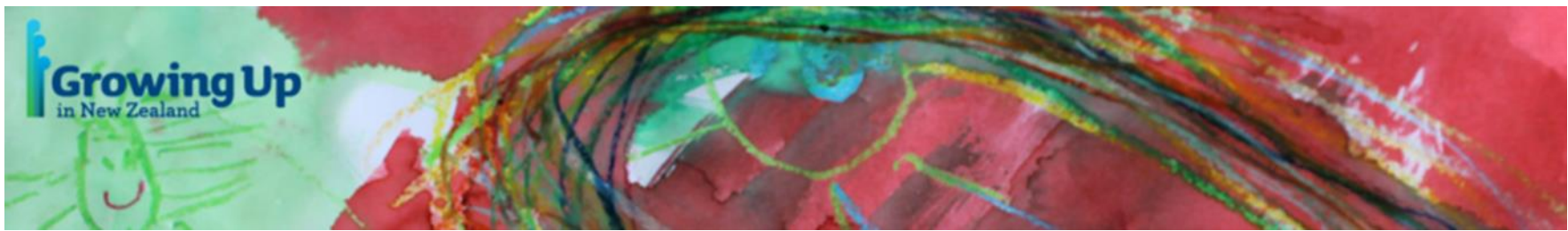
Families from early childhood education services with the Healthy Heart Award are almost **twice** as likely to learn more about healthy eating



80%

of early childhood education services say having a nutrition policy led to more children eating healthily





More research underway

Further analyses planned for the survey data include:

- a dietary assessment of childcare menus
- source and preparation of food
- spend per child per day on food
- active behaviours and screen-use
- physical activity strategies and equipment
- health promotion programme participation.

We will also be investigating the health outcomes for children exposed to different ECE nutrition and activity environments using data from the *Growing Up in New Zealand* study.



Preliminary Results from Menu Analysis

Menu score compared to		Count	Mean Overall Menu Score	Standard Deviation	P-Value
Type of ECE service	Community ECE	19	7.4	1.77	0.06
	Private ECE	37	6.5	1.64	
Written Nutrition Policy	No	6	5.7	1.63	0.10
	Yes	49	6.9	1.71	
NZ Dep(2006) Quintile	1	9	6.8	2.49	0.08
	2	10	6.2	1.69	
	3	15	6.5	1.19	
	4	10	6.1	1.52	
	5	11	8.0	1.10	
Participation in Healthy Heart Awards	Didn't participate	34	6.3	1.63	<0.01
	Participated	18	7.8	1.45	
Whether they have a cook	No	4	4.8	1.71	0.01
	Yes	53	7.0	1.63	
Whether their cook has nutrition training*	No	42	6.9	1.61	0.90
	Yes	10	7.0	1.82	
Whether they have a Nutrition Champion	No	18	6.9	1.32	0.94
	Yes	34	6.9	1.92	



www.learnbyheart.org.nz



Menu



Register

Login

*Haere mai and
welcome to
Learn by Heart!*



<https://youtu.be/go5JnPjUSMs>





**Thank you for
listening!**

