

An update on HM Government new example menus for early years settings in England



**Yorkshire and Humber Childhood Obesity Action Plan workshop
York, 14 March 2018**

Dr Patricia Mucavele, former Head of Nutrition
Children's Food Trust

Today's presentation

- Infants and young children's diets
- Rationale for and development of the new example menus for early years settings in England
- Overview of practical resources to help early years settings promote and support healthy eating
- Eat Better, Start Better programme - key elements for successful implementation



Diet and Nutrition Survey of Infants and Young Children (2011)

Measured food consumption, energy and nutrient intakes and nutritional status of infants and young children aged between 4-18 months

- Infants and young children consumed a **varied diet**
- **Dietary recommendations** generally met by the majority
- Estimated average **energy requirements exceeded by three quarters** and mean protein intakes well above Reference Nutrient Intake (RNI)*
- Mean intakes of **most key vitamins and minerals above RNI***
- Proportion of children over 6 months with intakes of vitamins/ minerals below LRNI** low, **except for iron**



DH, FSA, NatCen (2011)

* **RNI** values are set at levels of intake considered likely to meet the requirements of 97.5% of the population.

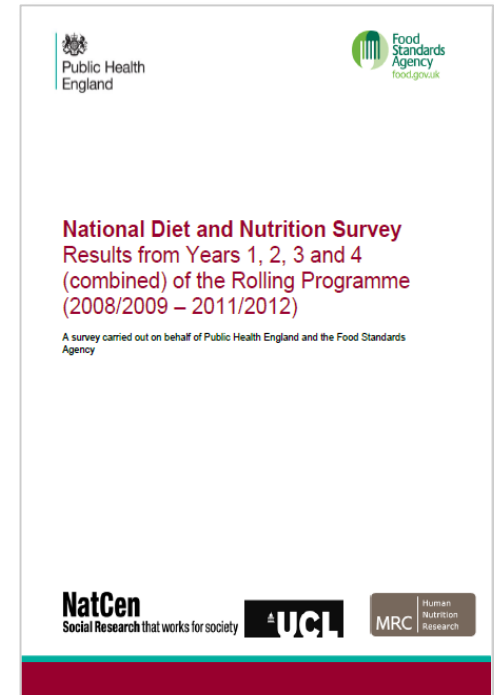
** **LRNI** is amount of nutrients sufficient for only a small number of people; those below LRNI likely to have insufficient intakes.

National Diet and Nutrition Survey (years 1-4; 2008-9 to 2011-12)

Measured food consumption, energy and nutrient intakes and nutritional status of children aged 18 months to three years.

- Mean daily energy intake **-114% of estimated average requirement for age group**
- % energy from carbohydrate (50.7) and fat (33.9) in **line with dietary guidelines**
- % energy from non-milk extrinsic sugar (11.9) **above** 2015 SACN recommendation (as free sugars)
- Intakes of salt (3.3g) **higher** than SACN recommendation for children aged 1-3 years (2g)
- Intakes of many micronutrients **appear adequate**, but more than 5% children had intakes of **vitamin A and iron** below the LRNI* (therefore unlikely to be adequate).

***LRNI** is amount of nutrients sufficient for only a small number of people; those below LRNI likely to have insufficient intakes.



PHE, FSA (2016)

Importance of children's early years

- **Children's early years** influence their health, development, learning, attainment and economic participation
- **Eating habits** during children's early years, influence growth, development and academic achievement in later life
- **Giving every child the best start in life** is crucial to reducing health inequalities for life.



The early years of a child's life are critically important:

- in their own right
- as a foundation of success at school and for all adult life

Why early years settings?

Early years settings - vital route to encourage young children and their families to eat well, so it's important to equip the whole childcare workforce to make every contact count

Education

- 3-4 year olds: 15 hrs free education (*universal*)
- 3-4 year olds: 30 hrs free childcare (*working parents, rolled out nationally in Sep-17*)
- Two year old: 15 hrs funded early education (*means tested*)
- Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) – *includes a welfare requirement for food and drink*
- Ofsted Common Inspection Framework *includes a judgment on personal development, behaviour and welfare which looks at the extent that settings promote and support healthy eating*

Health

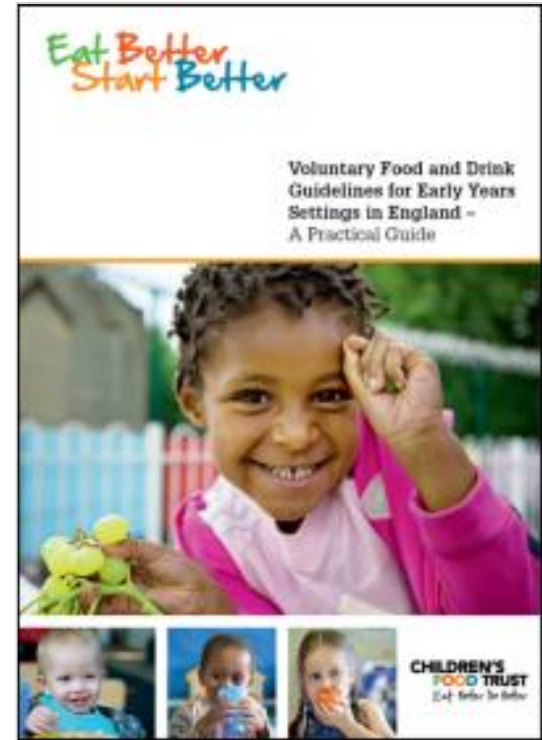
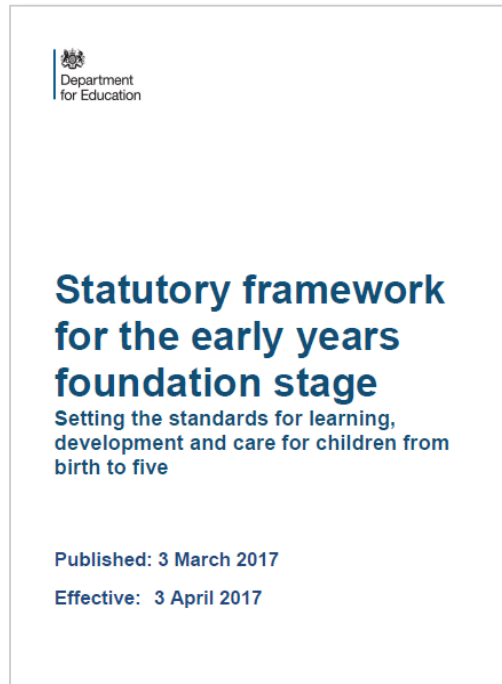
- Early Years High Impact Area 4 – Healthy weight, nutrition
- Healthy Child Programme
- 2-year integrated reviews
- Childhood Obesity Plan



Extension of free childcare means children are eating more meals in early years settings – an unprecedented opportunity to improve children's eating habits?

**Rationale for and development of the
new example menus and the Voluntary Food and Drink
Guidelines for Early Years Settings in England**

Meeting the welfare requirement for food and drink



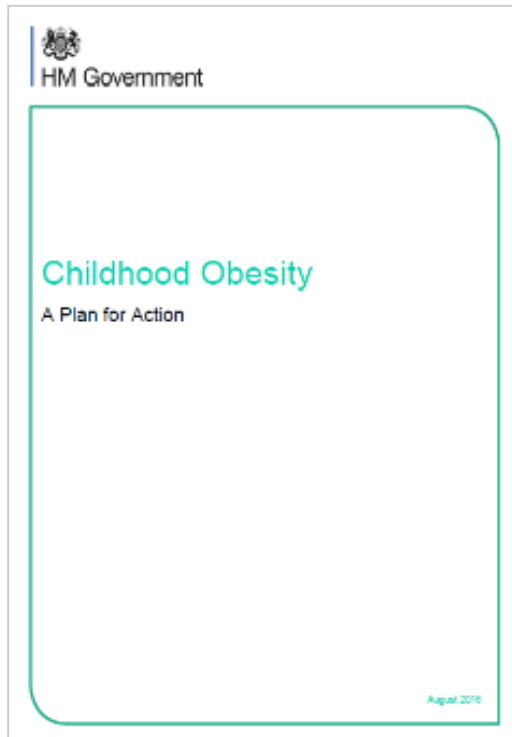
Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

section 3.47 states '*Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, they must be healthy, balanced and nutritious*'. (2017)

National guidance

Voluntary Food and Drink Guidelines for Early Years Settings in England (2012, *updated 2017*)

Revised menus for early years settings in England

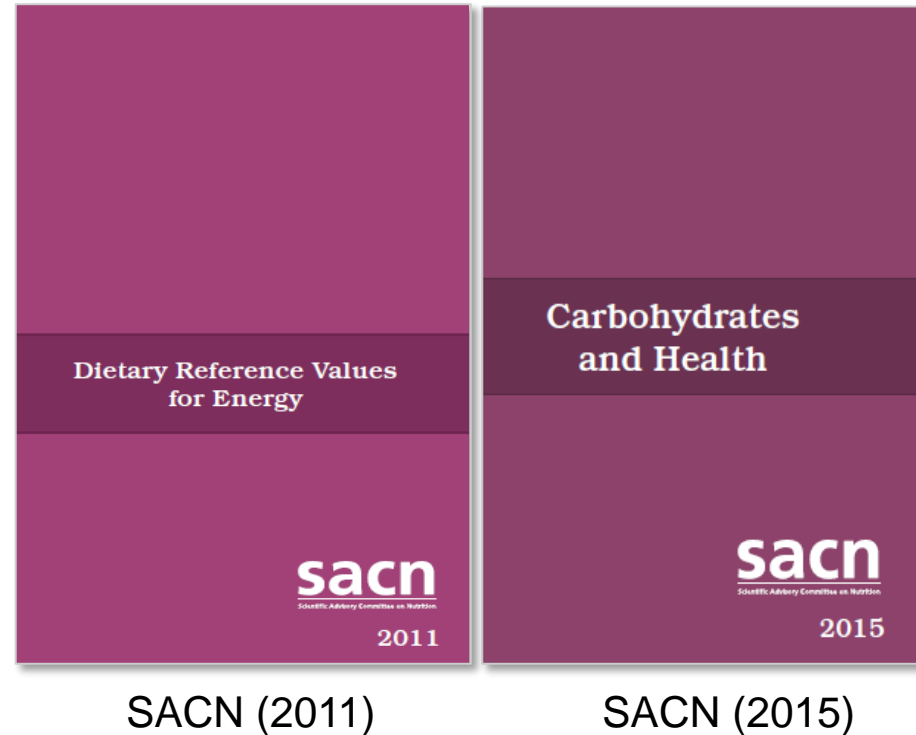


Public Health England - commissioned the Children's Food Trust to develop revised menus for early years settings in England, to reflect recent changes to government dietary recommendations.

Why develop new early years menus?

Menus need **updating to reflect current government dietary recommendations**:

- Lower energy intakes
- Reductions in the amount of 'free sugars'* (added sugars)
- Increases in the amount of dietary fibre



Outcome: to help promote appropriate amounts and types of food for young children, thereby helping to support key national priorities including reducing childhood obesity, addressing health inequalities, and ensuring the best start in life for all children.

**Free sugars' includes all monosaccharides and disaccharides added to foods by the manufacturer, cook or consumer, plus sugars naturally present in honey, syrups and unsweetened fruit juices. Under this definition lactose (milk sugar) when naturally present in milk and milk products and sugars contained within the cellular structure of foods (particularly fruits and vegetables) are excluded.*

Development of the Government's new example menus for early years settings in England

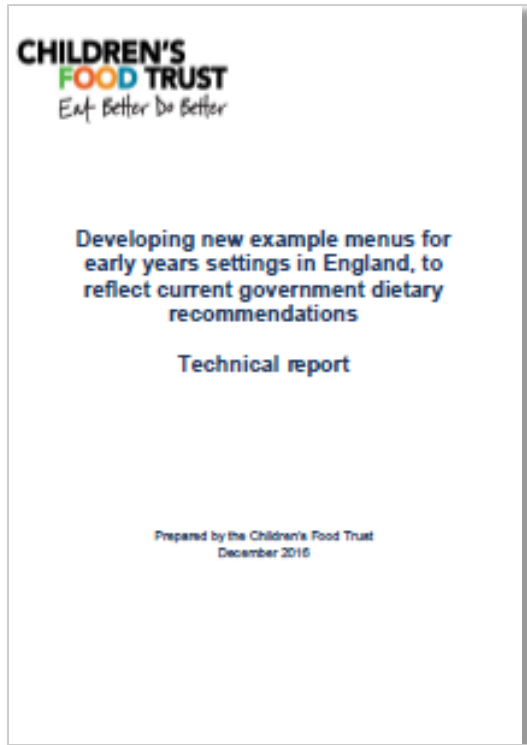
Scope of the work – Deliverables

1. Establish an **external reference group (ERG)** to help inform the development of the menus. The ERG included a **diverse range of representative bodies** with knowledge and experience of working in early years settings, as well as public health nutritionists, representatives from across government.
2. Organisation of a **series of meetings** to discuss the development of the menus.
3. Collection of **wider sector feedback** on the draft menus via an online feedback form.
4. Development of **two seasonal menus (and recipes)** which meet the revised nutrient requirements of infants and young children (**6 months-4 years***). Menus to be **three week rotation** period (based on 5 day week), adjusted to meet different care provision scenarios.
5. Publication of a **technical report** which outlines the options considered, the agreed set of nutrition and menu planning principles applied. Details the revisions made to the nutrient framework and the protocol used to develop the menus for early years settings in England and highlights any changes made to the Voluntary Food and Drink Guidelines for Early Years Settings in England to ensure current dietary requirements were met.

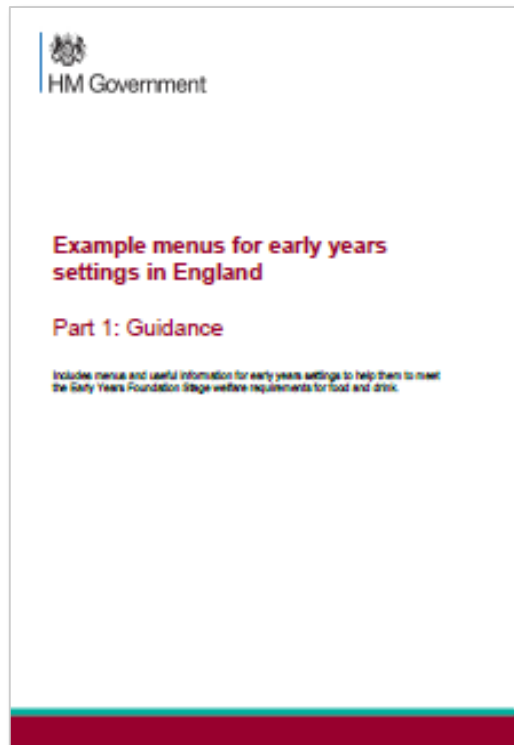
*The scope of the menu guidance covers the age range six months to four years (up to a child's fifth birthday).

Developing the new example menus for early years settings was a collaborative effort.

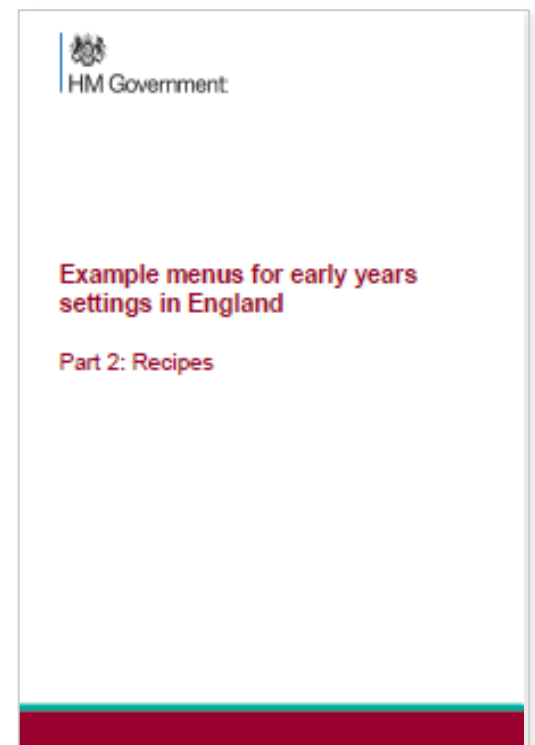
Government's new example menus for early years settings in England



Children's Food Trust (2016)



HM Government (2017)

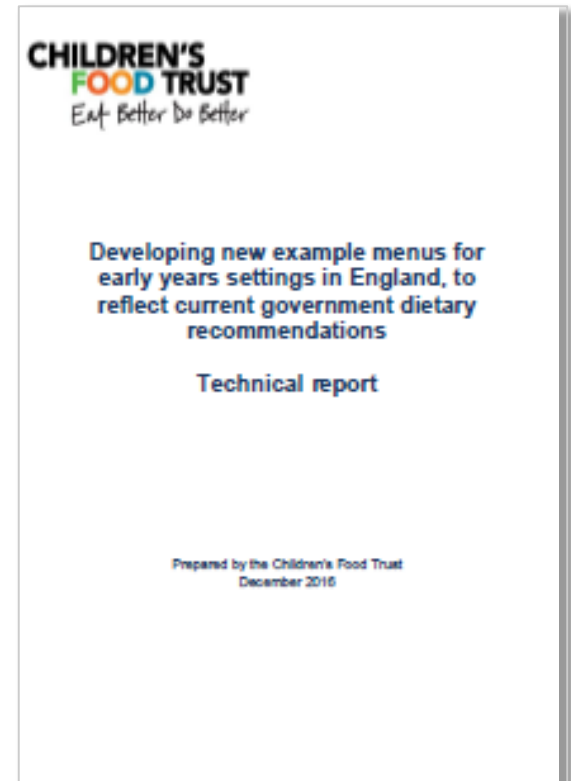


HM Government (2017)

The technical report and new example menus for early years settings in England can be downloaded from www.gov.uk

Technical report

- Outlines the agreed set of **nutrition and menu planning principles** used to develop the example menus and the **rationale**.
- Details the **protocol** used to develop the menus for early years settings in England and the **revisions** to the **nutrient framework**.
- Lists the **changes** made to the **Voluntary Food and Drink Guidelines for Early Years Settings in England** to ensure current dietary requirements were met.
- A **summary of dietary recommendations** applying to infants and children 6 months to four years in the UK.

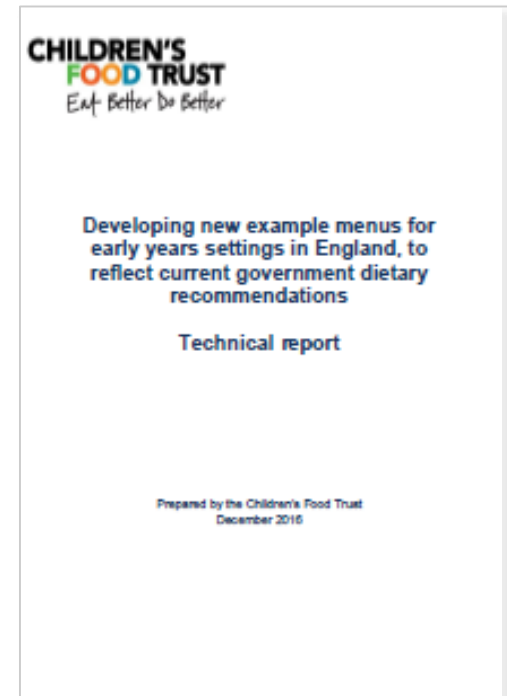


Children's Food Trust (2016)

The technical report and minutes from the meetings can be downloaded from www.gov.uk

Recommended updates to the Voluntary Food and Drink Guidelines for Early Years Settings in England

- **Fruit juice:** should be avoided in early years settings (even if diluted)
- **Cakes, biscuits and desserts:** strengthening the good practice guidance to recommend limiting the provision of cakes and biscuits at the main meal (e.g. lunch), and to avoid provision of cakes and biscuits with lighter meals (e.g. tea)
- A further 12 guidelines were amended to make them clearer and aligned to government advice



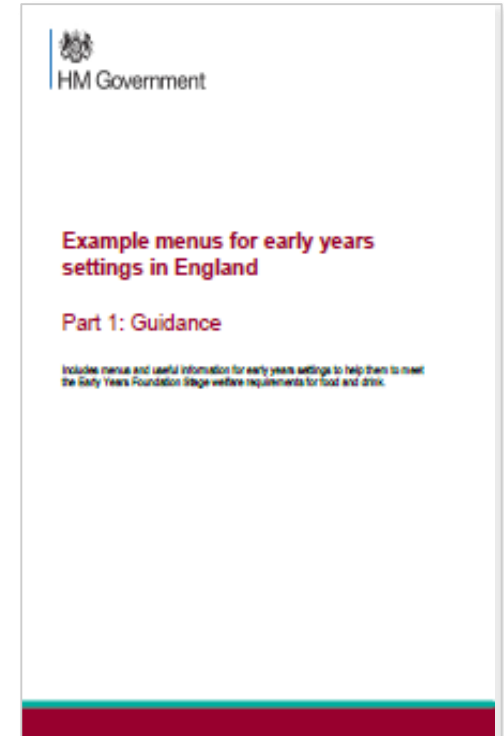
Children's Food Trust (2016)

Rationale: the updates to the food and drink guidelines help limit intakes of free sugars, and promote healthier dessert options for young children - helping to develop healthy eating habits from an early age.

Part 1: Guidance

This document includes:

- **Principles** underpinning the development of the example menus
- **‘At a glance’ information for meals and snacks** - based on the *Voluntary Food and Drink Guidelines for Early Years Settings in England*, published in 2012 with revisions to reflect current dietary recommendations for children aged one to four years.
- **Advice on**
 - eating well for children aged 1-4 years and infants aged 6-12 months
 - menu planning
 - food safety
 - managing food allergies
 - reading food labels
- **Sign posts to other resources** which give more detailed information on how to encourage children to eat well.



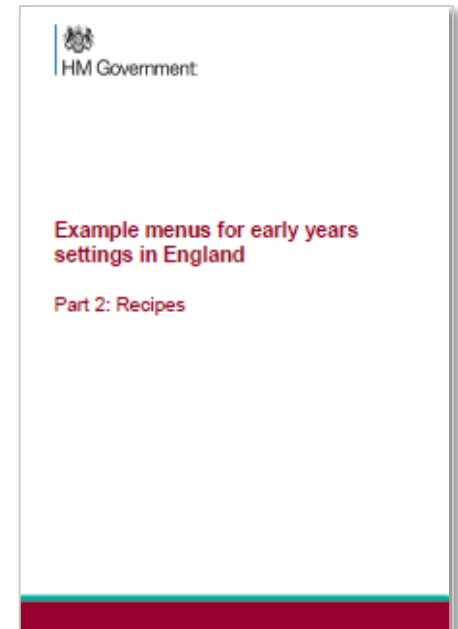
HM Government (2017)

Includes menus and useful information for early years settings to help them to meet the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) welfare requirement to provide “*healthy, balanced and nutritious*” meals for children.

Part 2: Recipes

This document includes:

- two example 3-week seasonal menus plus additional recipes
- all recipes for breakfasts, snacks, lunches and teas; plus additional recipes that can be substituted
- each recipe includes
 - **list of ingredients:** for 5 or 20 portions, in line with dietary advice and good practice guidance.
 - **typical portion sizes:** for children aged 1-4 years.
 - **allergen information:** for 14 allergens covered by EU and UK food labelling legislation (*based on allergens typically included in commonly available brands of each ingredient*).
 - **recipe adaptations for infants aged 7-12 months:** with a typical portion sizes and any additional information for preparation and serving of the recipe for 7-9 month and 10-12 months e.g. if particular ingredients should be omitted.



HM Government (2017)

Example menus and recipes illustrate the types and amounts of food and drink that can be provided to meet the nutritional requirements of infants and children aged six months to four years and how meals for 1-4 year olds can be adapted for infants aged 7-12 months. For guidance on introducing complementary foods for infants see Start4Life website www.nhs.uk/start4life

**Practical resources to help
early years settings provide
'healthy, balanced and nutritious'
meals and snacks**

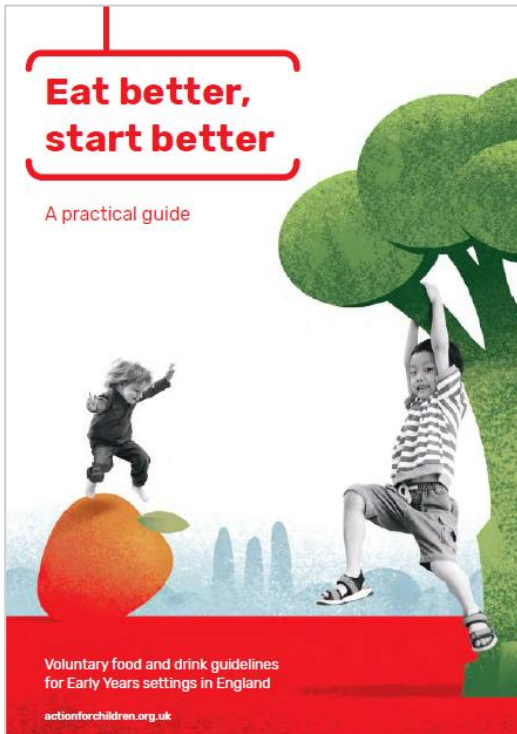
Accompanying infographics



HM Government (2017)

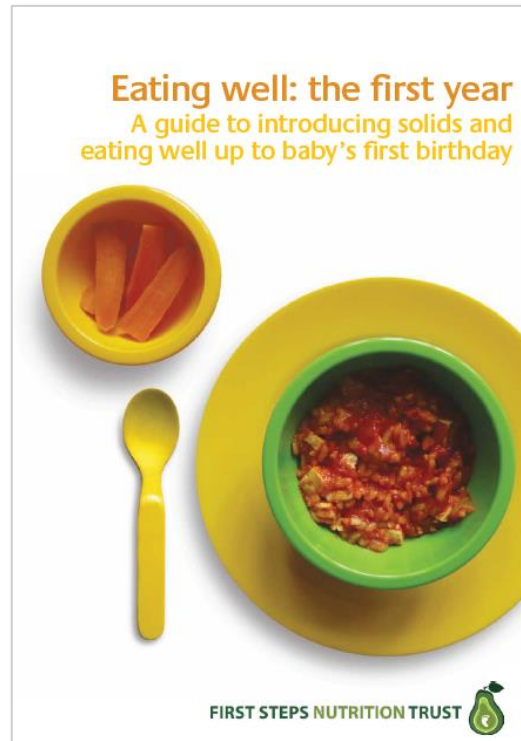
Download from Action for Children website www.foundationyears.org.uk/eat-better-start-better/

Useful resources



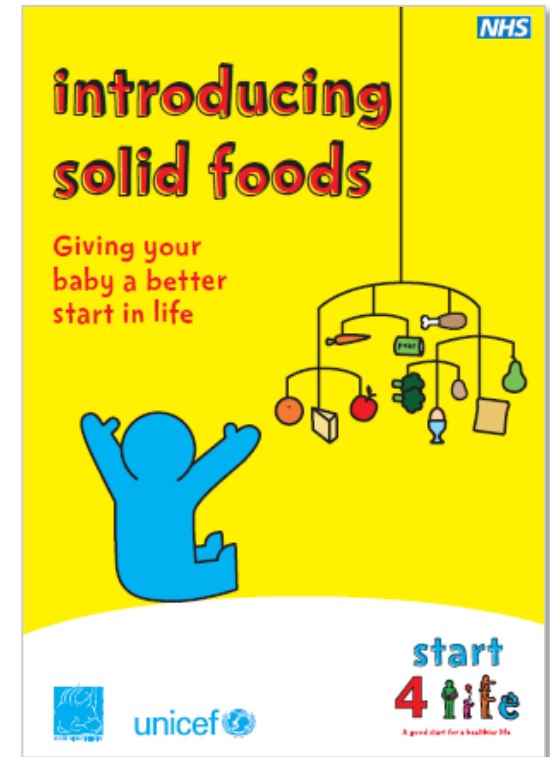
Action for Children (2017)

www.foundationyears.org.uk/eat-better-start-better/



First Steps Nutrition Trust (2017)

www.firststepsnutrition.org



Start4life (2017)

www.nhs.uk/start4life/

Four factsheets



Produced to support settings to adopt and demonstrate a whole setting approach to healthy eating

Explains how to meet the 2014 allergen labelling requirements

Outlines the different types of special diets and how to manage them

Packed lunch guidance

Download from Action for Children website www.foundationyears.org.uk/eat-better-start-better/

Eat Better, Start Better programme

to support young children and their families to cook and eat well



Working in **partnership** to **implement** the voluntary food and drink **guidelines** to **improve health outcomes** for children in the **early years**

Key elements for successful implementation

- **Leadership and joint action:** public health and early years work in close collaboration, to develop a shared vision, to develop a shared vision, commitment and an integrated whole systems approach to early years food and nutrition.
- **Knowledge base:** creating awareness and use of evidence-based age appropriate nutrition information.
- **Capacity building:** increasing the competence and confidence of the whole childcare workforce via accredited face to face or online training, peer to peer mentoring and networking – to help make every opportunity count.
- **Monitoring and accountability:** providing a comprehensive evaluation package to measure the outcomes and impact of the programme on the knowledge and skills of early years workforce, the food provided in early years settings, and the eating habits of families.
- **Awards:** knowing and celebrating success.

Thank you – any questions?