

Nutritional guidelines for residential care settings for young people

John Brown
Senior Programme Officer
NHS Health Scotland
(on behalf of the Nutritional Guidelines Group)
Scottish Government

The Scottish Government will soon publish nutritional guidelines for children and young people living in residential settings in Scotland. The guidelines have been produced by a group of experts drawn from all over Scotland, and the group has been chaired by the Scottish Government.

Poor diet has long been recognised as a significant contributor to poor health in Scotland and in childhood it can play an essential role in growth and development, wellbeing, and educational performance (Department of Health, 2002). Children and young people who are looked after away from home are recognised as a particularly vulnerable group with increased health needs, compared with children and young people from similar socio-economic backgrounds (Scottish Executive, 2005).

The Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007 builds on the achievements of *Hungry for Success* (Scottish Executive, 2003), and requires local authorities and managers of grant-aided schools to ensure all food and drink provided in schools complies with nutritional requirements, which are now specified by Scottish Ministers within the *Nutritional Requirements for Food and Drink in Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2008*.

The nutritional guidelines for children and young people living in residential settings will closely reflect the advice and support provided within *Healthy Eating in Schools: a guide to implementing the nutritional requirements for food and drink in schools (Scotland) regulations 2008* (Scottish Government, 2008). In addition to nutritional guidance, it will include key issues relating specifically to residential settings for children and young people and provide practical advice regarding the social and emotional aspects of food provision. Importantly, it will recognise that, for some children and young people, residential establishments act as their primary home environment. It will incorporate learning from recent work undertaken by the Care Commission relating to food and nutrition for children and young people in residential care (Care Commission, 2008). It will also be informed by the thoughts and views of children and young people themselves through consultation undertaken by Who Cares? Scotland, commissioned by Scottish Government.

This guidance will be of interest to anyone working or involved with children and young people living within residential settings, including residential care homes, residential schools and secure accommodation.

The group involved in drawing up the guidelines include:

- Lyndsey C. Quarm - Support for Learning, Scottish Government (chair);
- Russell Cockburn - Support for Learning, Scottish Government (secretariat);
- Kenny Campbell - Care Commission;
- Fiona Carter - Food Standards Agency Scotland;
- Philip Barton - Association of Heads of Residential Schools in Scotland;
- John Brown - NHS Health Scotland;
- Jackie Dougall - NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde;
- Isobel Dumigan - Care Commission;
- Claire Hislop - HM Inspectorate of Education;
- Bryan Livingstone - Care Commission;
- Elizabeth Morrison - Who Cares? Scotland;
- Heather Peace - Food Standards Agency Scotland;
- Marjory Thomson - Care Commission;
- Kathleen Mooney - Food Standards Agency Scotland.

References

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Scottish Executive (2003). *Hungry for success: A whole school approach to school meals in Scotland*. Edinburgh: The Stationery Office.

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