

What if I have any other questions?

We hope this leaflet answers the questions you may have, and that it shows the importance of the survey. A separate information sheet for children is also available.

If you have any other questions about the survey, please do not hesitate to ring one of the contacts listed below.

Your co-operation is very much appreciated.

Thank you very much for your help with this survey.

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The 2010 Scottish Children's Diet Study

Information for Parents or Guardians

This survey is being carried out for the Food Standards Agency in Scotland by the Scottish Centre for Social Research (ScotCen), an independent research institute, and the University of Aberdeen.

This leaflet tells you more about the survey and why it is being done.

What is it about?

The Scottish Children's Diet Study looks at what children and young people aged 3-16 years in Scotland are eating, including meals at home and snacks or meals in other places. To gain a more complete picture of children's diet and health the study also looks at what kinds of activities children do, and takes physical measurements, such as height and weight.

The study will visit 1800 children and young people throughout Scotland and is a repeat of a similar survey carried out in 2006. This will allow the researchers to see if children's diets have changed at all since 2006.

What is involved?

There are two parts to the study. The first part involves filling in the paper Food Frequency Questionnaire that was sent with this leaflet. This is a series of questions about how often your child eats certain things. If your child is aged 3-11 a parent or guardian will need to complete this part, with help from your child when possible. Children aged 12-16 should fill in the Food Frequency Questionnaire themselves, with help from an adult if they need it.

The second part of the study is an interview in your home. The interview will ask about children's activities and, for children in P4 and above at school, there will be some questions about buying food on the way to and from school, or at breaks. Parents or guardians will be asked to answer on behalf of children up to the age of 11, children aged 12-16 will be interviewed in person – with their parent or guardian present in the home. Children at secondary school will also be asked to fill in a short paper questionnaire about school breaks and lunchtimes.

Parents will be asked some details about the household, such as people's age and employment. This is needed to help interpret the information about children's diet.

The interviewer will also ask permission to collect some physical measurements of your child like height, weight and waist measurement. A parent or guardian will need to be present in the room when any measurements are taken. If your child does not want to have any measurements taken just tell the interviewer.

Why have we come to your household?

To visit every household in Scotland would take too long and cost too much money. Instead we select a sample of addresses that reflect the whole of Scotland, and ask the people at each address to take part in the Study.

Is the survey confidential?

Yes. We take very great care to protect the confidentiality of the information we are given. The information collected is used for statistical and research purposes only and will be dealt with according to the principles of the 1998 Data Protection Act. The Food Standards Agency, University of Aberdeen and ScotCen guarantee that the survey results will not be published in a form that can reveal anyone's identity and that no attempts will be made to identify individuals from their answers.

If you were to decide at a later date that you no longer wanted the information collected about your child to be used in the survey then it would be deleted.

Is the survey compulsory?

No. In all our surveys we rely on voluntary co-operation. The success of the survey depends on the goodwill and co-operation of those asked to take part. The more people who do take part, the more useful the results will be. You are free to withdraw from any part of the survey at any time, and you do not have to answer all the questions. It is important that you and your child are happy to take part, please discuss this with them beforehand.

Do I get anything from the survey?

All households will receive a £5 voucher to say thank you for taking part. If you wish, your child may also have a record of their measurements. Other benefits from the survey will be indirect and will come from any improvements in diet, health and health services which result from the survey.