

**TEENAGERS AND NUTRITION:
CREATIVE STRATEGY
DEVELOPMENT**

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I. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Recent FSA research has highlighted the fact that messages about healthy eating are not getting through to a range of groups, including young people. As a consequence of this, and other studies, the FSA is to launch an initiative to promote healthy eating amongst this age group.

There is a range of nutritional issues in adolescence that differ from those experienced by the general population. These include obesity and overweight, iron deficiency, reproductive health, low intakes of calcium and vitamin D and restricted food consumption. Young people are not concerned with health impacts, particularly those in later life.

In addition, influences on young people are different from those of the general population and healthy eating messages require specific, relevant mechanisms for delivery.

The key healthy eating messages for this age group are seen to be:

- Increase cereals/starchy foods such as bread, rice, noodles, cereals, potatoes and pasta.
- Increase intake of fruit and vegetables, i.e., eat five portions or more a day.
- Reduce foods containing fat.
- Reduce foods and drinks containing sugar.
- Encourage meal frequency rather than 'snacking'.
- Reduce foods containing salt.

Specifically, the objectives of the initiative have been defined as follows:

1. To explore the relevance of healthy eating messages for the 12 to 18 age group.
2. To focus test a simple message on healthy eating targeting young people.
3. To raise awareness of nutrition and dietary issues
4. To raise the profile of the Agency.

Qualitative research was required at this early stage, in order to explore the relationships which young people have with food and to identify triggers which will engage them and motivate them to adopt healthier eating patterns.

The objectives for the research were as follows:

1. To explore, in depth, the motivations, needs, attitudes and behaviour of young people towards food, within the broad context of their (out of school) lives and lifestyles.
2. To identify the triggers which will engage them and motivate them to adopt healthier eating patterns.
3. To explore how these triggers could be effectively expressed (language, tone of voice, imagery, mood, style, etc.) and in what medium, in order to encourage behavioural change.

The findings from this first stage of research will be incorporated into the development of advertising strategy and creative ideas which will be fed into subsequent research.

II. SAMPLE AND METHODOLOGY

1. Sample

Twelve group discussions were conducted amongst children across England in the 12 to 18 age group. The sample was structured as follows:

<u>Group</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Social Class</u>	<u>Region</u>
1	12/13	Male	BC1	Oldham
2	12/13	Female	C2D	Cheam, Surrey
3	13/14	Male	C2D	Rawdon, Leeds
4	13/14	Female	BC1	Plymouth
5	14/15	Male	C2D	Plymouth
6	14/15	Female	BC1	Rawdon, Leeds
7	16-18	Male	BC1	Cheam, Surrey
8	16-18	Female	C2D	Oldham
9	12/13	Male	Afro-Caribbean	Enfield, London
10	13/14	Female	S. Asian	Oldham
11	14/15	Female	Afro-Caribbean	Enfield, London
12	16-18	Male	S. Asian	Oldham

In addition:

- For children aged 15 and under (Groups 1 to 6, 9 to 11) the groups lasted one and a half hours. Groups with teenagers aged 16 to 18 (Groups 7, 8, 12) lasted two hours.
- It was decided to recruit respondents to the group discussions to talk about their lives/lifestyles, rather than to talk specifically about 'nutrition'. This was done in order to foster a broader perspective. It was also considered inappropriate to screen respondents in terms of dietary habits, in case it 'fixed' attitudes or heightened self-consciousness. Therefore, respondents were not screened for nutritional attitudes or behaviour, but recruiters were asked to ensure a 'good mix', in terms of height and weight.

Pre-group tasks

In order to optimise the output from the research sessions and explore respondents' lifestyles, respondents in half of the groups (Groups 1, 4, 6, 7, 11 and 12) were pre-placed with a disposable camera and asked to take photos of 'my life this week' and to have the film developed before coming to the group. Respondents in the remaining groups (2, 3, 5, 8, 9 and 10) were asked to keep a

'media diary' in which to record viewing/listening and other activities throughout the week. (See Appendix)

2. **Stimuli**

The following stimuli were used to prompt discussion:

- A reel of current (general) ads:
 - Tango
 - Fanta Icy Lemon
 - Halifax Finance Review
 - Microsoft Xbox
 - John Smiths Bitter
 - Nike Football

- A reel of food-related ads:
 - Pot Noodles
 - Kellogg's Corn Flakes
 - Walkers Sensations
 - Sainsbury's 'Free From' Range
 - KFC Pocket

- Media diaries

- Disposable cameras

- Drawing materials

3. **Discussion Areas**

A full discussion guide is included in the Appendix.

4. **Timing**

Fieldwork was conducted in the weeks commencing 15th July and 29th July, with a verbal presentation of findings on 9th August 2002.

III. SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

1. Arguably, teenagers' lives are more complex today than they have ever been. Peer and media pressure is intense. There are strong pressures to succeed academically, materially and socially. Many also experience the practical and emotional pressures associated with split families; single parents, a parent's new partner, step brothers and sisters, divided living arrangements.

On the other hand, teenagers are also a privileged group. Most expect to have extended support, financially and domestically, from their parent/s, through higher education if necessary. However, most teenagers are not expected to contribute greatly or participate fully in family life. Many do little to help around the home and there is often a fairly indulgent view of teenage behaviour.

2. Within this broader context, 'healthy eating' is not a priority for the vast majority of teenagers. The issues around sex, drugs, alcohol, money and freedom are much more top of mind, both for teenagers and, reportedly, for their parents - and, unlike 'eating unhealthily', these issues can often lead to dire consequences in the short term. In fact, 'eating unhealthily' is almost a characteristic of being a teenager – a way of life – part of distinguishing themselves from their parents' world of set meals and 'what's good for you' – and distancing them from their parents at the same time.
3. Whilst eating patterns at the pre-teen and early-teen stage (12/13) are often relatively healthy, largely because they are still controlled by the child's parent/s, they generally deteriorate as teenagers grow older. There are number of reasons for this:
 - At 12/13, teenagers have little money and limited freedom. Most food is obtained at home or at school. At home, mothers generally determine what the child eats (although the child may well influence this). However, with increasing money and freedom, teenagers often eat at home less frequently; they have less regular meal times and tend to eat more snacks and fast foods.
 - Many girls become very weight conscious as they move into their teenage years; they skip meals, eat an unbalanced diet and then binge on high fat/high sugar foods. Often these attitudes are, at least in part, fostered by their mothers, who themselves may be very weight conscious and erratic in their eating patterns.

- Spending more time with peers outside the home, reinforces this unhealthy eating behaviour; there is a strong emphasis on speed and convenience – the fast food culture – and also a need for inexpensive food., which tends to be less 'healthy'.
- Complex family arrangements and/or parents with very busy lives may also aggravate these tendencies. Meals may be hurriedly prepared, using convenience foods, snacks substituted for meals and/or teenagers may experience different eating styles and expectations in different parental households. Stress around meal times may even encourage them to avoid family meals.
- Most 'healthy' foods are seen as 'uncool', for example, vegetables have a poor image, being linked with old-fashioned food (Sunday dinners, sprouts, ageing relatives), parental control ("*Eat your greens*") and 'hard work' to prepare:

"Eating healthily is for nerds!"

(Boy, 12/13 Oldham)

4. Teenagers are not, however, ignorant about the benefits of healthy eating. Most have covered nutrition in some part of the school curriculum, e.g., biology, food technology, sport, PHSE and, although many claim that they have forgotten most of the detail of what they learnt, there is still a fairly high awareness of the basic rules of nutrition, e.g.
- Eat a lot of fruit and vegetables
 - Avoid 'junk' foods
 - Drink lots of water
 - Have a 'balanced' diet
 - Avoid too much fat, sugar, salt
 - Eat regular meals

The problem lies in the fact that teenagers rarely apply this knowledge to their own eating patterns. 'Healthy eating' is seen as the 'official' (school/parents) line. As such, it seemed that learning about nutrition at school could even act against healthy eating - at least during the teenage years. By avoiding 'healthy' food they are segregating themselves from the adult/parental world - playing by different rules.

5. In addition, there is little perceived benefit, and therefore little motivation, to 'eat healthily'. The long term effects of eating unhealthily have little resonance for teenagers; the possibility of poor nutrition leading to a heart attack in 20 or 30 years time is difficult for them to

comprehend emotionally at this age. However, there are few obvious short term symptoms of poor nutrition:

“You notice weight, you don’t notice health.”

(Girl, 16-18 Oldham)

Unless teenagers can see – or be persuaded to see – a short term benefit to healthy eating, benefits which are relevant to their lives **now**, there is little motivation for them to change their eating behaviour.

6. Both boys and girls at this life stage tend to aspire to the physical stereotypes for their gender; for girls this is to be thin, feminine and attractive, for boys to be tall, broad and fit. These aspirations coloured - and often undermined - their perceptions of ‘health’ and their desire to eat ‘healthy’ food.

For most **girls**, weight is a much bigger issue than health, although it is acknowledged that there is some connection between them:

“I’d prefer to be thin and unhealthy than fat and healthy.”

(Girl, 16-18, Oldham)

Societal norms are so unequivocally geared towards slimness that it is often difficult to even talk with girls about health without it being interpreted as ‘thinness’. The drive to be thin is so strong that most teenage girls, regardless of their actual size, are worried about their weight. As a result, most have unhealthy eating patterns; ‘starving and bingeing’, missing meals, substituting unhealthy snacks.

For **boys**, fitness, physique and strength are bigger issues than health. Because they tended to be more physically active than girls and because slimness is not such a cultural norm for boys, weight was less of an issue. They were also less aware of food and tended to eat what was available – and in quantity. Consequently, they often had a healthier diet than did girls.

7. The common ‘umbrella’ aspiration for boys and girls, however, was the desire to be ‘fit’ in its contemporary sense, i.e. being attractive to your own and the opposite sex in a fairly generic, non-threatening way – being popular, being courted, being part of the group, attracting the opposite sex. It is these overall aspirations, expressed in different ways to reflect gender differences which need to be linked to ‘healthy eating’, in order to start to shift attitudes and behaviour in this area.
8. It is clear that ‘healthy eating’ is not of intrinsic interest to most teenagers. Changing attitudes and behaviour in this area is likely to be a

challenging and a gradual process. Somehow it is necessary for the nutritional messages to be framed in such a way that they motivate teenagers – that they are seen to provide a means of achieving what the teenagers **really** want to achieve, i.e., social success, self-esteem, attractiveness, etc.

IV. FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND DEVELOPMENTS

1. Clearly 'healthy eating' messages need to emerge, and be seen to emerge, from and resonate with 'youth culture' (which is obviously not homogenous) if teenagers are to begin to accept and acted on them. If these messages are seen to emanate from adult authority or school, they are likely to be viewed in the same way as much of school education, i.e. classed as 'school learning' and not generalised into everyday life.

At the same time, teenagers are very sensitive to being patronised. They are quick to identify and reject approaches which assume an inappropriately 'chummy' tone or are seen as trying to appropriate their world:

*"...trying too hard - wanting to be our friend....."
 "...like they think they know us...."*

These potential pitfalls, of course, apply to all advertising and communication targeted at teenagers, but they are, perhaps, particularly relevant in this arena, given that, unlike many teen-targeted ads, the 'healthy eating' message is not one that teenagers particularly want to hear.

2. As ever, the medium is the message – and never more so than with teenagers. However, it may be quite a challenge to span the sexes (and probably, also, the age range) because needs are so different, both in term of advertising style and the specific messages which are most relevant.

For instance, within this sample, boys were attracted to 'sick' humour; the Tango and X Box ads were very appealing. Boys appreciated the surreal violence and irreverence of the approach. Girls, on the other hand, were more likely to be put off by this style; finding it incomprehensible and distasteful.

*"Tango - it's gay. I hate it. He should have died after he did that.
 It's silly. Stupid."*

(Girl 12-13,

Cheam)

Girls were more likely to gravitate towards 'relationship' ads., or those with a more 'sympathetic' humour e.g. Lilt, Archers.

This is, of course, an over-simplification and there are advertising styles, e.g., John Smiths, which, for different reasons, both boys and girls liked.

However, given that there are also likely to be different messages aimed at the different genders, it may be more efficient and more effective in the long run to consider separate targeting by gender and also, possibly by age.

3. Social success is a strong driver for both boys and girls at this age. In order to make 'healthy eating' relevant to them, teenagers have to be persuaded that there is a 'social success end benefit' to eating healthily. It is important, therefore, to understand what social success means to each gender and how health benefits can be related to this.

Broadly, "*being well fit*" can be taken as the umbrella end benefit (though not necessarily expressed in these words). For boys and girls, attributes that contribute to this can be summarised, rather crudely, as below:

Girls	Boys
- SLIMNESS	- PHYSIQUE
- Attractiveness	- Fitness
- Healthy skin, hair, nails	- Sport
- (Sexual) appeal	- (Sexual) energy
- Social ease	- Skill
- Fun/enjoyment of life	- Position in the 'pack'

Some of these attributes, e.g., slimness, need to be treated with care. Weight and looking slim are such core concerns for teenage girls that they cannot be ignored in developing any message about health. However, clearly, there is no desire to reinforce excessive concern with weight. It needs careful handling.

4. 'Healthy eating' messages can obviously be approached in a variety of ways. One dimension is an umbrella or 'blanket' message, e.g. suggesting major changes in eating patterns or spanning boys and girls across the age range vs specific targeted messages. 'Blanket' or complex healthy eating messages can be problematic for several reasons:

- they are reminiscent of 'school' nutrition messages
- it is too difficult/there is little motivation to make major dietary changes
- fat, sugar, salt and carbohydrates as components of foods are 'hidden'. It is difficult for teenagers to understand, monitor and control consumption of them.

5. By contrast, specific, targeted messages are easier for teenagers to understand and to incorporate into their lifestyles, for several reasons:
- they fit more easily with the style and tone of teen/women's magazines and street culture.
 - they are easier to absorb/implement
 - they can be fun, especially if they become part of the local currency, i.e. shared with friends

Water is a very good case study of a product which has been transformed through emphasising (or engineering) its relevance to contemporary teenage life. Many teenagers in this sample, especially girls, claimed to be drinking more water. As a product, it has moved from being seen as 'boring', or even invisible, to being 'sexy' because:

- it is linked to slimming, at least as far as girls are concerned
 - it fills you up
 - it flushes out toxins which helps you to lose weight
 - it uses up energy (when cold or iced) to warm up the water to body temperature
- it is believed to improve the complexion, so you have fewer spots
- bottled water imagery has tapped into contemporary culture:
 - it has strong sports associations
 - it has become something of a fashion accessory
 - it is linked with the clubbing scene

To some extent **milk**, 'the white stuff', also seems to have been successful in re-positioning itself away from a commodity and a drink for young children into a 'fast food' which is acceptable to teenagers.

6. Specific health messages clearly need to be made relevant to teenage needs, for reasons summarised above and explored in more detail through this report. This would suggest:
- (ideally) offering a definable short term benefit, e.g., improved hair/skin/nails, fitness (real or implied) Girls, in particular, are used to beauty care products which emphasise 'healthy' hair, skin etc. This is an existing framework into which 'healthy eating' might be fitted

- that healthy eating messages are attached to appropriate imagery/usership (e.g. sports or beauty care brands - or elements of their brand imagery), with their associations of social/sporting success
 - synchronising messages with teen lifestyles, i.e., fast/convenience oriented/easily available
 - a focus on the positive, i.e., what to eat – not what they shouldn't eat
 - that suggested changes in eating patterns are simple (formulaic)/fun to implement
7. Some specific 'healthy eating' areas which emerged in the research and which seem worthy of further exploration are:
- i. There is widespread awareness that eating more fruit and vegetables is 'good for you'. However, increasing vegetable consumption is quite a challenge:
- vegetables have a poor image
 - they generally require cooking!
 - they are part of a whole meal, which gives them an uneasy fit with fast food/snack culture

Fruit, on the other hand:

- has a relatively 'good' image
- is widely known to be 'healthy'
- is quick/easy to eat 'on the move'
- is often available at home

As a first step, therefore, it is probably easier to promote greater consumption of fruit and to explore how this can best be expressed, for example:

- Are there any relevant claims that can be made for specific fruits, e.g. cranberries?
- Could fruit eating fit with the 'binge/starve' cycle, e.g., cleanse your system, 'Fruit only Fridays' (beware seeming faddish)
- Could it be a social activity, e.g. incorporating speed/need to be with the group?
- Could there be more emphasis on juices or smoothies - following the water model?

- ii. 'Balance' is a relevant message, especially for girls who may 'exist' on crisps, chocolate or binge eat. Is there a message about balancing each bag of crisps/chocolate bar with a piece of fruit, for instance?
 - iii. For boys, messages which convey/imply increased fitness/energy/success with girls (linked to football? weight training, etc.) are likely to be strongly motivating – are there foods that can be presented as energy giving, e.g. pasta? Could sports celebrity diets be incorporated, without it appearing squeamish?
 - iv. For older boys (16+) there may be niche potential in addressing the heart attack risk (linked to increased obesity in men) – *"Where did your six pack go?"*
 - v. Water is already seen as healthy in an appealing way. Could this be developed further e.g. promotes healthy skin, flushes out toxins?
8. A number of advertising models/themes also emerged in the research, which may be worth feeding into thinking on strategy development:
- Haagen Dazs – the overt linkage of health/looks and sexiness
 - Special K – she looks good, enjoys life, **but is not skinny**. Healthy eating is presented as a key to feeling good about yourself and looking attractive
 - Archers: men pulling in their stomachs as women walk by - the humour works well for this age group and emphasises, to boys, the importance of looking good (healthy) in order to attract girls
 - Diet Coke Man - as above
 - Lilt; send up of Levi's ad - this is very appealing style of humour to both genders
 - Skoda (Pot Noodles); addressing the negative perceptions of vegetables 'head on' and with irreverence - Who says vegetables can't be sexy? Is there a role for a provocative ad with appropriate vegetables!!
 - Tango/X Box (Jaffa Cakes) – this style of 'sick/irreverent' humour is very appealing to boys, although rejected by most girls

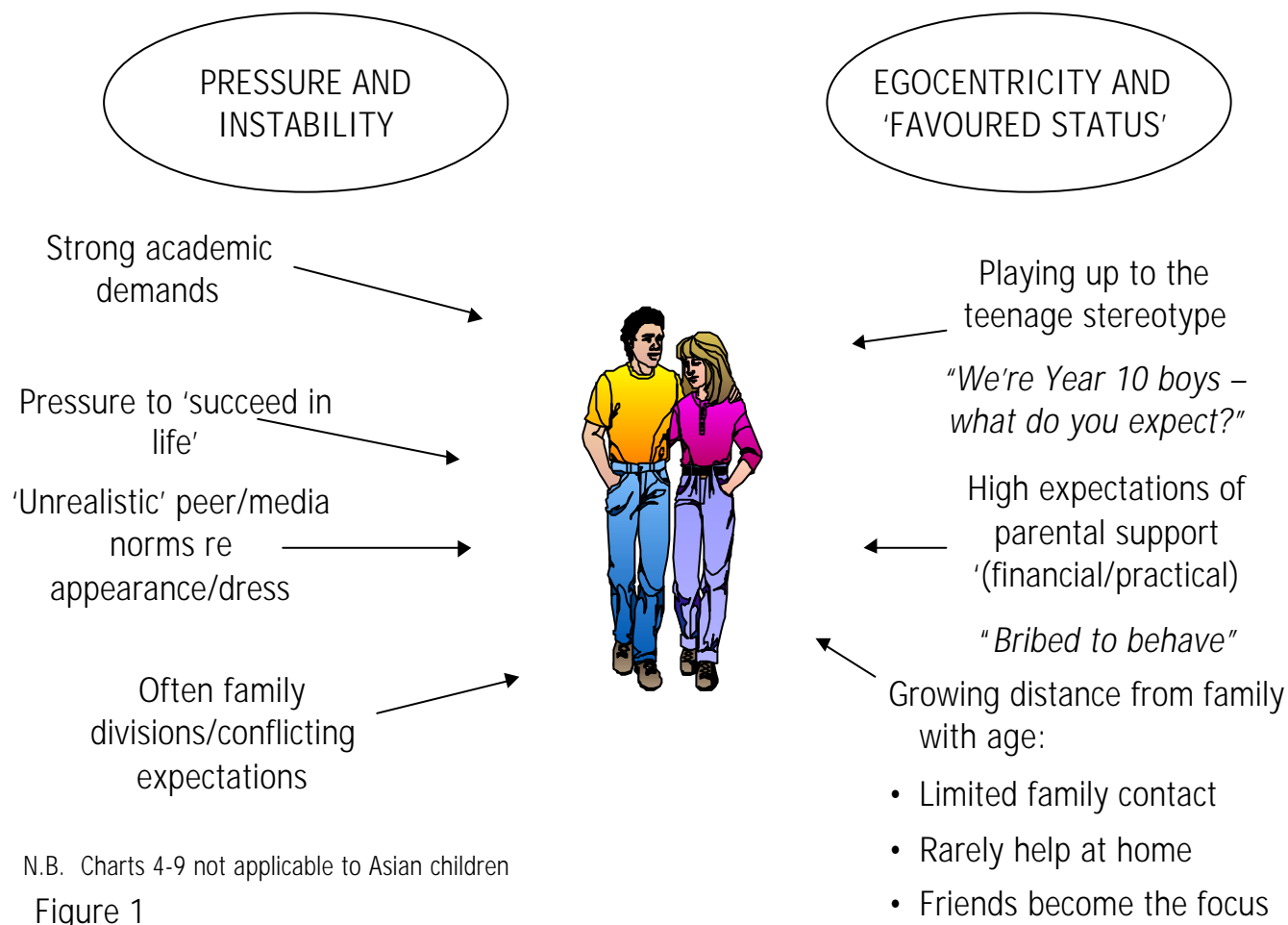
- 'Female' humour includes 'relationship'/more sympathetic humour, e.g., Bacardi Breezer (Cat), John Smiths (Meal out), Archers (Men holding in stomachs), BT (dinosaur)
 - Cartoon styles (e.g., Fanta) seem to be dangerous – they can be seen as childish – unless they're the Simpsons!
 - Hard hitting ads(Cancer Research) can be very disturbing – especially in a fragile home context, which many had already experienced when their parents separated
 - Sport delivers instant attention from boys – football/skill/celebrities have very strong appeal and are an obvious starting point for health messages
 - Overt sexual innuendo (e.g. Pot Noodles) can be uncomfortable, especially at the younger end of the age range
 - Celebrities work well (e.g. Walkers) – provided they're the right ones! It may be difficult to find celebrities who can span the genders and ages. Kylie Minogue emerged as a rare example
9. Given the importance of teen/women's magazines as a source of health information it would be very useful to underpin advertising activity with PR in teen/ women's magazines/on appropriate TV channels/programmes.
10. Achieving the right tone and style in advertising 'healthy eating' to this target audience is likely to be challenging and it is clearly important that teenagers views are sought during the development process. It would be useful to consider setting up workshops with teenagers selected to be articulate/creative - or even a panel of teenagers - to work with creatives in developing ideas.

V. DETAILED RESEARCH FINDINGS

1. Background Attitudes and Behaviour: 'Life as a Teenager'

In order to understand the attitudes and behaviour of teenagers in relation to nutrition, it is useful to examine the context in which these attitudes and behaviours operate; the aspirations and values of teenagers, the pressures they feel, relationships with parents and peers and how their lives are structured. This section briefly covers the key contextual issues that emerged in this research and which offer a backdrop for understanding nutritional issues and how they can be influenced (see Figure 1 below).

LIFE AS A TEENAGER ...



[Note: Attitudes and behaviour of Asian (and to a much lesser extent Afro-Caribbean) teenagers in this sample were quite different from those in the mainstream sample and will be discussed separately in Section 2.2]

1.1 The Conflicting Demands on and Expectations of Teenagers

Across the research sample – and increasingly evident with age – there emerged the paradoxical themes of:

- the stress of contemporary teenage life
- increased indulgence towards teenagers and their needs

On the one hand, many teenagers experienced considerable **pressure and instability** in their lives:

- Academic demands were strong. In the current educational climate, where exam success is widely regarded as critical, teenagers were under a lot of pressure to ‘succeed’ academically. Often there was an early polarisation between those who felt they would ‘make it’ and those who did not. SATs, GCSEs, AS and A Levels were an ongoing pressure throughout the teenage years.
- Linked to this was the perceived pressure to succeed ‘in life’. Material goals were highly valued; there was an expectation of home/car/good lifestyle from an early age. Therefore getting a ‘good’ job was viewed as a high priority – and this was seen as largely dependent on passing exams.

"You have to do more. You have to do well at school, to get your exams and get a good job."

(Girl, 12-13, Cheam)

- Teenagers were also subject to a good deal of pressure from the media and their peers in a variety of ways. At this stage of rapid change; physically, mentally and emotionally, there was perceived stability and security in conforming to 'norms' and stereotypes.

For **girls** this conformity often expressed itself as the desire to be thin, attractive and socially adept. The ‘Hello culture’, in which celebrities’ lives are examined in detail and their beauty (and other) secrets explored, offered an ideal opportunity for girls to emulate celebrity style and values. Living up to these ideals in terms of appearance, could be felt as a strong pressure.

Amongst **boys** the conformist urge often expressed itself as the desire to be tall, well built and fit. Sports personalities offered an idealised life-style which, arguably, was a more 'healthy' alternative than that for girls, because of the emphasis on exercise and fitness.

- Other pressures and instability arose closer to home. Teenagers within this sample had a variety of family living situations. [We did not probe this specifically, especially if we sensed that the child was reticent about revealing details of his/her home environment. However, we would estimate that over half of the children in the sample were in a family set up without two natural parents.] Sometimes the teenager was living with one parent, sometimes with a parent and step-parent. These family divisions could cause considerable stress and anxiety. The aim of the research was not to specifically explore these issues. However, different family relationships and structures could have considerable impact on nutritional attitudes and behaviour. It was not uncommon for the teenager to be subject to very different expectations and eating patterns with one parent (and/or their partner) and completely different expectations and patterns with the other parent. Food and meal arrangements, like other issues, could become a source of conflict between the parents, which the teenager could become embroiled in.

On the other hand, teenagers were often regarded, and regarded themselves, as having '**favoured status**', partly borne out of their considerable egocentricity.

- The concept of 'teenager' is a relatively recent construction which has created its own reality, in the sense that teenagers and, reportedly, their parents, have very different expectations of 'teenagers' than they have of adults or children. The 'mythology' which has grown up around teenagers suggests that they are difficult, irresponsible, lazy and over-indulged (as exemplified by the 'Kevin' stereotype).

Teenagers within this sample were very aware of this image of teenagers and, to an extent, played into the role. Boys, in particular, felt they were expected to be 'difficult' and 'non-academic':

"We're Year 10 boys. What do you expect?"

(Boy 14-15, Plymouth)

- A particular aspect of the 'indulgence' afforded to teenagers was the high expectation of parental support which respondents expressed. For instance, the large majority of teenagers were not expected to help around the house – or only in the most rudimentary of ways. These expectations of parents were particularly evident because the research was mainly conducted during the school holiday time:

"I don't do cooking. I let other people do it for me. My mum enjoys cooking ... she has to enjoy it."

(Boy, 12-13, Afro-Caribbean, Enfield)

"I don't cook or clean. I make my personal slave do that."

(Boy, 14-15, Plymouth)

"I get up about 2(pm) and then I just hang around. My Mum goes to work at 7(am) and then when she gets home at 6(pm) she cooks me tea."

(Girl, 16-18,

Oldham)

- Throughout the teenage years, there was an ongoing negotiation (or struggle) for power between teenager and parent(s). Gradually the focus shifted from family to friends, to the extent that some teenagers in the 16 to 18 age group claimed that they rarely saw their parents – friends had become the central aspect of their lives. Whilst this may, in part, be a public statement in the group situation which does not totally reflect reality, it was in sharp contrast to the attitudes expressed by the Asian teenagers (Section 2.2). It does, though, have important implications in terms of nutrition; less time at home led to increased dependence on take-aways and snack eating.

1.2 What Matters to Teenagers?

Teenagers are very much engaged in creating an identity for themselves which is comfortable to live with and which is appropriate and appealing to the outside world. These 'inner' and 'outer', or overt and covert, pressures often conflict as they struggle to find a balance.

(i) Overt Issues

There were some topics and interests which arose immediately in the conversation, as teenagers described their lives. These were discussed freely and, in a sense, they can be seen to define the teenage years (see Figure 2, overleaf).

- **Mobiles**, particularly used for **texting**, were a very prominent part of respondents' lives. The large majority of respondents had mobile phones, on a 'Pay as you go' system. Sometimes this was paid for or subsidised by a parent, who felt it was a way of keeping track of their teenager. Sometimes teenagers were expected to pay for it themselves.

It was common for respondents to make and receive 10 to 20 text messages a day. Text messages had a cult, almost subversive, role. They could be sent and received surreptitiously at school, where mobiles were often banned, and the language often excluded adults because it was largely incomprehensible to the uninitiated. Mobiles opened up a world for teenagers whereby they could bypass adult involvement; no need to ask permission to use the home phone or attempt to find privacy for a conversation.

TEENAGERS: WHAT MATTERS?

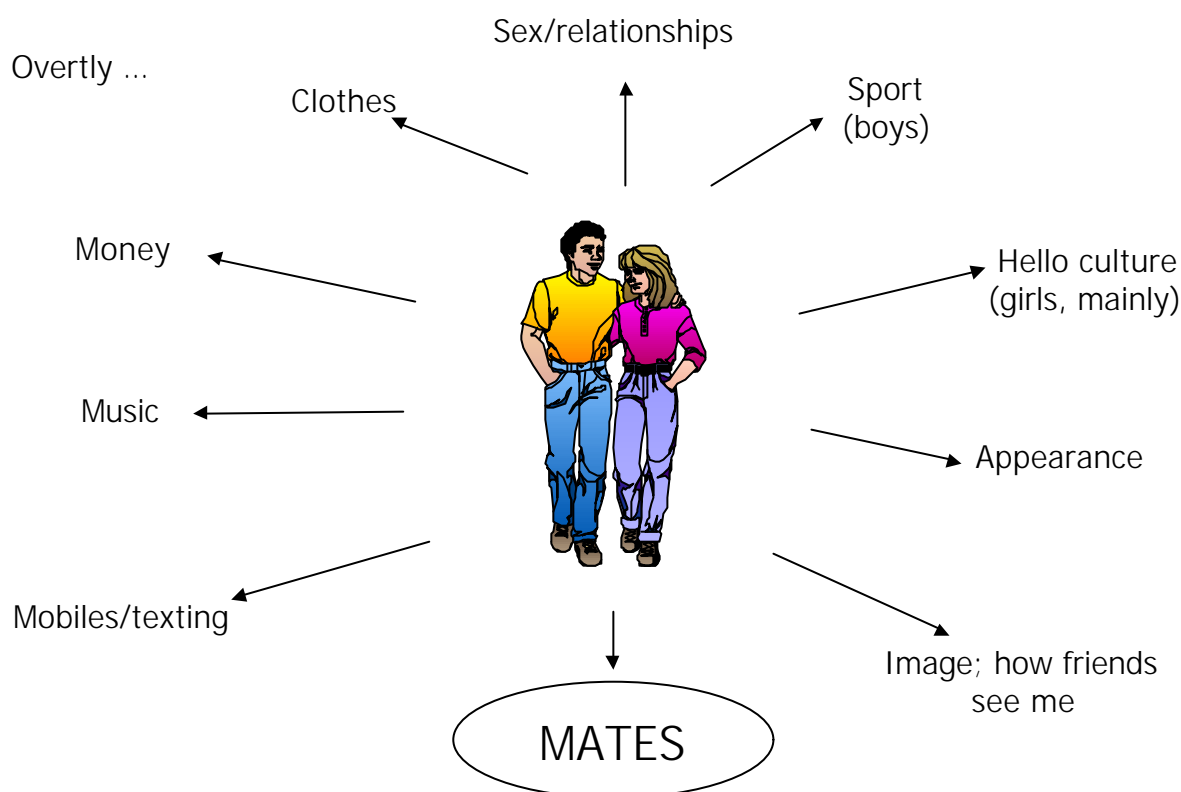


Figure 2

- Music** is clearly a pivotal part of teenage life and culture. However, musical tastes were so diverse, depending on age, tastes, sub-culture, etc., that it is impossible to make generalisations. At the younger end of the age spectrum, boy bands – Blue, Westlife – were still popular, although within the same group discussion those who felt they had outgrown such bands could be very disparaging towards those who still supported them. Peer rivalry and competition were rife. A sense of personal identity had not yet properly developed. Consequently identity was often defined externally – by what teenagers wore, what music they listened to, what views they espoused. Often they were ‘testing out’ different aspects of identity to see what they felt like. This could make for a lot of contradictory or ‘evolving’ viewpoints.

Older teenagers usually had more defined musical tastes. By the 16 to 18 age group respondents had often settled on a style or styles of music which they enjoyed and identified with.

"We're both DJs, me and my mate. We're setting up a club night in Kingston - I've been DJing for four years. I hate Garage"

(Boy, 16-18, Cheam)

- **Money** – or the lack of it – was a perennial issue and sources of income were very varied. Younger teenagers generally relied on pocket money or more random hand-outs from their parents, although a few had paper rounds or earned money from parents for doing jobs around the house:

"I work at Chelsea Football Club. I get £30 for five hours. I'm a runner for the Chelsea football TV crew on match days."

(Girl, 12-13, Cheam)

"I work in a pub and also at a call centre."

(Girl, 16-18, Oldham)

Older teenagers often had Saturday jobs or temporary jobs, as it was the summer holidays.

- **Clothes and appearance** were perennial teenage concerns, especially for girls. 'Going shopping' with a group of friends – regardless of whether they had any money to spend – was a regular activity. Birthday and Christmas money was often spent on clothes and there was frequent negotiation with parents over who would finance particular items of clothing.
- **Sex and relationships** also featured prominently. At the younger end, the game aspect – playing with the notion of boyfriends/girlfriends – was very important and respondents as young as 12 and 13 often 'claimed' a boyfriend or girlfriend as a sort of trophy – without there appearing to be much substance in the status.

Clearly at the other end of the age range, some teenagers had established relationships which had considerable influence on their social activities and, in turn, their eating patterns.

- Amongst boys, **sport** was, almost universally, a very important part of their lives. Sometimes this was formalised, e.g., being part of a football club, rowing club, etc. Often it was casual – kicking a football around with their mates in the park after school. However this need to expend energy was a very strong drive and was part of the way in which they relaxed with their 'mates'. It was communication in the way that talking was communication for girls.

- By contrast, girls **talked**. Relationships with other girls and the talk around relationships, e.g., in terms of celebrities, soaps, the relationships within their social group were a prime focus at this age:

“I’ve got 42 videos of Friends.”

(Girl, Year 9, Plymouth)

- As discussed earlier, **image** or evolving an identity which was comfortable to themselves and acceptable to the world outside was a prime concern in the teenage years. For boys, this often included ‘Am I tall, broad, fit?’. For girls it often encompassed ‘Am I thin, feminine, attractive?’ In this respect teenage aspirations are perhaps the most stereotypical, before they start to relax into the ‘How can I be **me**?’ aspirations of adulthood.

(ii) Covert Issues

Whilst the above issues were discussed fairly overtly within the groups, underlying, more covert, themes concerning 'what matters' gradually surfaced (Figure 3, overleaf). These themes often centred around the anxieties about success, personal identity, emotional stability and family relationships:

- As outlined earlier, this notion of ‘Who am I?’ was never far from the surface for teenagers. The transition from child to adult involves huge changes. Some teenagers had ‘shot up’ in height in the previous year. Both boys and girls had changed shape. Hormonal changes prompted unpredictable emotions. These changes often caused anxiety and a sense of lack of control.
- Concerns about the future also hovered close to the surface. What will I do with my life? Will I make the grade educationally? Financially? There was a view that ‘it’s a tough world’ – a view often propagated by parents.
- Social competence was also a worry. ‘Do people like me?’, ‘Have I got friends?’, ‘Why haven’t I got a boyfriend?’
- Family structure was sometimes a concern. For those who had experienced one family break up there was often the worry that this might happen again. They had learnt that adults were unpredictable. How then could they make sense of the adult world?
- Emotional well-being was another issue. Can I/will I cope with the adult world? Who cares about me? Have my parents got time for me? This

last concern seemed particularly acute in family set ups where the parents were working long hours to make ends meet. They were under considerable pressure themselves. Teenagers could feel that their parent/s had little energy left to deal with **their** needs.

TEENAGERS: WHAT MATTERS?

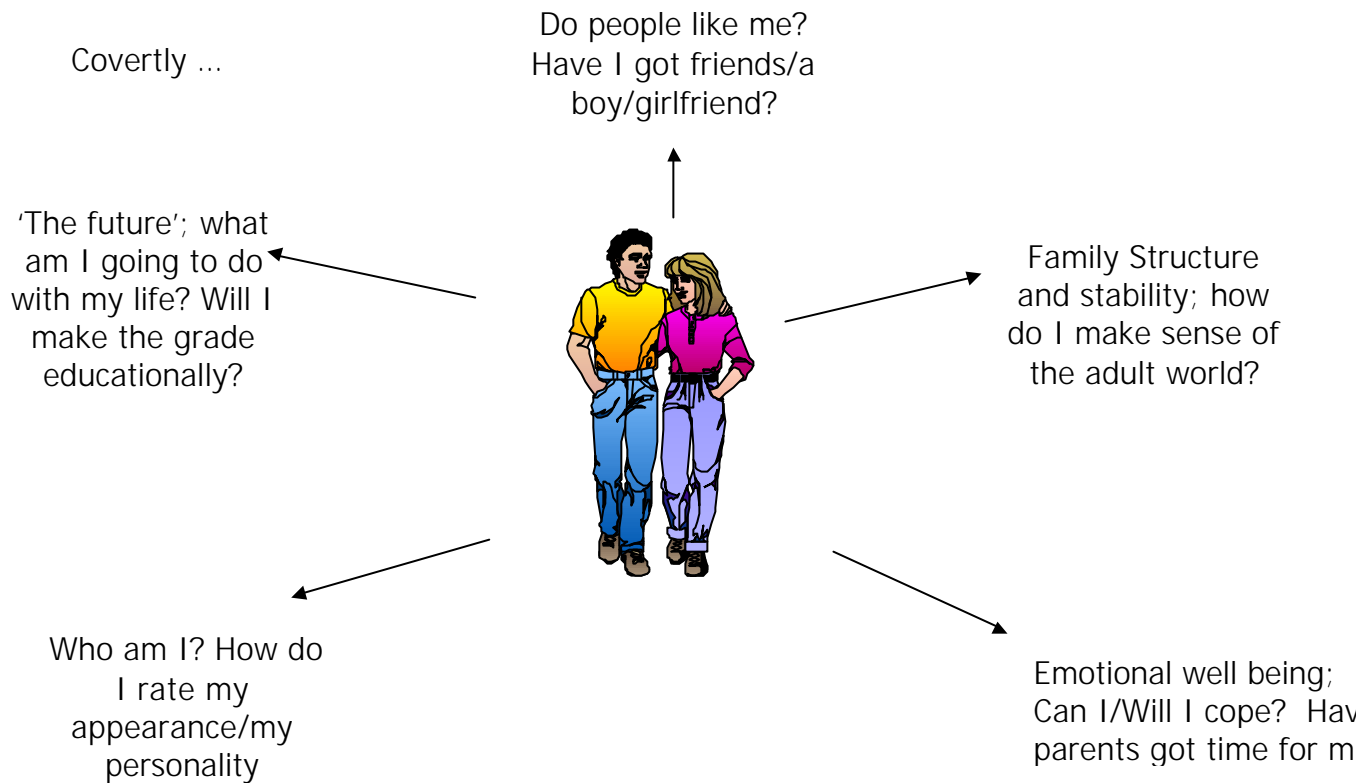


Figure 3

1.3 Media Influence

Media influence on the young is obviously a huge subject and it is outside the scope of this research to explore this area in detail. However, the following emerged as a snapshot of interests and influences.

- Amongst girls in particular, magazines were a prime source of information on health, as well as a wide range of other issues. Whilst they were often reading teen-targeted publications, e.g., J17, Bliss, Sugar, they were also reading a wide range of women's magazines.

"My Dad's girlfriend gets lots of magazines and I read them."

(Girl, 13-14,
Plymouth)

(Girl, 13-14,

- There was a wide range of TV viewing. Amongst girls, soaps, e.g., Brookside, East Enders, Hollyoaks, Friends, etc. were core viewing, alongside interest in reality TV (Big Brother was on at the time). Amongst boys, sport was often the core interest, along with cult humour, e.g., Graham Norton. However, the research was conducted in the summer months and many boys claimed that they were out playing sport in the evenings, which limited their TV viewing.
- Celebrity interest spanned the ages and genders, although the focus of interest was very diverse. Certain sports personalities, especially David Beckham, tended to have broad appeal, both for his looks and his lifestyle. Music and film celebrities tended to have more niche appeal – from Britney and S Club 7 to more esoteric personalities. A few celebrities seemed to be more multi-faceted in their appeal and span different audiences. Kylie Minogue was a good example of this. She appealed to a younger audience, but also to some older music listeners, as well as being something of a gay icon.
- Local radio stations were often popular, e.g., Kiss, Capital, Heart, Virgin, Key 103, Galaxy, although often these were vying with CDs for teenagers' attention. Radio was more likely to be listened to in a public forum, e.g., when in the car with a parent, whereas teenagers were more likely to play CDs in their bedrooms.
- Internet usage was high and most respondents had access to a computer at home. How they used the internet and the websites visited was extremely varied. Chat lines and sites such as Lycos, Quicksilver, Bollywood sites, sports sites, were mentioned.

1.4 Stages of Teenage

Teenagers are clearly not an homogenous group and it is useful to separate the 12 to 18 age group, somewhat arbitrarily, into three groups; the early, middle and older years.

(i) Teenagers: The early years (12 to 14)

As illustrated in Figure 4, overleaf, the early teenage years are still dominated by the home environment. Parents were generally seen to have a fairly strong control and much of the teenagers' time was spent with their families. In addition, limited financial independence restricted out of home activities. Main meals were generally eaten at home (or school) and therefore largely under the control of the parent(s) although the teenager could have quite a strong influence on what was bought and eaten.

TEENAGERS: THE EARLY YEARS (12 – 14)

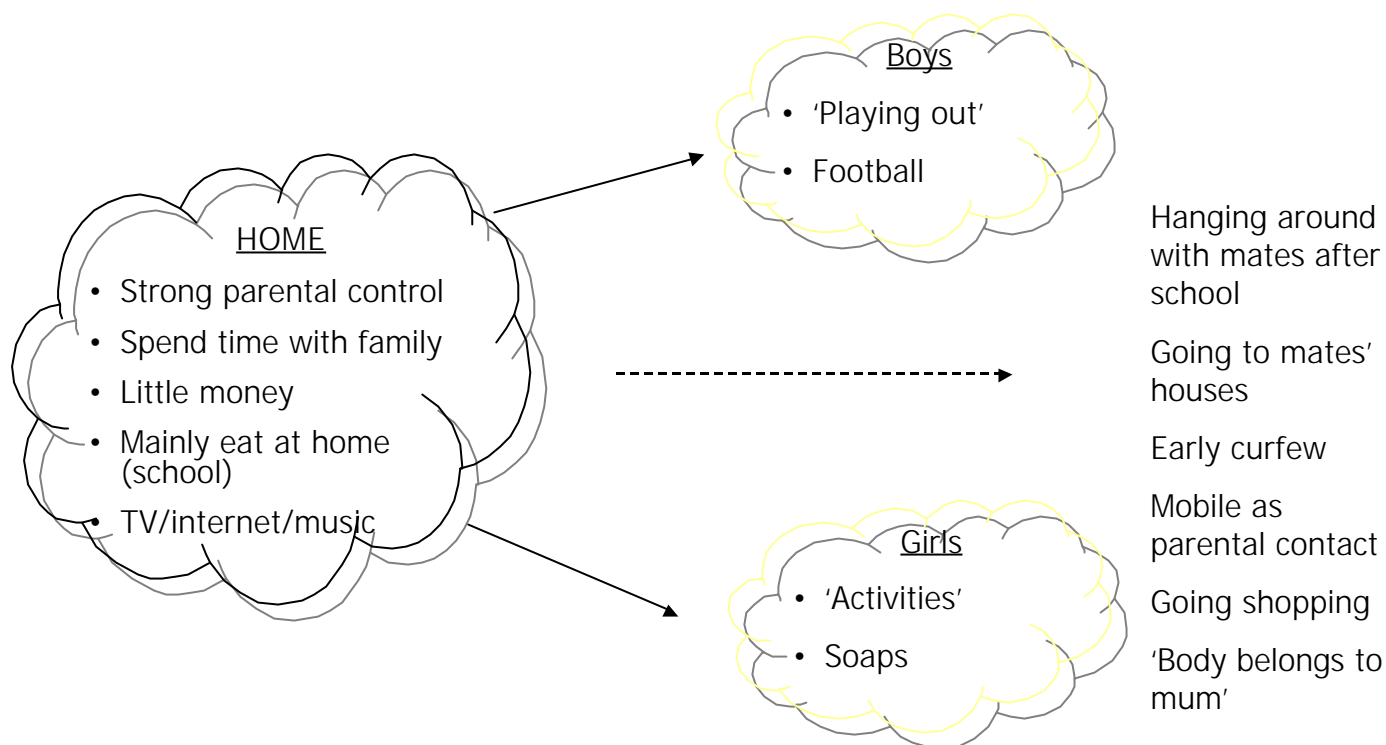


Figure 4

At home activities incorporated television, internet usage, music, play stations/computer games. 'Going out', for boys, often means 'playing out', with a football. For girls, activities were more likely to be structured, e.g., gym classes, Sea Cadets, swimming club.

The issues and themes which emerged amongst this age group were:

- Hanging around with mates after school – often in shopping malls or parks. At this age, with limited money, it was difficult for teenagers to find somewhere to go.
- Spending time at friends' houses – often in their bedrooms, away from parental surveillance.
- Negotiating curfews with parents; often these were still quite early:

"I have to be in before dark."

(Girl, 13-14, Plymouth)

"I have to tell my mum exactly what time I'll be home or she goes mad."

(Girl, 13-14, Afro-Caribbean, Enfield)

- Mobiles were both a form of parental control as well as offering increased independence for the teenager:

“If I’m supposed to be home at 5.30 and it’s quarter to 6, she’s on the mobile – ‘Where are you?’”

(Girl, 14-15, Afro-Caribbean, Enfield)

- ‘Going shopping’ with friends (for girls) – but rarely buying anything.
- There was a sense that ‘my body still belongs to Mum’, i.e., she is responsible for feeding me/determining what I eat and, even if not openly acknowledged, I go along with this.

(ii) **Teenagers: The Middle Years (14 to 16)**

As illustrated in Figure 5, overleaf, these were the classic ‘teenage’ years when physical and emotional changes were at their most pronounced. There were anxieties about bodily changes which often left teenagers feeling out of control. There was burgeoning sexual awareness, often accompanied by sexual posturing – part of discovering ‘Who I am’. There was frequent experimentation; with music tastes, clothes styles, alcohol, smoking etc.

Often there was a balancing act between the competing demands of home, school and ‘their mates’. At home, conflict with parents was common as teenagers struggled with their conflicting needs for dependence and independence, testing the boundaries and defining themselves by challenging family norms. At school there were GCSE choices to be made and academic pressure was hotting up. Meanwhile, friends were of growing importance in terms of shaping attitudes, values and activities.

Many boys at this stage claimed to be ‘out most of the time’ – often ‘hanging out’ or playing football. Sport often acted as an ‘acceptable’ escape. Simply ‘being with their mates’ was a strong drive:

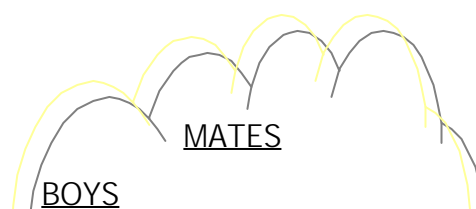
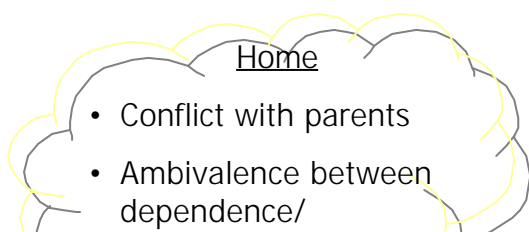
“I see my family at meal times – that’s about it.”

(Boy, 13-14, Leeds)

“I see my family when there’s no-one to go out with. My mum goes to work at 7 and is back at 6 or 7. I stay in bed till 12.30 and when she comes home, I’m out.”

(Boy, 13-14, Leeds)

TEENAGERS: THE MIDDLE YEARS (13-15)



Anxieties about rapid changes in body; feeling out of control

For girls there was a social and cultural explosion. Magazines, celebrity gossip, reality TV, simply talking with their mates were a very important focus and a way of exploring and coming to terms with the complex world of adult relationships.

Amongst both sexes, 'eating out' began to feature. They were usually strapped for cash, so choices were limited; fast food outlets, e.g., KFC, McDonalds, the chip shop and snacks from CTNs or supermarkets were the most common choices.

(iii) **Teenagers: The Older Years (16 to 18)**

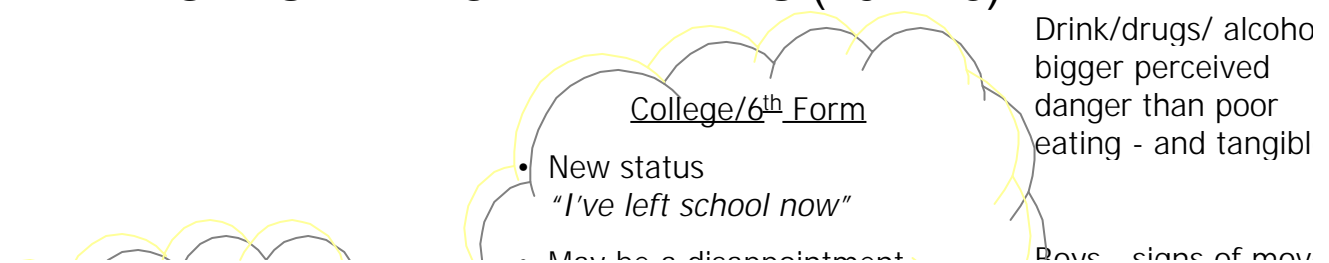
As summarised in Fig 6, overleaf, to some extent, the acute conflicts and uncertainties of the middle teenage years had subsided by this stage. For many teenagers in this sample, home had increasingly become a 'base' and there appeared to be limited family contact:

"I don't really see them, to be honest"

(Girl, 16-18,

Oldham)

TEENAGERS: THE OLDER YEARS (16 – 18)



Other teenagers could still be lured back for meal-times.

“Meal times are good, there's the incentive to get back for a meal – it's sociable.”

(Boy, 16-18,
Cheam)

However, at the same time, there was less antagonism; lack of contact seemed to be as much a function of different lifestyles as a desire to avoid the family:

“The way you treat your life depends on how your home life is. I work at 9.00 a.m. and I come in sometimes at 4 a.m. I always get up otherwise I'd lose my job – but my mum finds it a problem that I get in late. I earn my own money and pay housekeeping. She's probably worried about my health – lack of sleep.”

(Boy, 16-18, Cheam)

“Having your independence is important, your own space.”

(Boy, 16-18, Cheam)

Many teenagers had left school and started college. This had been heralded as a shift from the 'authoritarian' structure of school, which had felt increasingly constraining, to the more 'relaxed' environment of college, where they would

be treated as an adult. The reality was disappointing for some; the work pressure and climate were similar:

“I’ve left school now ... I’m at college, but it’s worse than school. I want to leave, but my mum won’t let me.”

(Girl, 16-18, Oldham)

Regardless of their attitudes to education, there was an increasing focus on the future at this stage; in terms of a job, vocational training or university. This was often exciting and frightening at the same time.

Meanwhile, social horizons expanded. Growing independence, getting jobs/money, getting a car, boyfriends/girlfriends, became the norm. Sport was still an important part of their lives for most boys, although there were signs in some of the older boys of a shift to a more sedentary lifestyle, which they associated with becoming an adult.

Amongst girls, attitudes towards weight and appearance (see Section 2) had become entrenched and, for many, coloured their everyday lives.

Pubs and clubs, mixed group socialising and frequent ‘eating out’ (usually still quite casually, i.e., take aways, pizzas, McDonalds) formed the basis of their social lives at this stage.

As discussed later in Section 2, good nutrition was of relatively low importance, either as far as these older teenagers were concerned or, reportedly, from their parents’ perspective. Alcohol, drugs, smoking, sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy, were all more prominent issues and usually had more tangible effects:

*“If I’ve had a skinfull I **know** it’s bad for me, ‘cos I feel it the next morning. Lack of vegetables ... well ...”*

(Boy, 16-18,)

2. Teenagers' current attitudes and behaviour in relation to nutrition

2.1 Eating/drinking patterns

Before exploring the influences on teenage nutrition in detail, it is perhaps useful just to look at a snapshot of a 'typical day in the life of a teenager', in terms of food consumption. Although there was obviously variation between teenagers, there was also a good deal of similarity.

- Breakfast (if it was eaten - and often it wasn't) almost universally consisted of toast or cereal with milk and possibly tea, coffee or water. Very occasionally juice was included. It was very rare for a respondent to have a cooked breakfast in the morning:

"I don't eat breakfast. When I get to school I go to the breakfast bar and at break I have chocolate and crisps."

(Girl, 12-13, Cheam)

- Snacks were a key component of almost every teenager's diet. Crisps and chocolate were the most prominent item. These were bought (and often eaten) on the way to school, eaten at break times, at lunch time (either from a packed lunch or bought in the canteen), on the way home from school or at home. Many respondents claimed to eat several packets of crisps and chocolate bars a day.
- The most common meal at lunch time was pizza and chips. Alternatively pies, baguettes or pasta were mentioned. It was very rare for respondents to mention vegetables, salad or fruit as a lunch time choice. Packed lunches usually contained a sandwich, drink, crisps and/or chocolate biscuits. Girls sometimes claimed to skip lunch.
- Arriving home after school was a classic time to graze and, for boys in particular, this seemed a largely indiscriminate process; whatever was available and quick. Biscuits, yoghurts, crisps or sandwiches, would do.
- The importance attached to tea or supper varied, depending on home circumstances, the age of the teenager, out of school activities etc. Reportedly, many mothers saw this as the one opportunity in the day to ensure that their child had a healthy meal and did their best to create a family gathering and a well balanced meal. Frequently circumstances (often in the shape of the child) conspired against this:

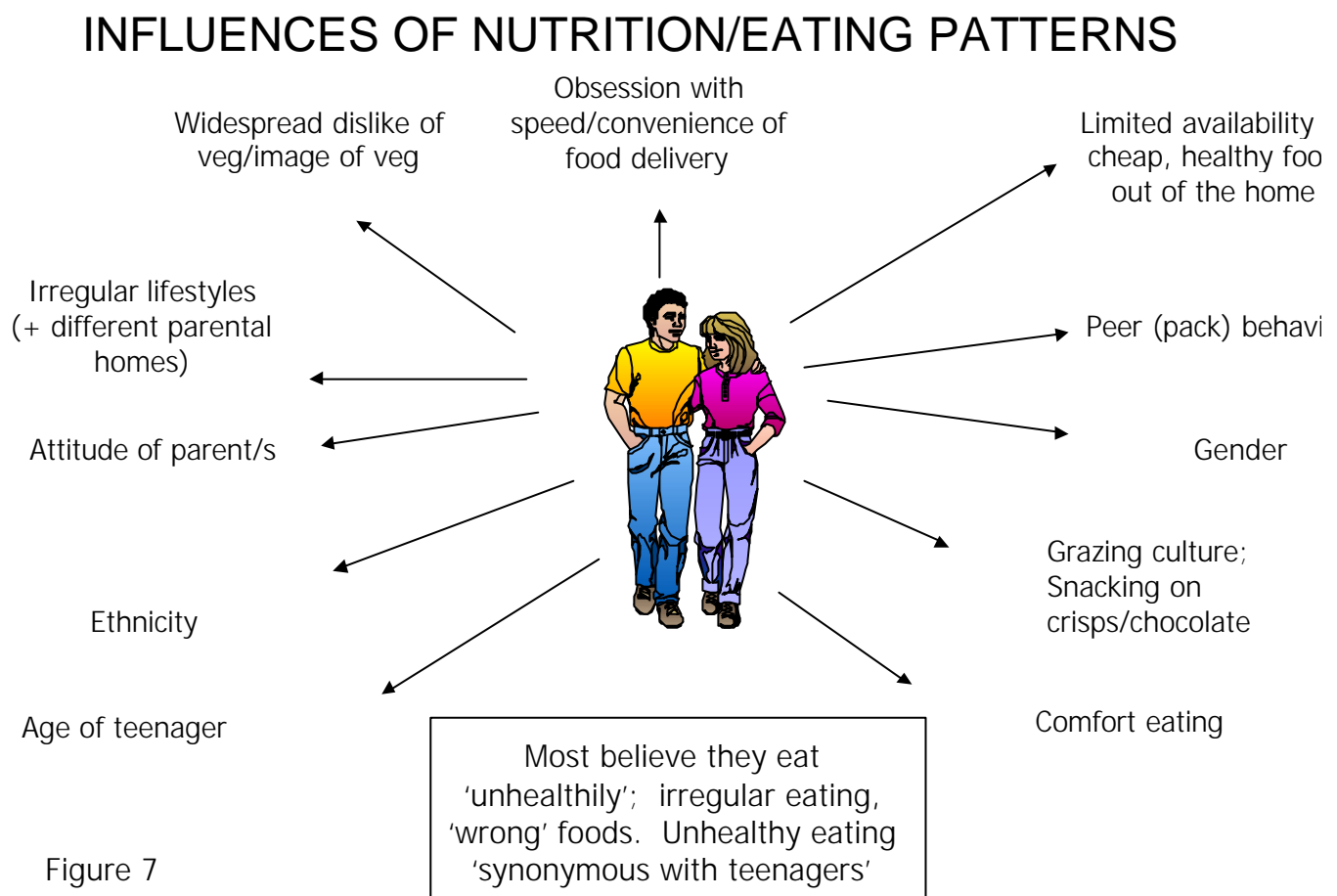
"Mum wants us to eat together, but I take a tray and eat on my own, up in my room."

(Girl, 14-15, Afro-Caribbean)

Other family circumstances, such as parents working shifts or coming home late from work, also made family meals difficult to contrive.

2.2 Influences on teenage nutrition and eating patterns

Figure 7 illustrates the main influences that emerged in relation to teenage nutrition and eating patterns:



(i) Age of teenager

This has been discussed in Section 1.4 in relation to psychological/physiological change. The main issue in terms of nutrition was that, with increasing age, independence and financial freedom, teenagers were

more likely to eat outside the home. As a result, they tend to eat less well balanced meals, to eat more erratically and to graze on snacks.

"Now I go out, so I don't have time to eat."

(Girl, 16-18,
Oldham)

"I don't eat as much, because I have to make it myself."

(Girl, 16-18,
Oldham)

(ii) **Ethnicity**

[Two groups of 'South Asian' teenagers and two groups of Afro-Caribbean teenagers were included in the research in order to have some input on the effect of different cultural backgrounds on teenage attitudes towards nutrition. These groups provided very useful feedback in forming the broader picture. However, it is worth remembering that there was a small representation of these ethnic groups and the groups were conducted in specific locations which may have affected the attitudes and behaviours which emerged. The findings cannot be generalised to South Asian and Afro-Caribbean communities as a whole.]

South Asian Teenagers

These groups were conducted in Oldham, Lancashire. Although the respondents were recruited as 'South Asian', this did not reflect respondents' own perceptions of their ethnicity. The groups comprised a mix of Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi teenagers; Muslims and Hindus. There were evident tensions between these three ethnic groups and, in everyday life, there was little mixing between them (schools were heavily biased towards one ethnic group or another) and, at least as far as the girls were concerned, there was little contact with 'white' contemporaries.

However, regardless of background and religion, there were similarities across the ethnic groups in terms of their attitudes to family life. In comparison with the rest of the sample, Asian teenagers' lives were much more integrated; family, school, religion, friends were a more cohesive whole, complementing each other, rather than competing or offering conflicting values, as was often the case with other teenagers. Friends were often extended family members. Teenagers often met at the mosque or temple and social gatherings often centred around or were organised by the temple or mosque. This was especially true for Indian girls (although they were also younger than the boys in this sample):

"It's the silver jubilee for the temple and we've been involved in that every day – we're doing this drama so it takes up a lot of time. We're

going on a camping trip – to Somerset – the group is from London – it’s to do with the temple – it’s really good – all your friends are there – they teach the religious stuff but it’s fun as well.”

(Girl, 13-14, Oldham)

Teenagers were expected to play an active role in the running of the home. They helped with cooking and cleaning, especially the girls, and seemed to lack (or did not express) the conflict with parents which was evident in most teenagers’ descriptions of family life. Family structure was often very different, with extended families common:

“We have to cook it (evening meal) ‘cos my mum’s at work.”

(Girl, 13-14, Oldham)

“Mum cooks, but we all help out. I’m practising cooking at the moment because I’m little. Sometimes me and my sister cook and when my mum comes home, the food’s ready and the kitchen’s clean.”

(Girl, 13-14, Oldham)

“There are no girls in the house, so I have to help with the cooking.”

(Boy, 16-

18, Oldham)

At least superficially, parental authority was not challenged and there was generally a greater acceptance of parental views that in the sample as a whole:

“They want what’s best for us, so we do what they say.”

(Boy, 16-18, Oldham)

“My Dad makes us turn off the TV when we eat.”

(Boy, 16-18, Oldham)

“My parents make you do the work and everything but they’ll support you in whatever you want to do.”

(Girl, 13-14, Oldham)

Academic expectations of parents were often high, especially amongst the Indian community:

“If you’re Asian you have to be a doctor!”

(Boy, 16-18, Oldham)

“I get more pressure from my parents to work hard and succeed than my white friends do.”

(Boy, 16-18, Oldham)

Overall, there was a strong sense of community and a desire to uphold cultural values, which was illustrated by some of the comments in the girls' diaries:

"I'd like more religion and more Asian programmes on TV."

"More B(h)angra music."

"Bollywood websites."

(Media Diaries, Girls, 13-

14, Oldham)

and also by the comments from some of the boys:

"Religion involves the family. You spend a lot of time with that.

Fridays, the mosque is always full. The women are mainly at home."

(Boy, 16-18,

Oldham)

There was also, apparently, a more relaxed attitude to weight and appearance than was evident with other teenage girls:

"You want to be quite slim, but if you've got a bit of fat on you, it's not a bad thing."

(Girl, 13-14, Oldham)

There were also very different nutritional patterns amongst these teenagers:

- There was a much stronger family focus for meal preparation and eating. The family members often prepared the meal together and usually ate together. This was especially true amongst the girls.
- The most common meal was chapatti, rice and curry. It was unusual for Western food to be prepared for a main meal at home, although there were concessions in some families:

"Curry is like traditional, but sometimes you fancy something different, like pasta or pizza. My mum would have traditional food and we'd have pizza."

(Girl, 13-14, Oldham)

However, there were also interesting cultural cross-overs which confounded this simple polarity:

"In London they don't get pies and peas so when my relatives come down here, we have that."

(Girl, 13-14, Oldham)

The Hindus in the sample (four in each group) were vegetarians, which obviously placed restriction on what could be eaten at home. However, food eaten outside the home was often viewed as suspect, especially by parents, because of what it might contain. As a result, eating at home was encouraged:

“Parents don’t agree with it (eating outside the home) but she (my mother) doesn’t stop you. It’s different and you don’t know how it’s cooked or with what. We have different standards. You have to be really careful. There’s this big temple in London and it’s the main temple and they send a newsletter round saying what you can and can’t eat ... You can have these E numbers and not those.”

(Girl, 13-14, Oldham)

Other religious observances also had an impact on food consumed:

“We have a fast day every 14 days, where we can only eat fruit.”

(Girl, 13-14, Oldham)

Because school populations were predominantly one religious group or another, canteen food catered for religious observances. A few teenagers, however, went home at lunch time, either to start preparing the evening meal and/or to eat with their family.

In spite of these traditional eating patterns, snack foods still played a strong role. Chocolate and crisps, as with other teenagers, were regularly bought and eaten going to and from school.

Whilst the (younger) girls tended to be more restricted in their social activities outside the extended family/religious circle, (older) boys had more freedom. As such they were more likely to break with family traditions of eating at home with the family; eating out, buying take aways, missing family meals.

Afro-Caribbean Teenagers

Within this sample, the Afro-Caribbean teenagers were more socially integrated within the ‘white’ community, so that there was less demarcation in terms of attitudes and behaviour than with the Asian teenagers, and many were part of culturally mixed social groups. There was a strong emphasis on ‘black’ culture and music, although this is fairly mainstream within teenage culture as a whole.

Generally there was a high level of cultural eclecticism, in food as well as other areas. Often respondents' mothers cooked West Indian food at home (salt fish, chicken, rice and peas), although this tended to be for special occasions rather than as everyday fare, because of the time and ingredients required:

“Mum has to shop specially for it. We'll have it if relatives come over.”
(Girl, 14-15, Enfield)

“She doesn't cook West Indian food very often, she'll mainly do English food, but Sunday or a special occasion.”
(Girl, 14-15, Enfield)

As with other families, quick meals, convenience foods, etc., featured in everyday meals. Within this sample, many teenagers were in single parent households with a parent working long hours. The need for quick meals was therefore emphasised. Similarly, snack eating, especially of chocolate and crisps, was rife.

Amongst the Afro-Caribbean boys, there was a very strong emphasis on height, physique, strength and sport. Whilst this was true for most teenage boys, it seemed very central amongst these boys. Being ‘big’ was very important:

“If you're thin, as a man, you're weedy.”
(Boy, 12-13, Enfield)

(iii) Gender differences

There were strong gender differences in attitudes and behaviour in relation to nutrition as summarised in Figure 8. As discussed in Section 1, at this age the pressure and resulting desire to conform to sexual stereotypes was very strong. Girls were ‘expected’ to be thin and feminine. Boys were ‘expected’ to be big and muscley. These stereotypes had a strong impact on nutritional attitudes and behaviour, especially amongst girls.

Girls

For the majority of girls in this sample weight and appearance were very important issues:

“It tends to be the skinny, pretty ones that are popular.”
(Girl, 16-18, Oldham)

“I'd prefer to be thin and unhealthy than fat and healthy”
(Girl, 16-18, Oldham)

MALE/FEMALE DIFFERENCES

Sexual stereotypes common:

- girls should be thin, feminine
- boys should be big, muscly

Girls

Boys

- Weight and appearance a big issue for most girls. Concern increases

- Strong emphasis on sport/fitness, strength, physique

The emphasis placed on weight and appearance increased with age and, for many girls, was a constant concern, which permeated their everyday lives. Essentially the majority of girls were 'food aware', in the sense that they were conscious about what they ate, or did not eat, most of the time.

"Girls worry more about what they eat."

(Girl, 12-13, Cheam)

Food was rarely taken for granted. There was a variety of often quite complex emotional patterns around food; binge and fasting were very common, comfort eating was widespread, calorie counting, fad diets, etc., were a normal part of life for many teenagers. Most teenagers in the sample, regardless of size, felt they were overweight and 'eating healthily' was of minor importance to them:

"I get another drink when I'm hungry 'cos I'm able to get by without food. Another drink and come home.....but some days I'll binge - lots of ice cream and a lot of tuna - for some reason.....I've had problems with eating, so my Mum makes me eat."

(Girl, 16-18, Oldham)

"Food cheers me up."

(Girl, 12-13, Cheam)

"Depends what I've eaten the day before what I eat today. If I've pigged out on a Monday, I won't eat on Tuesday."

(Girl, 16-18, Oldham)

Rather than eating regular, well balanced meals, they would often skip meals or substitute crisps and chocolate:

"At lunch, I don't eat nothing. We just sit and talk."

(Girl, 14-15, Afro-Caribbean, Enfield)

"I've got really bad eating habits. I eat in the morning and then I eat when I get home at 2.00 in the morning. I have the odd chocolate bar in between."

(Girl, 16-18, Oldham)

However, the stringent rules applied to food were often ignored when it came to alcohol.

"Alcohol is in a league of its own. You're allowed to drink alcohol, but Vodka is the cleanest drink. It goes straight through your system and so you don't put on so much weight."

(Girl, 16-18, Oldham)

Unlike boys, many girls regarded sport and exercise as 'unfeminine'. They felt self-conscious and 'exposed' during sport and once they reached adolescence, many avoided it - in spite of the encouragement of some parents:

"My Dad always says, 'Get off your fat arse and go and do some exercise."

(Girl, 16-18, Oldham)

Overall, health, as related to good nutrition and well balanced meals, was of little interest to most teenage girls. However, health linked to slimness, glossy hair, clear skin and attractiveness, i.e., end benefit related, could be much more interesting.

Boys

For boys, as discussed earlier, height, physique and strength - often linked to sports skills and fitness - were very important. Although it was acknowledged that diet was an important consideration for sports people ...

"Top athletes have got to have a good diet."

(Boy, 13-14, Leeds)

... teenage boys rarely applied the same considerations to their own diet:

“I just grab whatever’s there. You want to go out, don’t you. You just eat it and go out.”

(Boy, 14-15, Plymouth)

Most boys consumed huge quantities of food, but because they were physically active, they ‘burnt it off’:

“I’m always hungry, if it’s there you just eat it.”

(Boy, 12-13, Afro-Caribbean, Enfield)

“The more energy you use, the more healthy you get.”

(Boy, 12-13, Oldham)

“I just eat. I do sports, so I eat what I want.”

(Boy, 13-14, Leeds)

Boys' approach to food was very different from that of girls. They were much more relaxed about their food consumption and were largely ‘food unaware’ in the sense that quantity and availability were the prime considerations:

“My mum complains that I’ve eaten everything before she’s unpacked it.”

(Boy, 12-13, Afro-Caribbean, Enfield)

“If you’re hungry, you have to make the effort to eat.”

(Boy, 16-18, Cheam)

This indiscriminate consumption of food meant that, by default, boys often ate more healthily than girls; they would eat main meals that were prepared for them, but also snack in between:

“I don’t eat too much junk food. I eat my food at home and it’s only in the streets I’ll eat some junk food.”

(Boy, 12-13, Afro-Caribbean, Enfield)

At the other end of the spectrum, there was, in some older boys, a tendency to drift into laziness – abandon sport, and adopt a more sedentary lifestyle:

“When you’re pissed food is lovely – I’ll eat anything. Kebabs are good and they’re open late – complements the alcohol nicely – it’s slob food.”

(Boys, 16-18, Cheam)

Often it was only fear and vanity that prevented them succumbing to this sedentary lifestyle and unhealthy diet:

“I couldn’t have a beer gut and be a famous band member.”

(Boy, 16-18,
Cheam)

Healthy eating, as far as boys were concerned, had little appeal for its own sake or when linked to long term health benefits. However, when linked to attributes that they aspired to, i.e., a good build, strength, skill, (sexual) energy, being cool/fit, it had much greater resonance:

“Makes me think that if I get fat I won’t get with a fit bird ... later on, in 20 years I would probably think about heart disease and stuff, but not now.”

(Boy, 16-18, Cheam)

“If your girlfriend thinks you’re physically fit then you’re laughing.”

(Boy, 16-18, Cheam)

(iv) **Parental Attitudes towards Nutrition**

Parental attitudes towards nutrition did affect teenagers’ eating patterns, although the direct influence decreased markedly with the age of the teenager. Two fairly basic stances were evident in the teenagers’ descriptions of their parents’ attitudes (see Figure 9, overleaf), although parents were not fixed in these stances; they could sometimes move from one to the other – and back again.

On the one hand was a **health focused** stance in which parents, usually the mother, actively attempted to instil healthy eating habits within the family. The core of this effort was often the family evening meal which was the only meal occasion that, it seemed, she felt she could really control:

“My mum doesn’t mind (me eating junk food) ‘cos she knows I’ve got a good meal when I come home.”

(Girl, 14-15, Afro-Caribbean, Enfield)

“I just eat what my Mum makes me. She makes me what she thinks is good for me. She knows I don’t like salad so she makes me potatoes and peas and carrots. She wouldn’t bake a massive cake every night. She doesn’t mind if I have cake if I eat my tea.”

(Boy, 12-13, Oldham)

“7 p.m. supper is the high point of the day. I prefer a main meal to snacks. We all eat together. It’s good!”

(Girl, 12-13, Cheam)

“My mum’s health conscious. She wouldn’t let us eat anything that’s bad for us. She doesn’t buy meat and she’ll only let us have one main chocolate thing a day and if we have something fattening at tea we have a really big salad with it.”

(Girl, 13-14, Plymouth)

“They buy the food so if they want you to eat healthy food, they buy it.”

(Boy, 13-14, Leeds)

PARENTAL ATTITUDES TO NUTRITION

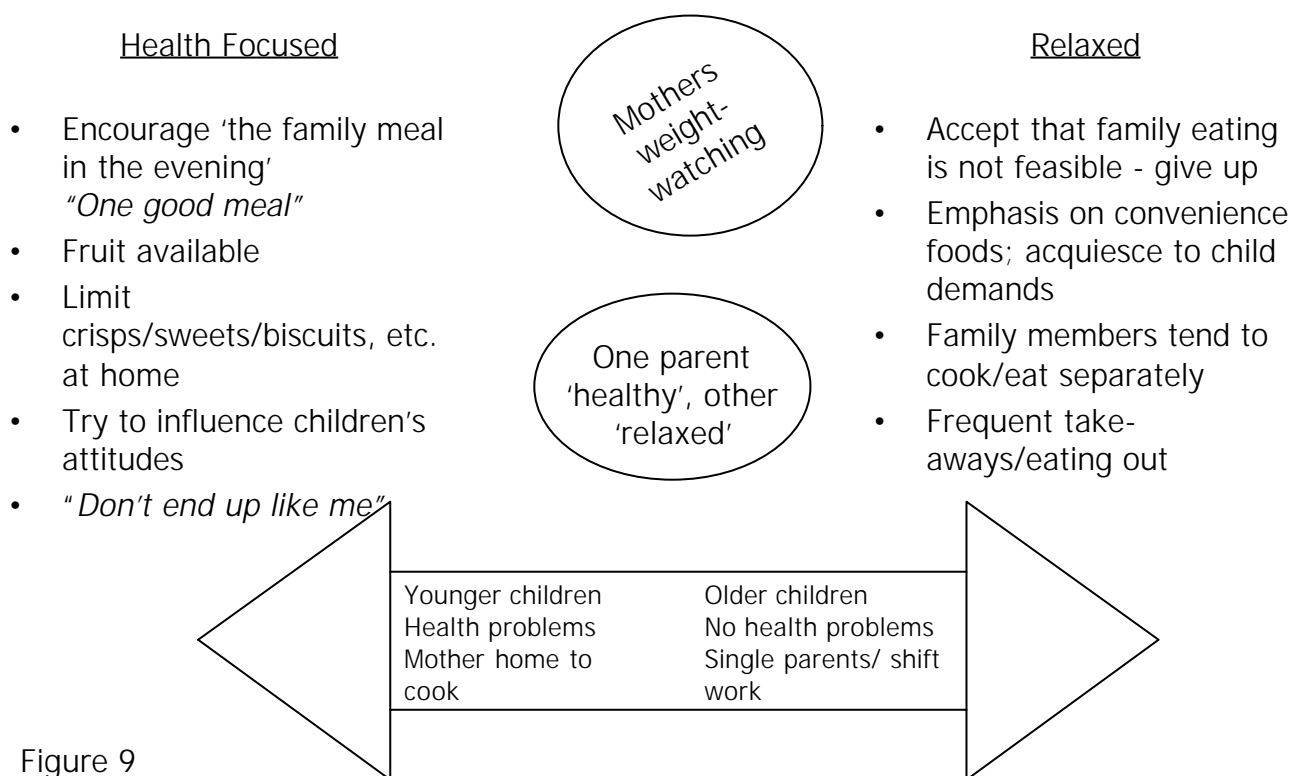


Figure 9

Having fruit regularly available for snacking and limiting crisps, sweets, biscuits and carbonated drink consumption at home, were all part of the process of encouraging healthy family eating patterns:

“My Nan’s a caterer so she tells us to eat a balanced diet – have salad before ice cream.”

(Girl, 12-13, Cheam)

In some cases, mothers seemed to be actively trying to change the eating patterns that they themselves had been brought up with. If overweight they

tried to ensure that their children did not develop the same unhealthy eating patterns:

“She says, ‘Don’t end up like me’.”

(Girl, 12-13, Cheam)

On the other hand were parents who adopted a more **relaxed** stance to healthy eating. Some of these parents had started off with the intention of controlling their children’s diet, but had been worn down by teenage resistance, e.g., not eating healthy food they’d prepared, refusing to eat with the family or at family meal times:

“She used to worry but now she can’t be bothered.”

(Girl, 13-14, Plymouth)

“My mum buys things that are disgusting and she thinks I’ll like it, but I don’t eat it.”

(Girl, 13-14, Plymouth)

“My mum tried to get me to eat healthily. It doesn’t work. I look for chocolate first and if there isn’t any, I’ll have fruit.”

(Boy, 13-14, Leeds)

Others parents appeared simply not to be very concerned about nutrition:

“I don’t have any tea. He (Dad) says, ‘If you’re hungry, get a bag of crisps or something.’”

(Boy, 12-13, Oldham)

The emphasis was on convenience foods and parents usually acquiesced to the teenager’s demands.

Within relaxed families, people often cooked and ate separately, to the extent that some family members appeared to lead largely parallel lives. Eating outside the home and ‘take aways’ were common, so that eating was no longer viewed as an element of family sharing and communication.

Parents with younger teenage children, those whose children or other family members had some health problem (a few teenagers in the sample admitted to eating disorders) and home situations where the mother was not working outside the home or was at home in time to prepare the evening meal, were more likely to veer towards the Health Focused end of the spectrum. Parents with older children, where there were no health problems in the family and with stressful or ‘anti-social’ work hours, tended to move towards the Relaxed end of the spectrum.

Two other key issues which emerged, related to parental attitudes, were the mother's attitude to her own weight and the different attitudes of parents living apart.

The Mother's attitude to weight

Many teenagers reported that their mothers were very concerned about their own weight and made on-going or sporadic attempts to lose weight. Often these attempts spilt over into family life, both behaviourally and in terms of influencing the attitudes of teenagers, especially girls:

"Mum doesn't eat meals with us. She sits in front of the TV and doesn't eat at all.

We have a fridge for diet food and a fridge for fat food."

(Girl, 12-13, Cheam)

"My Mum is always on a diet. She's skinny. She doesn't eat."

(Girl, 16-18, Oldham)

"My mum's a hypocrite. We're only allowed one bag of crisps a day and she has a second."

(Girl, 13-14, Plymouth)

Conflicting parental attitudes to nutrition

Sometimes nutrition was one element of difference – and source of conflict – between parents, especially separated parents. The teenager had to accommodate him/herself to these different patterns, as discussed in more detail below:

"The best time is when we (the family) aren't together – we can't argue then – it's the happiest time, I suppose."

(Girl, 12-13, Cheam)

(v) Influence of family structure and social class

As discussed earlier, within this sample, more than half of the teenagers did not live with both natural parents. Many had complex arrangements involving parents, step parents, girlfriends/ boyfriends of their parents, and half brothers and sisters. Sometimes the resulting contact with one or both parents was stressful, or limited:

"I only eat out with my Dad. He moans all the time so it isn't much fun."

(Girl, 12-13, Cheam)

“My Mum doesn’t have time for breakfast because she goes to work. She leaves about 5.00 in the morning and gets home at 6.00. My dad lives in Leeds. I stay with him at weekends.”

(Boy, 12-13, Oldham)

“I go to my Dad’s every Sunday. He gives me and my brother and my sister £3 pocket money each every week – he hasn’t got much money. He doesn’t want to take us out. He’d prefer to work, but that’s because he needs the money.”

(Girl, 12-13, Cheam)

Often there were different ‘rules’ in different households:

“My Dad’s girlfriend is very strict. She’s a teacher. She says, ‘You can only eat what I give you’ and she has healthy stuff. I skip breakfast and have tea with my mum.”

(Boy, 12-13, Oldham)

“My Mum and Dad aren’t separated. They still live together, but if my Mum’s there, we have a proper meal and with my Dad, it’s just junk food.”

(Girl, 13-14, Plymouth)

“My Dad’s from Iran. He cooks weird stuff when I stay with him. I eat junk food at home and when I go to my Dad’s I eat healthily.”

(Girl, 13-14, Plymouth)

Many parents, particularly those of C2D social class, were working shifts or anti-social hours. These work patterns often prevented the family members eating together:

“My Mum gets me up, but my dad gets up as I’m leaving in the morning and then I eat before he comes in, so I don’t see him a lot.”

(Girl, 12-13, Cheam)

“My Dad wakes me up as he goes to work. My mum gets back at 9 (evening). Sometimes I go and have tea at my Aunt Chris’s.”

(Boy, 12-13, Oldham)

Single parents were often under considerable pressure, in a number of ways:

- The parent often arrived home tired and late from work - sometimes after the child had arrived home from school:

"I try not to spend time with my mum. She works a lot so she's tired and moody – if I ask for £5 for the cinema she snaps at me."

(Girl, 13-14, Plymouth)

- With a smaller number of people to cook for, there was often less likelihood of cooking a proper meal.
- Finances were often tight and there was less money to spend on food.

Sometimes other family members could mitigate these stresses:

"I like eating with my Nan. We talk for an hour afterwards."

(Girl, 12-13, Cheam)

(vi) **Cultural norms for teenagers:**

Peer pressure at this age was very strong and influenced attitudes and behaviour in relation to nutrition quite markedly. The emphasis was on:

- Speed and convenience of delivery:

"I want something quick. I can't be bothered to cook."

(Boy, 14-15,

Plymouth)

- A grazing culture, where crisps/chocolate/soft drinks played a very important role.

"I don't have lunch. I have a drink and some crisps."

(Girl, 14-15,

Leeds)

- Emotional relationships with food, especially amongst girls.
- A widespread dislike of vegetables and the image of vegetables.

"I hate the idea of vegetables, although I don't mind the taste."

(Girl, 14-15,

Leeds)

"Vegetables have never really been portrayed as a nice thing to eat. Most people just think that they're boring. You ate them when you were little. Sprouts!"

(Girl, 16-18,

Oldham)

- Limited availability of (and interest in) cheap healthy food outside the home.

These cultural norms undermined healthy eating. Most teenagers believed that they were eating 'unhealthily', because of their irregular eating patterns and their consumption of the 'wrong' foods. Indeed, there was some pride in this. Unhealthy eating was regarded as almost synonymous with teenage life.

3. Awareness and Sources of Information on Nutrition and Healthy Eating

3.1 Specific knowledge of the ‘Rules of Nutrition’

Figure 10 attempts to weight nutritional knowledge, albeit crudely, in terms of how widespread the knowledge was across the sample.

SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF ‘RULES OF NUTRITION’

COMMON KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat lots of fruit and vegetables • Don’t eat junk food, esp. crisps and chocolate • Fizzy drinks are bad for you • Water is good for you

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a balanced diet • Too much fat is unhealthy • Milk provides calcium • Unhealthy eating can cause heart disease/cancer, etc.

SPORADIC KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat five portions of fruit and veg a day (very little awareness that juices ‘count’) • Too much salt is bad

Figure 10

At the top layer, certain information was common knowledge across the sample:

- ‘Eat lots of fruit and vegetables’ was very widely known, although the ‘Five portions of fruit and vegetables a day’ was much less familiar.
- ‘Cut down on junk food, especially crisps and chocolate’ was also very familiar, in part because most teenagers were conscious that they consumed crisps and chocolate on a daily basis:
“I eat quite healthily ... but it’s the junk food.”

(Girl, 13-14, Asian, Oldham)

- ‘Fizzy’ drinks were bad for you, because of the sugar content.
- ‘Water is good for you’: This was an interesting belief, and a good case history of how it is possible for 'healthy' food/drinks to become acceptable to teenagers. The associations of water with slimming, a clear complexion and positive imagery (sport, clubbing, a fashion accessory) has raised its status and encouraged greater consumption of water:

“You’re supposed to drink eight glasses of water a day.”

(Girl, 14-15, Afro-Caribbean, Enfield)

"I drink loads of water. I like it when there are ice cubes in it, because of the weight thing - your body uses up more calories to warm the water up."

(Girl, 16-18,

Oldham)

"It gets rid of the toxins, which makes you lose weight. And it gets rid of spots."

(Girl, 16-18,

Oldham)

A little lower down the scale of familiarity was:

- ‘Have a balanced diet’: Not all teenagers knew what this meant, even if they were familiar with the phrase. Where they did have some idea, they usually cited increased consumption of fruit and vegetables, reduced fat and sugar intake and 'sufficient' carbohydrates – bread and pasta, as the important ingredients of a balanced diet.
- ‘Too much’ fat was also cited, although very rarely did anyone know what ‘too much’ meant. Avoiding too many chips and ‘fry-ups’ was the extent of most teenagers understanding.
- ‘Milk provides calcium’ was common knowledge. ‘Milk: The white stuff’ campaign was positively recalled by some respondents. It was seen as appropriate in tone and memorable:

“Jonathan Ross – ‘The white stuff – are you made of it?’. It’s just funny.”

(Girl, 14-15, Afro-Caribbean, Enfield)

- There was awareness that ‘Unhealthy eating can cause heart disease, cancer and other health problems in the future’. Although knowledge (at

some level of specificity) of the health dangers of eating unhealthily was common, there was little indication that potential long term effects would influence present behaviour, when it came to eating more healthily.

At the lowest level of knowledge came more specific information, for example:

- ‘Eat five portions of fruit/vegetables a day’. Given the high levels of general exposure this information has received, there was surprisingly little recall within this sample.
- Similarly, specifics of what is ‘too much’ sugar/fat and how would you know, were very vague.
- There was also some awareness that ‘too much’ salt is also unhealthy:

“Too much salt gives you heart disease.”

(Boy, 13-14, Leeds)

Clearly, information is only one stage in behavioural change. There was little indication that even those respondents who were most knowledgeable translated this knowledge into practice on a regular basis,

I just don’t like healthy food.”

(Girl, 12-13, Cheam)

However, the fact that change **can** happen, given information that motivates and the appropriate context/imagery e.g. as has happened with water, is encouraging!

3.2 Sources of information on nutrition and healthy eating

It is interesting to explore where teenagers acquire their information on nutrition from and the way in which the source of this information colours response to the information itself. (See summary in Figure 11, overleaf)

Broadly there were two sources of information; the official and the unofficial. These often conveyed the same or similar messages, but in very different ways which affected their ‘take up’. Official sources were largely school related, although parents could also be loosely grouped in this camp. Certainly schools seemed to be making noble efforts to educate children in nutrition and healthy eating, and these areas were covered within a variety of school subjects, such as biology, PE, food technology, PHSE. Sometimes the subject was approached from a technical angle, sometimes in terms of personal care.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON NUTRITION & HEALTHY EATING

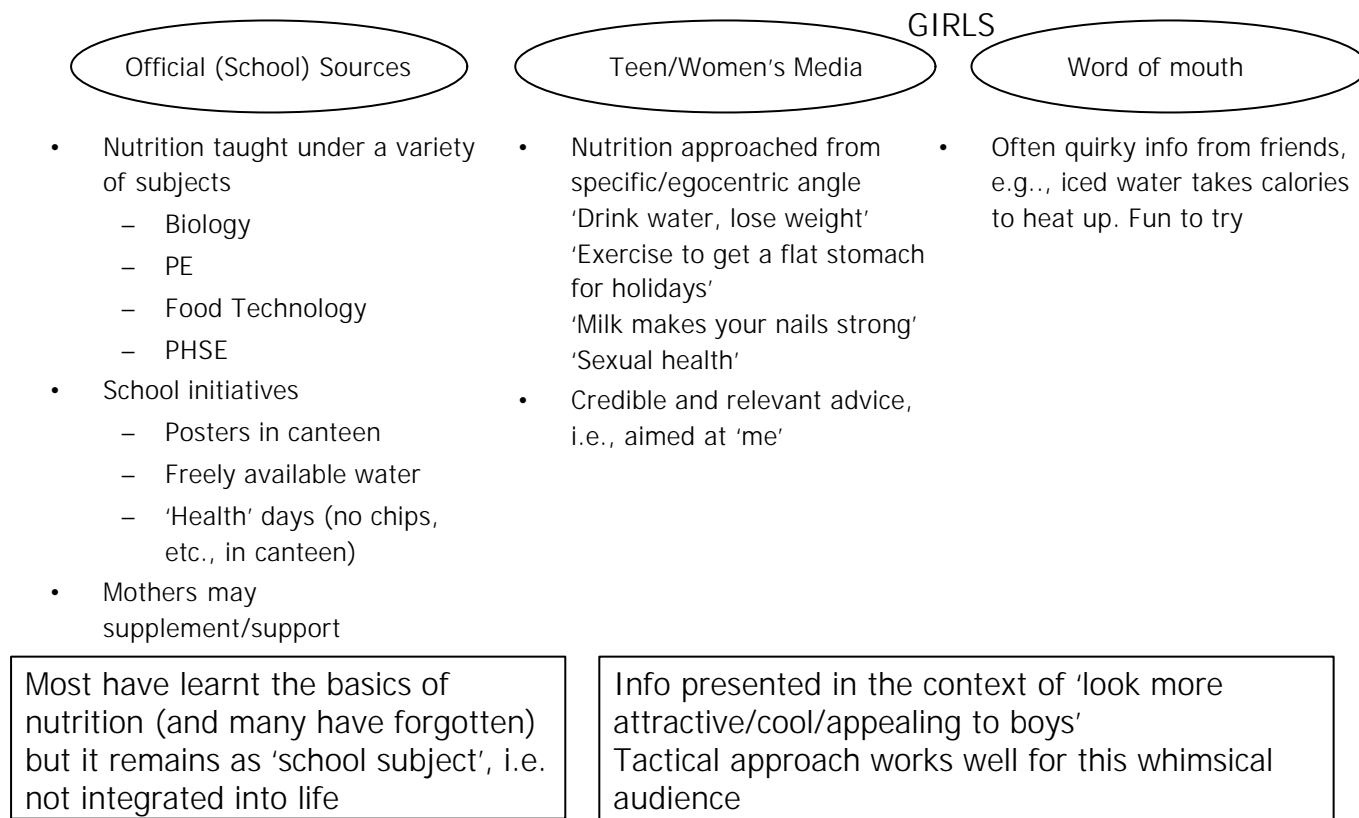


Figure 11

In addition, there were many school initiatives reported which clearly attempted to move teenage eating patterns in a healthier direction, e.g.

- Healthy eating posters in the canteen:

"We've got one telling you you should eat healthily when you're pregnant .. I'm not sure why it's there."

(Girl, 14-15, Leeds)

"We have posters all over school, 'Drink milk', 'Eat vegetables'. Do they think we're stupid?"

18, Oldham)

(Girl, 16-

- Increased access to water:

“We’re allowed free water at school – so someone goes and gets it. We used to have water fights to start with but now we’ve got into the habit of drinking it.”

(Girl, 14-15, Afro-Caribbean, Enfield)

- ‘Healthy eating’ days, e.g., no chips, fried food available in the canteen.

“Going for Gold - every person in the school eats something healthy on that day. You don't have a choice. No chips! If you want to eat, you've got to eat vegetables.”

18, Oldham)

(Girl, 16-

Parents often reinforced the school's approach to nutritional education, albeit in a more everyday and practical context. Both parents and school, however, represented the view of ‘authority’ – the official line:

“My mum brings (nutritional) leaflets home – it’s very annoying. ”

(Girl, 12-13 Cheam)

Although almost all respondents had received some education in nutrition at school (although they often claimed to have forgotten the detail), it was seen as a ‘school subject’. As with many other academic school subjects, it was rarely translated into ‘the real world’ and integrated into their lives.

Amongst boys, this official line appeared to be the dominant, or even the only, acknowledged source of information. For girls, however, there were other, very different, sources which had much more resonance and appeal than the official sources.

Teen and women’s media were a very important source of information on health and nutrition, as well as on a huge range of other issues. However, nutrition was addressed in a very different way from the approach at school. Rather than an academic subject taught for its own sake, it was end benefit-related and the topics were chosen to reflect interests and concerns of the target audience. It was ‘bite-sized’ and egocentric and promised instant (or fast) gratification – which reflected teenage needs and interests, e.g., ‘Drink water and lose weight’, ‘Exercise to get a flat stomach for your holiday in two weeks time’, ‘Drink milk for strong nails’. It was credible (given the source) and relevant (targeted) advice, from a teenage perspective (aimed ‘at me’).

‘Word of mouth’ – often quirky information from friends, which might originally have been gleaned from women’s media, was an extension of this source – often it had a rather bizarre quality – instant remedies and mythical potions which were entertaining as well as promising dramatic results.

Essentially, 'healthy eating' (and other) information presented in the context of 'look attractive/cool and appealing to boys' worked effectively. In particular, a tactical approach, i.e., bite sized, specific information was very appropriate for this whimsical audience. The challenge is to present this in a way which also begins to initiate long term behaviour change and which does not further encourage 'faddish' eating.

APPENDICES

1. Discussion Guide
2. Activity Diary

Discussion Guide: Nutritional Campaign, Young People

Warm Up

Respondents will be asked to chat to their neighbour for a few minutes about their interests and plans for the summer, with the aim of finding out three interesting things about them. They will then introduce their neighbour to the group.

Exploration of pre-group task material

For ‘camera’ groups: There will be a reasonable amount of time spent on exploring the photos taken, because this will provide a route into understanding respondents’ interests, influences, priorities, etc. To an extent we will be steered by respondents, although during the course of the conversation we would also anticipate covering areas. Although we would not focus specifically on food at this stage, we would be conscious of issues which could be relevant and which we would return to later in the group.

- Family and friend relationships; patterns of interaction, involvement with family vs growing independence.
- Attitudes and interests at school.
- Out of school activities; time spent at home/of home/who with/where do they go/ideals in terms of spending time with family and friends, involvement with sport/other activities.
- Aspirations, ambitions, dreams in the short and longer term.
- Media; TV consumption/programmes, radio, CDs, internet; where do they have access? Websites visited?
- Mobiles – texting; home/school use. What are the benefits/restrictions?
- Magazines; do they read? If so, which ones?
- Cinema; favourite films. Celebrities – what makes some interesting and others not?
- Clothes; shopping – how do these fit into their lives?
- Brief discussion on eating attitudes/tastes/venues as part of the general life-style exploration.

- Advertising awareness; ‘good’/’bad’ ads and why?

[At this point we would introduce the reel of (non-food) ads as well as any other media ‘tools’, in order to explore style, tone of voice, imagery, etc., which is appealing/surprising/intriguing, etc.]

For ‘diary’ groups: The same broad areas as above would be covered, in addition to areas which respondents spontaneously introduce, but discussion would be accessed via the diary material.

(We would expect that this life-style exploration will take up a third to a half of the group time.)

For all groups:

Exploration of attitudes and behaviour in relation to food

- How does food fit within their lives; attitudes to food and types of food, e.g., vegetarian, organic, ‘healthy vs junk’, sugar and salt consumption (are these seen as key issues?), grazing.
- Differences in attitude related to eating situation, e.g., home, school, out of school, with friends/family, in a restaurant/café, on the street.
- Role of convenience, cost, speed, nutrition, taste, parental choice, location, etc.
- Respondents will be asked to draw ‘Life-graphs’ of their food consumption in a ‘typical’ day, as a way of talking around the emotional, practical, situational factors that influence eating.
- Attitudes of parents and peers and how this can affect their attitudes and behaviour.
- Importance of weight/appearance. (This needs to be approached sensitively, and discussed in relation to the mood and mix of the group.)
- Level of knowledge and interest in diet and nutrition. Where do they learn about this? Role of school, magazines, friends, parents, TV, etc., in informing. What are most valued sources of information? What do they want/need to know? How interested are they in finding out?

- How conscious are they of the key healthy eating messages, e.g., increased cereal/starchy foods, five plus portions of fruit/veg, reduced fat, reduced sugar and salt, meal frequency rather than snacking?
- Response to current food advertising; what ‘works’/doesn’t ‘work’ for them and why?

Exploration of triggers to adopting healthier eating patterns

- What would their ideal ‘healthy’ diet be? How could they achieve this – on a fantasy level?

[Respondents may be asked to work together in syndicate groups to create this.]

- What are the key elements of this? Role of convenience, simplicity, taste, fashion, novelty, group appeal, imagery, etc. (using magazine tears to illustrate).
- Which of these elements would trigger a shift towards more healthy eating, integrating pragmatic and emotional.
- How could this be incorporated into their current life-style and aspirations?
- What do they think are the strong themes emerging which should be further developed – and how?

ACTIVITY DIARY

NAME _____

AGE _____

BOY/GIRL _____

TOWN _____

This diary is just a rough guide to get an idea of what is important to you. If we've missed things out or there are things you want to add, please just scribble in the margins or change it!

Day 2 _____ Please write in the day

1. What TV programmes did you watch today? Are there any of these that you always watch?

2. Do you remember any ads. you saw on TV? Please can you write down what you remembered and what you liked/disliked?

3. What radio stations did you tune into? What time of the day was this?

4. Did you read any magazines? If so, which ones?

5. Roughly, how many mobile phone calls and text messages did you make and receive?

6. Did you go out (other than to school!) today? If so, where did you go and who was it with?

7. Did you go on-line? For how long? What websites (if any) did you visit?

Day 4 _____ **Please write in the day**

- 1. What TV programmes did you watch today? Are there any of these that you always watch?**

- 2. Do you remember any ads. you saw on TV? Please can you write down what you remembered and what you liked/disliked?**

- 3. What radio stations did you tune into? What time of the day was this?**

- 4. Did you read any magazines? If so, which ones?**

- 5. Roughly, how many mobile phone calls and text messages did you make and receive?**

- 6. Did you go out (other than to school!) today? If so, where did you go and who was it with?**

- 7. Did you go on-line? For how long? What websites (if any) did you visit?**

Day 5 _____ **Please write in the day**

- 1. What TV programmes did you watch today? Are there any of these that you always watch?**

- 2. Do you remember any ads. you saw on TV? Please can you write down what you remembered and what you liked/disliked?**

3. **What radio stations did you tune into? What time of the day was this?**

4. **Did you read any magazines? If so, which ones?**

5. **Roughly, how many mobile phone calls and text messages did you make and receive?**

6. **Did you go out (other than to school!) today? If so, where did you go and who was it with?**

7. **Did you go on-line? For how long? What websites (if any) did you visit?**

Day 6 _____ **Please write in the day**

1. **What TV programmes did you watch today? Are there any of these that you always watch?**

2. **Do you remember any ads. you saw on TV? Please can you write down what you remembered and what you liked/disliked?**

3. **What radio stations did you tune into? What time of the day was this?**

4. **Did you read any magazines? If so, which ones?**

5. **Roughly, how many mobile phone calls and text messages did you make and receive?**

6. **Did you go out (other than to school!) today? If so, where did you go and who was it with?**

7. **Did you go on-line? For how long? What websites (if any) did you visit?**

Day 7 _____ Please write in the day

1. **What TV programmes did you watch today? Are there any of these that you always watch?**

2. **Do you remember any ads. you saw on TV? Please can you write down what you remembered and what you liked/disliked?**

3. **What radio stations did you tune into? What time of the day was this?**

4. **Did you read any magazines? If so, which ones?**

5. **Roughly, how many mobile phone calls and text messages did you make and receive?**

6. **Did you go out (other than to school!) today? If so, where did you go and who was it with?**

7. **Did you go on-line? For how long? What websites (if any) did you visit?**

PLEASE CAN YOU FILL IN THIS SUMMARY SHEET, SO THAT WE GET AN OVERALL IDEA OF WHAT YOUR FAVOURITE ACTIVITIES/ TV/ RADIO ETC. ARE:

1. **What are your favourite TV shows/TV stations/Radio stations/Magazines?**

2. **How often do you go to the cinema? What are the best movies you have seen in the last year?**

3. **If you ever go out to eat (with your family or friends), where do you like to go - and what is your favourite place to eat?**

4. **If you had a choice, where would you most like to go with your friends?**

5. **If money was no object, where would you like to shop for clothes?**

6. **What celebrities do you most admire and why? Which do you really dislike?**

7. **Are there any areas we've missed that are very important to you that you'd like to say something about?**

THANKS VERY MUCH FOR TAKING THE TROUBLE TO FILL THIS DIARY OUT