



the Food We Eat and Why

This is the first survey of our Doncaster Talks consultation to support the development of the Compassionate Approach to Weight.

The aims of this survey were:

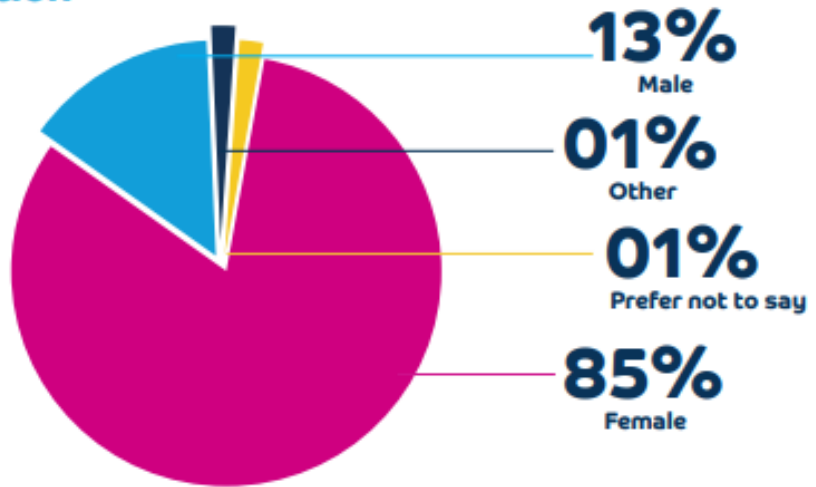
- To understand the different factors locally that influence the quality of diets, the ability to be physically active, and how decisions are made regarding health and wellbeing.
- To gain a better understanding of how local families experience food, weight and activity, including family and feeding dynamic, attitudes to food and meals, parenting and barriers experienced.

This survey was open to all Doncaster residents and asked about eating habits and health behaviours. This survey had a total of 562 participants.

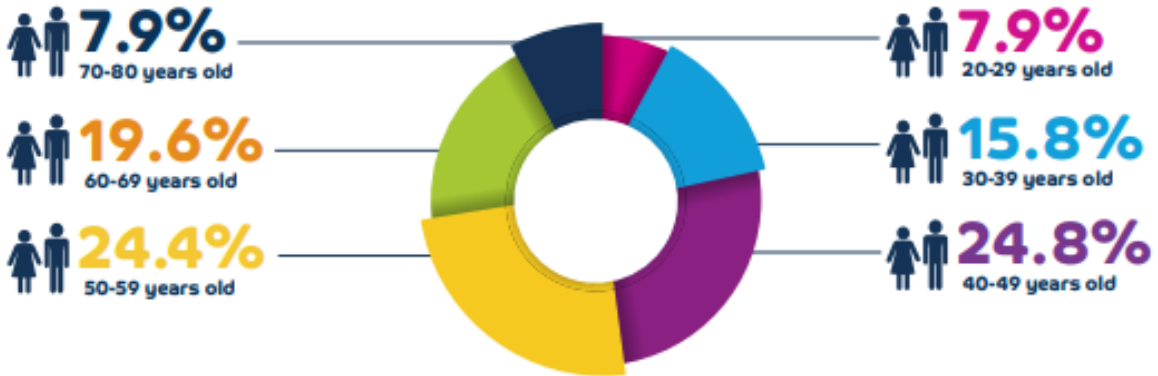
Who completed the survey?

Participant Information

Gender



Age



Ethnicity

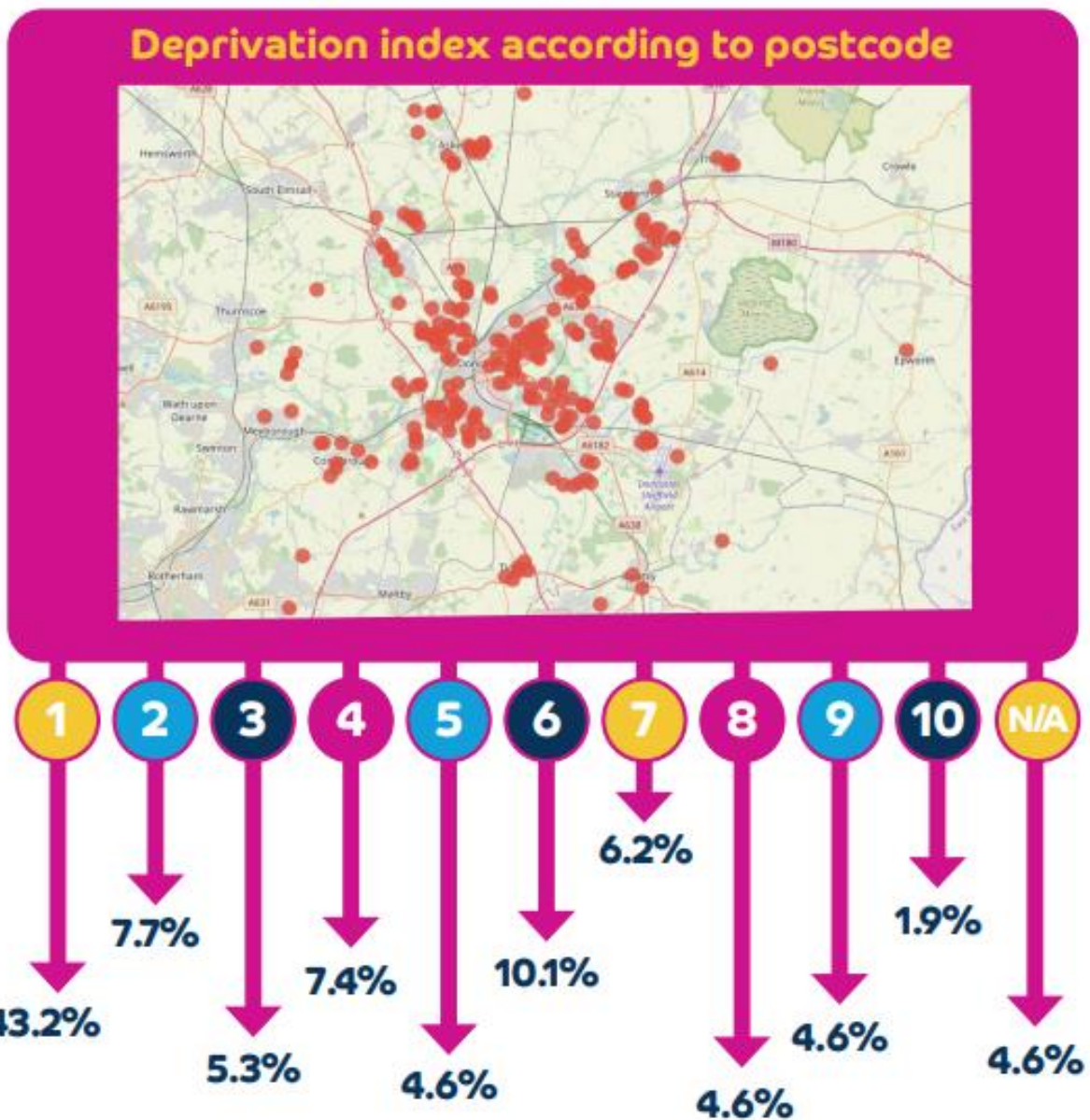


Children



Location distribution

1 most deprived to 10 least deprived



We asked...

*What are
your eating
habits in the
home?*

You told us...

- 84% of households typically eat together
- 76% typically eat the same food
- 95% serve the food already plated
- 64% eat at the table
- 93% said mealtimes are enjoyable
- 57% eat whilst distracted (e.g. by TV; radio; mobile phones)

What we will do with this information...

Eating together as a household without distractions can have many benefits including improving mental health, family cohesion and social connection; as well as being more mindful of the food you are eating.

Understanding the eating habits of Doncaster households will help us target advice and information to our citizens to help them make meaningful changes to improve their health and wellbeing.

Information on local eating habits and behaviours help to inform the support we offer, such as our health and wellbeing coaching service, and programmes that support families with children and infant feeding.

We asked...

What is important to you about the food you eat?

You told us...

Taste/enjoyability (24%), ease of preparation (20%) and 'good for health' were cited as the top reasons people choose the food they eat.

Easy to cook/prepare and cheap to buy were the most important reasons for food choice for people in more deprived areas to get food, whilst taste, enjoyability, and good for health were the key reasons for people in less deprived areas.

43% compare prices of similar products most or all of the time

Younger people are more likely to 'Always compare prices of similar products'.

36% read food labels most or all of the time

81% stated importance of having a balanced diet as 'a lot' or 'a great deal'

What we will do with this information...

We know that having a balanced diet is important to our residents. It is helpful for us to know what else is important to our residents about the food that they eat – such as cost, nutritional value, ease or time it takes to prepare, and taste - so that we can provide appropriate and relevant support.

We know that the rising cost of living is a concern for our residents, particularly those who are most vulnerable. Understanding the barriers and motivations for choosing your food helps us to improve the support we offer, particularly our services relating to nutrition and cooking skills. It helps us to understand what education and resources are needed, and how to prioritise.

We asked...

*What stops
you from
getting the
food you want
to eat?*

You told us...

78% are easily able to get the foods they want to include in their diet.

Cost (33%) and time (19%) were the top reasons it is difficult for people to get the foods they want to include in their diet.

Cost of food is the biggest issue for more deprived households, whilst time is the biggest issue for less deprived households.

95% have access to fresh fruit and vegetables near their home

31% grow fruit and or vegetable at home or on an allotment

What we will do with this information...

It is important that we all have access to nutritious food that we want to eat. This survey found that the biggest barriers to a balanced diet are time and money. The cost of living increases may exacerbate this issue in the future.

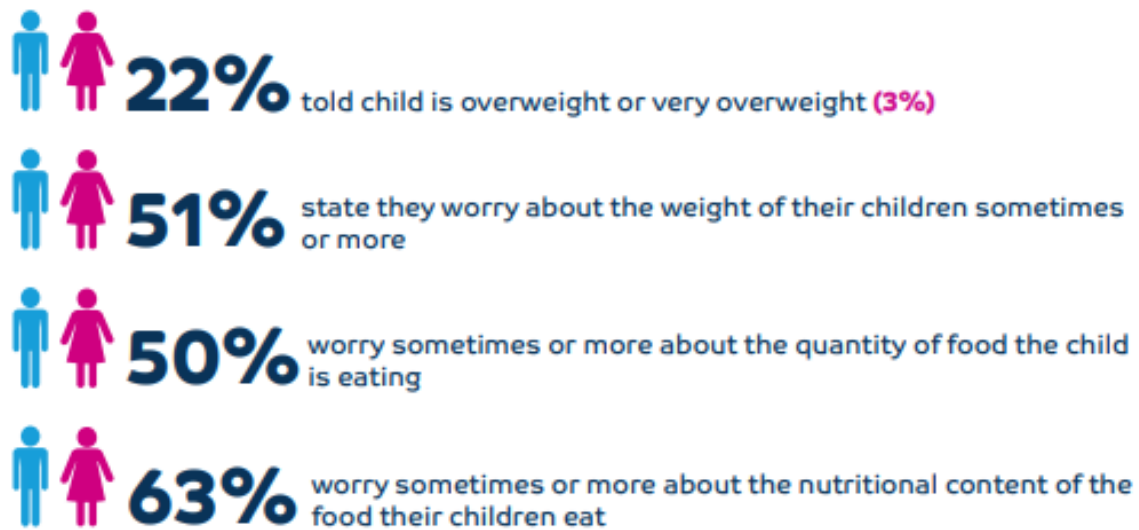
Understanding the factors that influence your ability to have a balanced diet is essential for improving the types of support we offer, the programmes or peer groups that we run in our communities, and the way we collaborate and work with our different networks.

Some work that this will contribute to includes creating a local food strategy and informing the development of the Doncaster Food Network.

We asked...

How do you feel about your children's diet and health?

You told us...



What we will do with this information...

We all want our children and young people to have the best start in life. Both parents and children can feel under pressure when it comes to the food we eat and what we look like, which can make it difficult to have a positive relationship with food and our bodies.

This information will help us to review our approach to certain programmes and the support that we offer, such as the [National Child Measurement Programme](#), to ensure they are delivered as compassionately as possible. We want to put support in place to guide and reassure parents through having potentially difficult conversations with children about their weight, diet, and health.

We asked...

What are your habits around feeding your children?

You told us...

Preparing, cooking for and feeding children, feels 'enjoyable' (18%) and 'structured' (20%), as well as 'stressful' (16%) and 'chaotic' (13%). Feeling changes depending on type of meal (43%) and whether it is a weekday or weekend (55%)

26% offer dessert as a reward to get their child to eat

70% give their children 1-2 snacks per day. The main reason for giving snacks was hunger (62%), but 29% gave snacks as part of routine

41% who take their children to the supermarket with them said this impacts on what they buy.

What we will do with this information...

Feeling positive about food, and having a balanced diet, are both essential to ensuring that our children and young people have the best start in life.

Family mealtimes are usually where children first develop the eating habits that may stay with them throughout their life. Understanding family eating habits, attitudes to food, and behaviour at mealtimes, can help us to provide relevant support to our families.

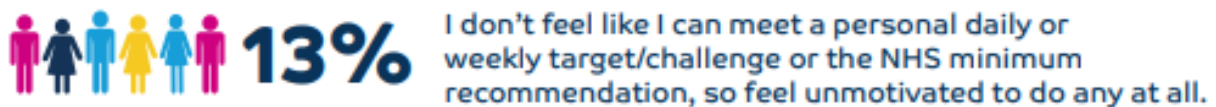
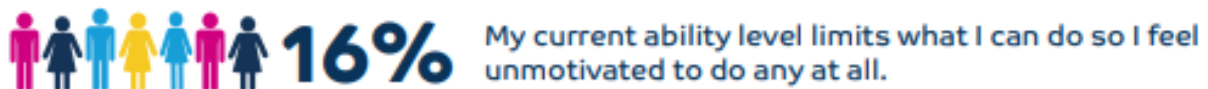
The information gathered by these questions will help to shape our services that support families with children and infant feeding.

We asked...

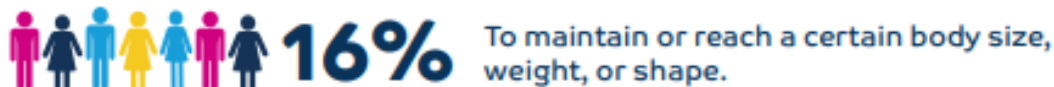
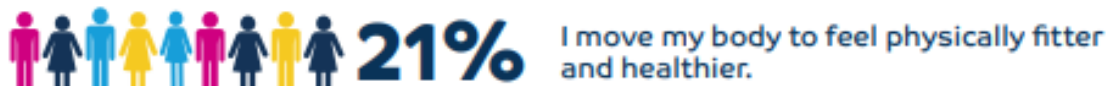
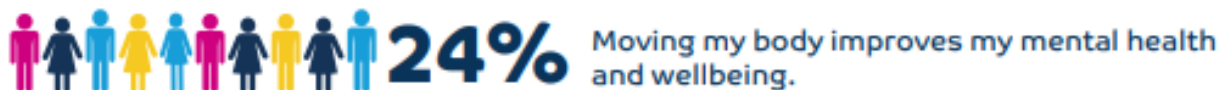
What motivates you or discourages you from being physically active?

You told us...

Top 3 barriers to participating in physical activity:



Top 3 motivations for participating in physical activity:



What we will do with this information...

Regular movement is an important part of a healthy and happy lifestyle. However, we know that some of our residents struggle to meet the recommended 30 minutes of physical activity a day. We want to support our residents of all sizes, abilities, and interests to engage in enjoyable movement, to the degree that they choose.

Understanding the motivations and barriers to physical activity will help us to target the support we offer, particularly the work being done by our [Get Doncaster Moving](#) team. This information will also be shared with organisations across Doncaster who work in physical activity and leisure, to support and inform their work.

Further Support

If you need help from a food bank, you can find information on how to get support here:

- [Food Bank Information - YourLifeDoncaster](#)

If you need help with the cost of living, you can find information on how to get support here:

- [Help for Households Support website](#)

If any of the above information has brought up uncomfortable or difficult feelings for you, please discuss this with someone you trust, such as a friend or family member. Talking about negative feelings and experiences can help us to process them, and can begin the journey of finding help and support.

You can get professional support from:

- Your GP
- [BEAT - The UK's Eating Disorder Charity](#)
- Your local [IAPT](#) service

If you are experiencing a personal crisis and feel you are unable to cope, text SHOUT to 85258. Shout can help with urgent issues such as suicidal thoughts, self-harm, and relationship challenges.

The [Samaritans](#) offer confidential emotional support 24 hours a day – call 116 123 or email jo@samaritans.org.uk