



March 2023

**"I liked getting information tailored to my child/our family. It was good to have information from a nutritionist, so you could be confident it was accurate."**

**Fiona Mc**

Edinburgh Community Food and LINKnet Mentoring are delighted to be working together to deliver a project called Eat Well for Oral Health.

This is a community-based food skills and nutrition project to drive oral health improvements for all living in vulnerable circumstances and affected by socio-economic and race inequalities across Edinburgh and the Lothians, with an intention to scale and spread across other parts of Scotland.

It is designed to increase opportunities for all families from disadvantaged communities to improve their health and wellbeing by sharing diet and nutrition knowledge and enhancing cooking skills and confidence using a community-based approach.



**"I'm delighted to learn how to read food labels to know how much sugar is in my wee one's food." Zahara**



## EDINBURGH COMMUNITY FOOD

Edinburgh Community Food Associate Nutritionists, Jo Howie and Emma Hamill, support people to gain confidence in cooking nutritious affordable meals, understand how diet relates to oral health and provide general oral health awareness information.



## LINKNET MENTORING

LINKnet Mentoring provides oral health support in various ways, including conducting oral health awareness sessions targeting different ethnic groups.

Moreover, the organisation recruits volunteers and encourages them to actively engage with the community.



# JUST A SNIPPET OF WHAT WE'VE DONE IN OUR FIRST YEAR

## Making connections

With Dental Health Support Workers, NHS staff, community organisations and Early Years Centres throughout Edinburgh



## Cooking, Nutrition & Oral Health Awareness

Supported 80 participants, volunteers and support workers through our cooking, nutrition and oral health awareness sessions. Giving them skills and confidence to cook healthy meals and continue to adopt healthy behaviours at home.



## Advocacy

LINKnet registered 25 service users from different ethnicity groups with a dentist, made appointments for them and supported them at the dentist visit.



They were all happy to be registered with a dentist after a long time waiting.

## Fizz Free February

We encouraged people to take part in Fizz Free February, to reduce or quit fizzy and sugary drinks throughout the whole month. Here are 3 mums agreeing to sign the pledge to #gofizzfree!



"When I set myself a challenge like this, I will make sure I do it."

## Weaning and Fussy Eating

We have delivered 28 weaning and fussy eating workshops supporting 220 adults and children. Through promoting healthy eating behaviours, and supporting positive longer term behaviour change, oral health will remain good as children age and move towards school.

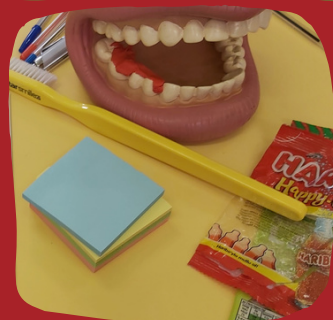


We have also trained 10 health care professionals in fussy eating behaviours. There is a waiting list for another 4 courses!

# LINKNET OUTREACH WORKERS

Our Out-reach workers are delegated to help and encourage disadvantaged members of the community, offering them support and providing opportunities to improve their quality of life. They also help people develop their skills and encourage them to make decisions about their future. Our focus is to make a strong connection with different organisations, groups, specific audiences and with the general public, to uplift and support those who are deprived of certain rights.

**"Good opportunity to ask questions, understand better and clear up misconceptions. I enjoyed finding out about different options at the dentist such as fluoride varnish for children- especially important as not all offered at school"**



# IMPACT

Families report that they are:

- more aware of the importance of eating healthily since using the project.
- more able to cook healthy meals from scratch.
- eating more daily portions of fruit & vegetables.
- have better understanding of the link between food/drink and good oral health.
- practicing good oral health & nutrition recommendations at home.
- more likely to visit their dentist.
- more aware of the importance of oral health care.



To find out more about Eat Well for Oral Health, please contact Jo Howie, [jo.howie@edinburghcommunityfood.org.uk](mailto:jo.howie@edinburghcommunityfood.org.uk), 0131 467 7326 <https://www.edinburghcommunityfood.org.uk/eat-well-for-oral-health> or Shaymaa Bolbol, [volunteer3@linknetmentoring.com](mailto:volunteer3@linknetmentoring.com), 0131 261 4463