



Increasing our uptake of Healthy Start vouchers

Brighton & Hove Food Partnership

Interim report, November 2019

A city-wide campaign

We redesigned our poster and delivered over 1,500 through partners. They were displayed in all the city buses and libraries as well as food banks, community centres, GP surgeries and pharmacies. A social media campaign ran alongside this.

Partners also embedded Healthy Start awareness deeper within their own organisations, such as adding stickers to children's 'red books' to remind midwives and health visitors to talk about Healthy Start.

We delivered 21 'bite sized' training sessions marketed as "Families and food poverty" but focussing on Healthy Start, reaching 278 frontline workers/volunteers. The average score for usefulness was 9 out of 10, and participants reported an increase in knowledge of 94%.

Many participants committed to embedding Healthy Start awareness into their own processes, practices or checklists, and the sessions were great for building a sense of collective mission around raising uptake in our city.

Challenges and learning

Upon receiving detailed uptake data for our three local postcodes, we noticed that one area had 80% uptake, much higher than the city average of 65%, and we couldn't understand why. It turned out that one children's centre receptionist had played a key role in proactively promoting the vouchers via displays and by mentioning it to everyone using the centre. We have shared her good practice at a training session specifically for children's centre admin and reception staff.

Next steps

Over the next six months we'll deliver the final training sessions, and produce a report which evaluates their effectiveness.



"Bite sized sessions are a good way to reach frontline workers – the half hour format plus our willingness to go out to organisations, slotting into their normal staff or volunteer meetings, works well."
Emily O'Brien, Brighton & Hove Food Partnership

Outcomes

By embedding awareness of Healthy Start within local organisations, voucher uptake will continue to increase over time

Although they may seem a relatively small amount of money, Healthy Start Vouchers can add up to over £900 per child – in a world where there is little other support for healthy eating. Bringing this 'missing money' into our city directly addresses household food insecurity.