

News story: PHE launches Change4Life campaign around children's snacking

Public Health England (PHE) is helping parents take control of their children's snacking by launching the first Change4Life campaign promoting healthier snacks.

This is because half of children's sugar intake, currently around 7 sugar cubes a day, comes from unhealthy snacks and sugary drinks, leading to obesity and dental decay.

Each year children are consuming almost 400 biscuits; more than 120 cakes, buns and pastries; around 100 portions of sweets; nearly 70 of both chocolate bars and ice creams; washed down with over 150 juice drink pouches and cans of fizzy drink.

On average, children are consuming at least 3 unhealthy snacks and sugary drinks a day, with around a third consuming 4 or more. The overall result is that children consume 3 times more sugar than is recommended.

The new Change4Life campaign encourages parents to look for '100 calorie snacks, two a day max' to help them purchase healthier snacks than the ones they currently buy.

Selected supermarkets are supporting the campaign. As part of their wider work promoting good health, Tesco will help parents – instore and online – choose affordable, healthier snacks that are 100 calories or less. Co-op will also provide tasty and healthy snacking products, making it easier for customers to make healthier choices on the go.

Parents can also get money-off vouchers from Change4Life to help them try healthier snack options, including malt loaf, lower-sugar fromage frais, and drinks with no added sugar.

Many of the unhealthy snacks children consume regularly are high in sugar and also typically high in calories, for example:

- an ice-cream contains around 175 calories
- a pack of crisps contains around 190 calories
- a chocolate bar contains around 200 calories
- a pastry contains around 270 calories

The '100 calorie snacks, two a day max' tip applies to all snacks apart from fruit and vegetables, as children should also be encouraged to eat a variety of these to achieve their 5 A Day.

Dr Alison Tedstone, Chief Nutritionist at Public Health England, said:

The true extent of children's snacking habits is greater than the

odd biscuit or chocolate bar. Children are having unhealthy snacks throughout the day and parents have told us they're concerned.

To make it easier for busy families, we've developed a simple rule of thumb to help them move towards healthier snacking – look for 100 calories snacks, two a day max.

Justine Roberts, CEO and founder of Mumsnet, said:

The volume of sugar kids are getting from snacks and sugary drinks alone is pretty mind-blowing, and it can often be difficult to distinguish which snacks are healthy and which aren't.

This rule of thumb from Change4Life will help parents make healthier choices, which can only be a good thing.

PHE's improved Change4Life 'Food Scanner' app also shows parents how many calories, sugar, salt and saturated fat is in their food to help make healthier choices easier. It can be downloaded from the App Store or Google Play.

With a third of children leaving primary school overweight or obese, tackling obesity requires wider action and is not just limited to individual efforts from parents. PHE is working with the food industry to cut 20% of sugar from the products children consume most by 2020, with work to reduce calories due to start in 2018.

[Press release: Foreign Secretary statement on Iran](#)

The Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

The UK is watching events in Iran closely. We believe that there should be meaningful debate about the legitimate and important issues the protesters are raising and we look to the Iranian authorities to permit this.

We also believe that, particularly as we enter the 70th anniversary year of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, people should be able to have freedom of expression and to demonstrate peacefully within the law.

We regret the loss of life that has occurred in the protests in Iran, and call on all concerned to refrain from violence and for international obligations on human rights to be observed.

Press release: 30,000 respond to ivory consultation ban during Christmas week

There has been a massive public response to the Government's proposed ban on ivory sales – with over 60,000 responses to the public consultation, making it one of Defra's most popular ever. Of the responses analysed so far the overwhelming majority support a ban.

In the past week more than 30,000 responses were submitted before the consultation closed.

Plans announced by Environment Secretary Michael Gove to impose a ban on ivory sales will protect elephants and help combat poaching by removing opportunities for criminals to trade illegally-poached ivory.

Unlike previous proposals, these plans cover items of all ages, not only those created after a certain date.

Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

It is imperative we halt the decline in the elephant population to protect these wonderful animals for future generations. Ivory should never be seen as a commodity for financial gain or a status symbol and we are ready to take radical and robust action to protect one of the world's most iconic and treasured species.

It's incredibly heartening that so many people have contributed to our consultation. The response underlines that we are a nation which cares for wildlife. In 2018 the UK must be front and centre of global efforts to end this insidious trade.

Tanya Steele, WWF CEO said:

The scale of the public response – including over 60,000 who signed a WWF petition – shows just how strongly the British public feel about the need to end this mindless slaughter.

The UK Government must now act quickly. On average 55 elephants a day are killed. Every day we wait is a day too long.

The number of elephants has declined by almost a third in the last decade and around 20,000 a year are still being slaughtered due to the global demand for ivory.

The decline of elephants would also deprive some of the poorest countries in the world of their valuable natural capital, affecting economic growth and sustainable development.

As profits become ever greater, the illegal wildlife trade has become a transnational organised enterprise, estimated to be worth between £7 and £17 billion a year.

The ban would reaffirm the UK's global leadership on this critical issue, demonstrating the UK's belief that the ivory trade should become a thing of the past.

It comes as the largest market for ivory, China, has introduced a ban on all trading and processing activities which came in to force at the end of 2017.

This new ban builds on Government work both at home and overseas to tackle poaching and the illegal ivory trade. The UK military trains an elite force of anti-poachers in African countries, and Border Force officers share their expertise in identifying smuggled ivory with counterparts worldwide to stop wildlife trafficking.

In October 2018, the UK will host a fourth international conference on the illegal wildlife, bringing global leaders to London to tackle the strategic challenges of the trade. This follows the ground breaking London 2014 conference on the illegal wildlife trade, and subsequent conferences in Botswana and Vietnam.

The Government will publish a response to the [consultation](#) shortly.

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News story: DFID staff recognised in New Year Honours

Bill Kilby was made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for services to International Development.

Two individuals named on 2018's New Year's Honours List have been recognised for their work at the Department for International Development.

Dr Phil Evans has been made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE), for his services to humanitarian relief, while Bill Kilby has been made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for services to International Development.

International Development Secretary, Penny Mordaunt, said:

UK Aid has saved lives and delivered hope in some of the poorest, most desperate and disaster stricken parts of the world throughout 2017. I am delighted to see that the individual contributions of Phil and Bill have been recognised in this year's Honours and I congratulate them both.

For many, the festive season is a time for family and friends to come together. Yet so often, our humanitarian workers sacrifice this time to ensure UK aid gets to those who need it most, saving and improving millions of lives around the world.

We can all be exceptionally proud of the good that they do.