

The impact of labeled food choices on the relation between food attitudes and food behavior in 6-to 9-year-old children

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Abstract

This paper tested children's implicit and explicit food attitudes and examined whether attitudes can predict food choice between healthy and unhealthy food items with different claims and emoticons. 216 children participated. The results demonstrate that in younger children (aged 6 and 7), implicit attitudes are poorly developed and do not relate to food choice. In contrast, explicit attitudes are developed and positively related to choosing healthy food items. Furthermore, at the transition from age 8 to 9, implicit attitudes become more pronounced and ultimately affect food choice. Labeling food items with claims and emoticons has an impact on choice and it can be concluded that certain claims and emoticons influence the food choice. The results can help scholars identify (a) developmental window during which children's attitudes about healthy food are most malleable and (b) which messages and emoticons can encourage children to make healthier choices.

Subject Areas: *Attitude, Consumer Behaviour, Decision-Making*

Track: Consumer Behaviour