

Schools, TV and Children's Implicit and Explicit Attitudes to Food

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Abstract

This paper considers the nature and interrelationships between primary school children's implicit and explicit attitudes to food. Data were collected in 15 Croatian schools (n=1356 children; ages 5-10). Measurement of implicit attitudes occurred using a child-friendly adaptation of the Implicit Association Test (Ch-IAT). The analysis identifies the determinants of these attitudes, considering the impact of television viewing and school gardens. Children self-report they like unhealthy foods more than healthy foods (explicit attitude), but implicitly children overall associate healthy food with being tasty, an association which was stronger with older children. Regarding determinants, we find that television viewing increases the appeal of unhealthy foods, while the presence of a school garden appears to have no significant effect. Both implicit and explicit measures predicted higher recent consumption of healthy foods and beliefs about healthy foods making one strong.

Keywords: *Explicit attitude; Implicit attitude; Children*

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