

# Northumbria Research Link

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# Healthy Living Lab: Public Engagement

Professor Greta Defeyter  
Northumbria University



GETTY IMAGES

# Upstream Engagement

- Public is viewed as a research collaborator or scientific citizen (Irwin, 2001)
- Dialogue between non-expert public groups and academic experts
- Sharing with and learning from non-expert public groups







# Conference Guide



**School and Community Breakfast Clubs:  
Breakfast on a Plate... Delivery to Impact  
8th & 9th November 2010**



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The Big Breakfast

## The Big Breakfast

Northumbria University is co-hosting an event aimed at boosting awareness into 'the most important meal of the day.'

The Inaugural Knowledge Exchange Conference on school and community breakfast clubs is a joint venture organised by Northumbria University, Kellogg's, and leading educational charity ContinYou.

This knowledge exchange conference entitled: School and Community Breakfast Club: Breakfast on a plate - Delivery to Impact, aims to develop ways to improve communication and co-ordination between breakfast club organisers, supporting organisations, nutritionists, academics and user groups.

The event will feature a keynote address from Rt. Hon Anne Milton Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Public Health who will address the summit via a specially pre-recorded message.

The conference will also feature exhibitions from Kellogg's, ContinYou, School Food Trust, Food for Life Partnerships and many more.

Event coordinator, Dr. Greta Defeyter, from Northumbria's School of Life Sciences, explained: "Over the last decade there has been a substantial rise in the number of school and community breakfast clubs in the UK and these have brought significant benefits to children's health and education."

"However, these clubs are disparate and there is a lack of cohesion. This knowledge exchange event will enable academics, head teachers, policymakers, and charities to share knowledge and discuss challenges facing breakfast clubs."

The event will feature facilitated discussions which will cover the social and economic impact of school breakfast clubs children's nutrition and food choices, the effect of breakfast club attendance on cognitive and academic performance, and the latest political and economic thinking on the sustainability of breakfast clubs.

Northumbria University has a strong research group investigating the impact of breakfast and breakfast club attendance on children's educational performance, nutrition, social behaviours, and community cohesion. The group has presented their findings at the Westminster Education Forum and Westminster Food and Nutrition Forum and major International conferences. Dr. Defeyter's group has collaborated with Kellogg's and ContinYou: who between them have funded over 500 breakfast clubs in the UK's most



Over the last decade there has been a substantial rise in the number of school and community breakfast clubs in the UK









## THE IMPACT OF PRIMARY SCHOOL BREAKFAST CLUBS IN DEPRIVED AREAS OF LONDON

### Key finding

Key Stage 2 results were better in primary schools in deprived areas of London one year after introducing breakfast clubs compared with the results of a comparable group of schools without breakfast clubs.

#### Overview

In February 2007, 13 primary schools with a breakfast club and 9 primary schools without a breakfast club, all from deprived areas of London, were recruited to take part in a study to determine the impact of breakfast clubs.

Key stage 2 average point scores for all schools were obtained from the Department for Education and Skills (now the Department for Education).

An in-depth qualitative interview was carried out in all schools. In schools with breakfast clubs they were asked why they had started a breakfast club and the perceived benefits. In schools without breakfast clubs they were asked their views about breakfast clubs and why they did not have one.



"Not all these problems are solved but there is a definite change in the children. At the moment as well as the club helps the health of our children."



"The healthy diet and scheme has had an impact on breakfast clubs and breakfast clubs are not an option as it is better with the club to have a more quiet impact."

#### Conclusions

The present study adds to the growing bank of evidence that breakfast clubs can have a beneficial impact, specifically on academic performance and punctuality.

It will require a larger study in more representative samples and with better assessment of potential confounders to confirm the findings presented here and the role of food per se.



"The group used in particular used to come every day with a bag of sweets. Now they have a proper breakfast and it's a different picture."

#### Results

Approximately 13% of pupils on the school rolls attended the breakfast club, with 10% of pupils attending the breakfast club regularly (three or more days a week).

Schools started breakfast clubs to address problems relating to children being hungry on arrival at school and by mid-morning showing signs of tiredness, lack of concentration, and poor behaviour or learning.

Pupils most likely to attend the breakfast clubs were those who had been arriving early because their parents needed to be at work or college.

Average KS2 results were statistically significantly higher by 0.72 points in the year after the introduction of a breakfast club compared with a non-significant 0.27 point increase in the control schools.

Schools believed the benefits included, improving children's social skills, punctuality of children who were frequently late and health and concentration levels. Children were calmer, happier and had fewer behaviour and learning issues, and were unwell less often.

Furthermore, the introduction of a breakfast club was seen to have a positive and synergistic impact on other activities in the school.

Amongst the control schools, the main reason for not wanting to start a breakfast club was that it was morally wrong to provide children with breakfast, as this was the domain and responsibility of the family. There were also concerns about additional demands placed on staff, the cost of staffing, and the ability to maintain the programme indefinitely.



"I get children who have odd diets, some eat sweets and won't eat and when they do eat things they eat things people breakfast and healthy ones in school. Most of these problems are solved but there is a definite change in the children. At the moment as well as the club helps the health of our children."



Cymru Ifanc  
Young Wales

www.cymru.gov.uk

## Primary School Free Breakfast Initiative

The Welsh Assembly Government first introduced this initiative in September 2004 and is committed to providing for all children of primary school age registered in maintained primary schools in Wales to have a free, healthy breakfast at school each day. Free breakfasts are not a standalone initiative, but support our **whole school approach** to improving nutrition in schools.

#### Why provide breakfast?

##### Quotes from headteachers:

"The breakfast scheme is a valuable service to our pupils. It has improved attendance, combated lateness, encouraged children to eat breakfast and given the pupils a chance to come in and sit and chat with their friends."

"Some parents are saying their children never ate breakfast or fruit before, but now they're eating healthily. This has a knock-on effect in the classroom because they're more alert and attentive."



#### How does the initiative work?

The Welsh Assembly Government funds the initiative via a specific grant scheme to local authorities and has produced guidelines providing advice on its operation. All primary schools have the flexibility within the free breakfast guidelines to decide how they provide and run the free breakfast sessions.

Breakfast provision should normally be delivered as a short period (for example 30 minutes) before the start of the normal school activities. The breakfast offered should be healthy. There are 4 food groups - milk-based drinks or products; cereals - not sugar coated; fruit; breads.

#### Take-up and evaluation

More than 1,000 (67%) primary schools are now participating in the initiative.

An independent evaluation undertaken by Cardiff Institute for Society, Health and Ethics (CSHE) indicated that this initiative represents a potentially effective approach for influencing dietary habits in the long term, given that many of them develop at this age. Staff perceive that pupils attending the free breakfast scheme in schools are benefiting from it. Even in the initial stages of implementation, staff identify outcomes relating to health behaviour and psychosocial health and learning.



www.wales.gov.uk/breakfast







- <https://www.makewav.es/post/185152/title/frontstreetreportersatthebreakfastclubconference>



# Examples of Provision

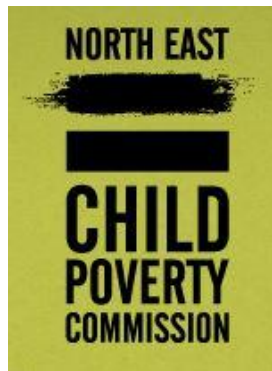


[www.makelunch.org.uk](http://www.makelunch.org.uk)

51 clubs 12,000



<http://accordgroup.org.uk/articles/444-Holiday-learning-food-and-play-for-families-who-need-it-most->



<http://www.nechildpoverty.org.uk/>

5 Ongoing projects

***ASPE Snapshot Survey Feb 2014, 120 responses in first 24 hours 72% stated holiday hunger is an issue in their area (Defeyter & Graham, 2014)***



North Ayrshire  
88% =124 FSM

# Why: We don't do it for the money!





## Brain Zone: Centre for Life, Newcastle upon Tyne



## Dr Julie Young: British Science Festival and Great North Run



The 'Be Full of B.E.A.N.S (Brain Energy Activity Nutrition Success)' exhibition, is aimed at children and parents and is an opportunity for academics to share their research to the general public in a fun and accessible way. Advice is provided on how to increase fruit and vegetable intake, how to increase physical activity levels, as well as the importance of food and cognitive function.



## Presenting at Westminster: Blackpool Council Free Breakfast Club Programme



## INTRODUCTION

This event presents how breakfast programmes will continue delivering health, educational and social benefits to 25 schools across Denmark as part of the ongoing work of the Danish Food Bank in tackling food poverty and food waste in Denmark, together with its partners.

The partnership with Kallogg's has created numerous breakfast programmes for children in low socio-economic status communities. This session will discuss the social and nutritional benefits of breakfast programmes as documented in numerous studies globally and how we can all make a valuable and ongoing contribution to the health and well-being of children across Europe.

#BreakfastForBetterDays

### HOSTED BY



**Christel Schaldemose, Member, European Parliament**  
([MP @SchaldemoseMEP](#))

Christel Schaldemose is Member of the European Parliament since 2009 (SMD) and member of the Danish social democratic delegation. Within the Parliament she is a member of the Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) and the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI). Previously she was Secretary General of the Danish Adult Education Council. Throughout her political work, she has engaged actively in consumer, food, health and sustainability related issues that benefit citizens.

### MODERATOR



**Greta Deleyter, Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor Strategic Planning and Engagement, Faculty of Health & Life Sciences, University of Northumbria**  
([MP @NorthumbriaUni](#))

Greta Deleyter is a Professor of Enterprise within the Department of Psychology at Northumbria University and is currently Director of Business and Employer Engagement and Director of Healthy Living. Her research focus is on child psychology, with past work areas including children's understanding of property ownership and the effects of breakfast club attendance on social behaviors and cognition. An influential academic, Greta is a member of various committees including the All Party Parliamentary School Food Group, the North East of England Branch of BPS and the National Steering Group for Breakfast Clubs. Previously she has served as an advisor to the Westminster Health and Education Forum and presented a number of Parliamentary Papers both to the forum and the House of Lords.

