



Thinking about our diet and future health

This activity will stimulate initial thinking and discussion about students' relationship with food and their food environment. Students post answers to a simple 'YES/NO/Don't Know' survey. Survey questions are posted around the room on large sheets of paper (see attached). Students are given small stickers or marker pens to place their responses. They can be encouraged to make "Yes-but" or "It depends" statements as they discuss reasons for their responses. Students then explore scientific evidence about the association between early-life nutrition and life-long wellbeing before re-visiting their responses post-learning to assess shifts in thinking and to stimulate further discussion.

Materials and preparation

Small coloured Post-it notes or stickers (to distribute to students)

Printed question/answer sheets 1-6 (A2 or larger) to put up on classroom walls

Instructions for teachers

1. Tell students that they will be asked for their opinions via a class survey. The survey will show their thoughts about factors that influence the foods they eat/food choices that they make and the long term impacts of healthy/unhealthy food choices. Explain that you will discuss the survey results as a class. Explain that students will be asked to revisit the survey after completing the learning module to see if their thoughts/opinions have changed.
2. Students are to visit each of the question sheets in any order at all, but at each question they are to stop and carefully consider their response. They are not to discuss their thoughts with friends at this stage. Students place a sticker where they see their answer sitting — and they need to be able to discuss and defend the reasons for their decision. The stickers are not to cover any other sticker but can be placed close together—so that it is possible to see clusters of responses.
3. Once all stickers have been placed, ask students to pair up and explain their answers for each question to each other. Gather the class together and engage the whole class — What were common themes? Select students to explain their answers.

Introduce the learning:

Scientists know that our the state of our own health right now influences the health of future generations— the DOHaD story tells the science of how and why we know this.

Learning resources

4. Continue the learning and discussion by engaging students with scientific evidence in the 'DOHaD story' (see LENSscience student resource '[My First 1000 days](#)' and PowerPoint slides with accompanying narrative.
5. Post-learning, ask students to re-visit their original survey answers—what has changed? What do they now know? How might this new knowledge influence their behaviour and dietary choices? What could they do, right now, to ensure their own health and the health of any future children they may have?

The food I eat now will affect my health in the future

YES

NO

Don't
know

What I eat now will affect the health of my future children

YES

NO

Don't
know

The food a woman eats when she is pregnant affects the health of her babies

YES

NO

Don't
know

The food a man eats will affect the health of his children when they are babies

YES

NO

Don't
know

The food a woman eats when pregnant will affect the health of her children when they grow up

YES

NO

Don't know

The food a man eats will affect the health of his children when they grow up

YES

NO

Don't know