



The Victorian Population Health Survey (2006) identified that:

- Only about 7% of adult men and 13% of adult women in the Southern Metropolitan Region ate the recommended five serves of vegetables per day
- About 44% of men and 51% of women ate two serves of fruit per day, and
- Across Victoria, younger adults, low income groups and people who rate their health as only fair or poor are less likely to eat fruit and vegetables than other groups (figures for the inner south east alone are not available).



The survey also indicated that:

- About 38% of men and 26% of women in the Southern Metropolitan Region were classified as overweight, and
- About 14% of both men and women as obese.

The rate of overweight in Australia is increasing and there is particular concern about the increasing rate in children.



The Inner South East Partnership in Community and Health (ISEPICH) is a partnership of 50 health and community support agencies in the Cities of Glen Eira, Stonnington, and Port Phillip. Food Security is an ISEPICH Health Promotion priority.

Healthy eating contributes to good health, as well as enjoyment of life, while poor nutrition (including over-nutrition) is a risk factor for many diseases, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and some cancers.

Other conditions that have a nutritional component, including dehydration and gastro-enteritis, dental conditions, and iron deficiency anaemia, are also responsible for a significant proportion of hospital admissions in the inner south east.

Organisations and community members in the inner south east are working on a range of strategies to improve food security and to build skills, knowledge and motivation in relation to healthy eating. A list of current activities is available.

You are invited to be involved in activities to promote food security and healthy eating.

For information please contact the ISEPICH Health Promotion Coordinator on 9209 6394 or visit www.isepich.org and go to the Integrated Health Promotion page.

Many groups in the Inner South East may not have secure access to affordable, nutritious, culturally acceptable food.

Food Security & Healthy Eating in the Inner South East



ENCOURAGING HEALTHY EATING IN OUR COMMUNITY

To encourage healthy eating we need to address both structural and personal factors to ensure:

- 1 That there is reliable access for all to healthy, affordable and culturally appropriate food and clean water (food security).
- 2 That individuals, families and communities have the skills, knowledge and motivation to support healthy eating.

WHAT IS FOOD SECURITY?



Being food secure means having access to an adequate food supply in terms of food production, processing and transportation to an accessible location. The price, quality and availability of food need to support the whole population and be accessible to individuals and families of diverse backgrounds.

Barriers include low income, distance to shops, lack of transport, and lack of storage, preparation and cooking facilities.

Research has identified many groups in the Inner South East who may not have secure access to affordable, nutritious, culturally acceptable food, including:

- People living in poverty
- Families with children
- Young people
- Older people
- Indigenous Australians
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- People with a disability
- People experiencing homelessness
- People with alcohol and drug issues
- Street sex workers

Key issues to consider in the Inner South East are:

- Gentrification
- Housing stress
- Physical and mental health issues
- Language and cultural barriers
- Transport barriers
- The location of affordable food outlets and delivered food services in the region.

The ISEPICH Nutrition and Food Security Action Group surveyed agencies in 2004-06 and found that while there was concern about food security, there was a need to build capacity to address the issue. ISEPICH members are working with a range of stakeholders to increase awareness of, and knowledge about, food security.

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND MOTIVATION



Skills, knowledge, motivation, time and social support are also important for food security and healthy eating, at individual, family and community level.

It is difficult for individuals to change their food purchasing and eating habits if family, community and social settings do not support them.



Examples of factors that may affect people's skills, knowledge and motivation in relation to healthy eating include:

- The increasing cost of fresh food (which may worsen with climate change)
- The promotion of processed foods that are high in energy and low in nutrients (also known as energy-dense, nutrient-poor or EDNP food)
- EDNP food is often cheaper per kilojoule than fresh food, therefore can be attractive to people on low incomes, as it is more filling for the same price
- The promotion of idealised body-image and fad diets (fad diets are unhealthy, are a risk factor for overweight because people who diet are likely to put on weight in the long term, and increase the risk of eating disorders)
- Lack of access to education or information about food preparation and healthy eating, e.g. through language barriers, low education or literacy, or gender stereotyping
- Poor mental or physical health may impact negatively on people's motivation and capacity to obtain, prepare or eat healthy food
- Being time poor
- Low income and disadvantage in general.

It is clear that there are a range of social and economic factors that affect food security and influence people's skills, knowledge and motivation. In promoting nutrition and food security it is important to address these factors as well as working with individuals and families.

Food security: "the state in which all persons obtain a nutritionally adequate, culturally acceptable diet at all times through local non-emergency sources." (Community Food Security Coalition 1995)