

FEEDS (Focus of Early Eating, Drinking and Swallowing) Study Summary

Thank you to all those who took part in the FEEDS study! Our report summarising the study has been published.

To read a summary for parents and non-health professionals go to:

<https://www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk/hta/hta25220/#/plain-english-summary>

To read a summary for health professionals go to:

<https://www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk/hta/hta25220/#/scientific-summary>

To read the full report go to:

<https://www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk/hta/hta25220/#/abstract>.

What was the study about?

Our aim was to find out about the strategies parents of young children with developmental difficulties used at home to help improve children's eating, drinking and swallowing difficulties. We worked with a parent advisory group throughout the research. The study was funded by the NHS research funder the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) – they were interested to know whether strategies for eating, drinking and swallowing difficulties could be tested further in future research (in clinical trials).

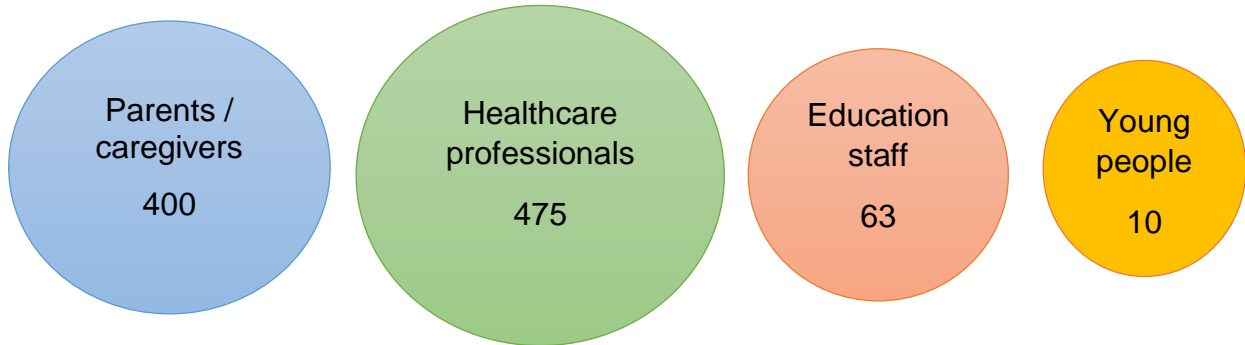
Study Overview

In the study we:

- Looked at existing published research about strategies for improving children's eating, drinking and swallowing difficulties
- Completed a national survey with parents / carers, health professionals and school staff to gather information on the strategies parents used at home
- Identified which aspects of health were important to focus on when measuring whether strategies are effective (outcomes)
- Identified ways to measure improvement
- Held focus groups with parents and health professionals to discuss our findings and explore designs for future research studies
- Completed another survey with parents / carers and health professionals to identify which strategies and outcomes were most important
- Held workshops with parents and health professionals to share our findings and agree on how we would organise future research
- Held focus groups with young people to establish which of the identified outcomes were most meaningful to them

Who took part in the study?

947 people took part in our study. This included:



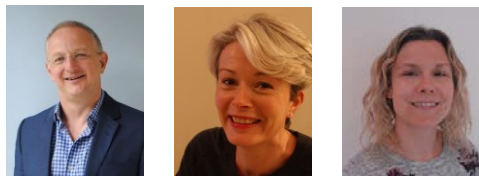
Study Findings

- Overall, research about parent-delivered strategies and how to measure improvements in eating and drinking is of poor quality
- A wide variety of strategies to improve eating and drinking are used by parents / carers: 19 strategies were thought to be most useful by parents / carers and health professionals
- Parents / carers and health professionals agreed on 10 areas they would most like to improve
- Parents / carers and health professionals were enthusiastic about a 'toolkit' of strategies so that they could choose the right strategy at the right time. The study team are now working to develop the FEEDS toolkit.

What will happen next?

The FEEDS toolkit is being developed but is not currently available for use. If you would be interested in using the FEEDS toolkit in the future, please let us know at Feeds@ncl.ac.uk so that we can contact you when it becomes available.

Thank you again for your support for this important study



**Professor Jeremy Parr, Dr Lindsay Pennington and Dr Helen Taylor
on behalf of the FEEDS Study Team**

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