



**EVALUATION OF THE ‘*TACKLING CHILDHOOD OBESITY WITH HENRY*’ E-COURSE DESIGNED FOR PROFESSIONALS WORKING IN CHILD CARE AND HEALTH SETTINGS**

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## ABSTRACT

HENRY – Health Exercise Nutrition for the Really Young – trains practitioners to work more sensitively and effectively with babies, preschool children and their parents around obesity and lifestyle concerns. It places a particular emphasis on parenting/carer skills and is one of very few initiatives that focuses on the first two years of life. The *Tackling Childhood Obesity* e-course was developed following rigorous review of the research literature and consultation with experts. It offers child care providers and health professionals a readily accessible way to enhance their knowledge, skills and understanding in this area.

*Evaluation:* The evaluation was conducted in two phases between March and June 2008. 535 participants were recruited from 115 Sure Start Children's centres (a UK government initiative for young families in disadvantaged areas similar to Head Start). On completion of the e-course they completed an on-line assessment and evaluation form involving quantitative and open ended questions

*Results:* The participants came from a broad professional background, mostly nursery nurses, teachers, nurse practitioners and dietitians; 11% had no professional qualifications. 93% worked in childcare and preschool settings. 178 (33%) completed the course in 2-3 hours; 207 (39%) took 3-4 hours. Most accessed the course while at work.

98% evaluated the course overall as useful or very useful, with 97% reporting that it had improved their knowledge about obesity and how to work effectively with young families. 94% unexpectedly reported that they thought it would enhance their skills as well as their knowledge. 98% said they would recommend the course to colleagues. Their on-line comments provided a rich fabric regarding the value of the course with suggestions for how it might be enhanced.

*Conclusions:* The e-course helps child care providers and health professionals to gain the knowledge and skills required to work effectively with young children and their parents in the area of obesity prevention. It fills a gap in the field in that it targets babies as well as preschoolers and addresses the parenting and carer skills required for lifestyle change. It offers a way to reach and train large numbers of practitioners at minimal cost.

## **BACKGROUND**

Childhood obesity is now recognised as a public health issue of epidemic proportions. Epidemiological studies demonstrate that ever-younger children are affected. Latest figures show that as many as 1 in 4 children are overweight on starting school and 1 in 10 are obese<sup>1</sup>, and systematic reviews indicate that rapid weight gain in the first months of life is associated with later obesity<sup>2</sup>. To date efforts to address childhood obesity have focused on school-age children<sup>3,4</sup>, but in the face of this evidence there is an imperative to intervene much earlier in life. In 2006 the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health set up an expert advisory group to consider how the College might support research into obesity. In the light of this evidence they decided to focus on the early years.

Given the paucity of research relating to effective interventions for this age group, a grant was obtained from the Child Growth Foundation to ascertain key stakeholders' views about what was required. Parents of obese babies and preschool children were interviewed and reported their discontent at their experience in primary care. They described how the advice given was unhelpful, and at times judgemental or dismissive<sup>5</sup>. Focus groups of health visitors (nurse practitioners who deliver well child care to children aged 0-5 years) reported a lack of training and continuing professional development in this area and a lack of confidence in discussing obesity with parents, particularly if they were obese<sup>5</sup>.

These findings suggested the need for training for practitioners to enhance to help them develop the skills to work effectively with babies, preschoolers and their parents to achieve lifestyle change. Recognising that most young children spend extended time in childcare, a needs assessment was also carried out involving 12 Sure Start Children's Centres. It was clear that a training course to develop the knowledge and skills of the Early Years workforce would be welcomed. Children's Centre directors identified among their staff a reluctance to address lifestyle issues and obesity with client families for fear of causing offence. They expressed a need for training that would offer a holistic approach to help them develop a co-ordinated range of activities for their communities. The majority also mentioned that there was significant obesity among the workforce, and voiced the desire for staff to benefit from training for themselves and their families. The need for consistency across multi-agency professionals was also considered important. Combining parenting skills and a sensitive approach as well as key information about nutrition was regarded as essential.

The need for training for child care providers, community practitioners and health professionals was evident. In 2006 a further grant was obtained from the Child Growth Foundation to develop and pilot training and a package of resources. This was followed by substantial grants from the UK Department of Health and the UK Department for Children, Schools and Families to refine HENRY and offer it widely across the country as part of its strategy to halt the rise of obesity in the preschool years.

### **HENRY – Health Exercise Nutrition for the Really Young**

HENRY today is a non-profit organisation with charitable status. It aims to help childcare providers, community practitioners and health professionals enhance their skills so that they are more effective, sensitive and confident when working with very young children and their parents around obesity and lifestyle change

### **Developmental stages for HENRY as a whole**

HENRY was developed by Professor Mary Rudolf, consultant paediatrician and professor of child health and Candida Hunt, parenting educator and training specialist. Support was provided by the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health obesity advisory group. The stages of HENRY's development involved:

- i. The needs assessment and qualitative research described above
- ii. Rigorous review of the literature for interventions and other evidence relating to the development of lifestyle behaviour and obesity in order to write a curriculum tailored to the needs of children aged 0-5 years
- iii. Discussion with experts in the fields of parenting and obesity.
- iv. Engagement with a creative team from Haberman LLP to use the Glugs, a fun group of carton animals to illustrate training materials and resources for parents and carers
- v. Development of a curriculum for training, and piloting of courses to ascertain practitioners' views.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum focuses on 5 lifestyle areas

- Carer/parenting qualities and skills
- Eating behaviour
- Nutrition
- Active play
- Emotional well being

HENRY is underpinned by the Family Partnership Model<sup>6</sup>, combined with a process of reflective practice<sup>7</sup> and strengths-based support incorporating techniques from brief solution-focused therapy<sup>8</sup> to encourage lifestyle change. The approach is similar to Motivational Interviewing and differs from the traditional 'expert' model, providing practitioners with a more helpful way to engage with parents and encourage them to make lifestyle change. The HENRY approach is fully described elsewhere<sup>9</sup>.

### **Training opportunities offered by HENRY**

HENRY offers a variety of training opportunities:

- An e-learning course *Tackling childhood obesity with HENRY*
- Core training – 2 day courses to help practitioners in their 1-1 work with families
- Group facilitation training for practitioners wishing to deliver *Let's Get Healthy with HENRY* parent groups
- Training the trainer courses
- A HENRY toolkit for use by practitioners who have attended the on-line or face-to-face training (see Box 1)

#### **BOX 1: THE HENRY TOOLKIT OF RESOURCES**

Tackling Child Obesity with HENRY handbook for practitioners  
Tuning in to Mealtimes DVD to promote responsive feeding  
Poster: Steps in Growing, including hunger and fullness cues  
Chart: A guide to portion sizes for the under 5s  
Placemat: Eatwell plate  
Food and activity diary  
Family reward charts and stickers  
Ball and activity ideas sheet  
Story books  
Game: Let's Go Shopping

## The HENRY e-learning course

In 2007 HENRY was commissioned by the UK Department of Children, Schools and Families to design the e-learning course in order to ensure that HENRY training would be available to childcare providers across the country. The *Tackling Childhood Obesity with HENRY* e-course was developed and piloted in 2008.

The course aims to alert practitioners to their role in working with very young children and their parents around lifestyle issues; provide them with the knowledge base they require; give them the latest evidence relating to preschool child obesity and to help them reflect on the personal qualities and skills needed to be most effective.

The course takes about 3 hours to complete and comprises six sessions:

- Session 1:* The obesity epidemic and the Henry approach
- Session 2:* Healthy Eating Patterns (including responsive feeding training)
- Session 3:* Addressing food (including weaning issues and portion sizes)
- Session 4:* Being Active (including screentime)
- Session 5:* Parenting for a healthy lifestyle (and the skills required by carers as well as parents)
- Session 6:* Recommended reading and resources

The course is interactive and designed to be engaging. It does not require a high degree of literacy, and can be accessed by the hearing impaired as the audio component is accompanied by written text. Each session concludes with a formative assessment so learners can feel confident that they are ready to move on.

The course concludes with a summative assessment. A passmark of 75% is required to receive HENRY certification (a personalised certificate, see attached document, is printed off by the learner). Repeat assessments can be taken if the learner is unsuccessful on the first attempt, or would simply like to review the course at a later stage. E-learners can also purchase the HENRY course book<sup>9</sup> and it is hoped that the full HENRY toolkit will also become available in the near future.

The e-learning course<sup>10</sup> was developed in collaboration with the Virtual College UK who provide the platform along with 24 hour technical support to answer learners' needs. The course can be purchased by individuals or organisations, who can acquire a group license. Organisations are provided with feedback so that they can keep track regarding numbers accessing the course and their successful completion of the on-line assessment.

## EVALUATION OF THE HENRY E-LEARNING COURSE

### Methods

The pilot for the HENRY e-course was conducted with staff working in Sure Start Children's Centres in England. Sure Start is a government programme which aims to achieve better outcomes for children, parents and communities by increasing the availability of childcare for all children, improving health and emotional development for young children and supporting parents. Sure Start has similarities with Head Start, but in addition to offering childcare in disadvantaged areas, it provides a number of other community facilities and services. Staff working in Children's Centres include childcare providers, outreach workers, health visitors and nutritionists.

The pilot was conducted in two phases, March to April, and May to June 2008. This allowed for review and modification before its final release in July 2008. Children's Centres across the country were recruited through a flyer distributed at a national conference for Centre managers arranged by the Department for Children Schools and Families, and through the Sure Start website. The HENRY toolkit was offered as an incentive to encourage participation. In addition experts in the area of obesity, health promotion, preschool education and childcare were approached to review the course for comment on the curriculum and its suitability for their professional body.

Participants were asked to complete the course and the on-line assessment, so providing data on successful completion. They were also asked to complete an online evaluation form providing both qualitative and quantitative information about the value of the course. The data was collated by staff at the Virtual College and a report written by the General Manager. The evaluation form can be seen in Appendix 1, along with questions asked of the expert reviewers.

## **Results**

In Phase 1, interest was expressed by 350 practitioners of whom 139 learners from 45 Children's Centres undertook and completed the training; 81 completed the evaluation too. In Phase 2 interest was expressed by 720 practitioners from 139 Children's Centres of whom 396 undertook and completed the training; 261 completed the evaluation forms.

In total therefore 535 practitioners from 115 Children's Centres completed the course, of whom 342 (64%) provided feedback through the on-line evaluation.

### *Learners' professional backgrounds*

The 535 learners came from a broad professional background. 53% were nursery nurses, 8% were teachers, 2% were health visitors (nurse practitioners responsible for well child care), 26% had a variety of other professional training including social work, dietetics and nutrition. 11% had no professional qualifications. Only 11 (2%) had attended a face-to-face HENRY training course.

481 learners (90%) worked in a Sure Start Children's Centre; 37 (7%) worked in the National Health Service; 2% in a preschool educational setting and 1% in private day care.

### *Time and access*

178 (33%) completed the course in 2-3 hours; 207 (39%) took 3-4 hours; the remainder took longer. Most accessed the course while at work. 60% entirely on a work computer, 20% at home and 20% at a mixture of home and work. All completed the on-line assessment and received a certificate of successful completion

### *Learners' views of the course*

By Phase 2 98% evaluated the course overall as useful or very useful, with 97% reporting that it had improved their knowledge about obesity and how to work effectively with young families. 94% unexpectedly reported that they thought it would enhance their skills as well as their knowledge. 98% said they would recommend the course to colleagues.

Key points gleaned from the quantitative questionnaires are shown in Box 2.

**BOX 2: Points of note derived from the quantitative questionnaire**  
*Figures provided are from Phase 2. (Phase 1 figures are provided in brackets)*

**Content**

- 98% (94%) of respondents found the course useful or very useful overall.
- 97% (92%) found that the training was useful or very useful for improving their knowledge about obesity and how to work effectively with young children and their families
- 94% (92%) also found that the course was useful or very useful for enhancing their skills in working with young children and their families
- 90% (82%) found the course enjoyable or very enjoyable
- 99% (93%) felt that course was useful or very useful for those working to help young children and their families adopt a healthier lifestyle
- 98% (95%) found the course useful or very useful for those working to help young children and their families where obesity is a problem
- 96% (89%) of respondents would recommend the course to colleagues and friends

**Technical issues**

- 94% (85%) found the course easy to navigate.
- 66% (61%) had no problems using the course

*Qualitative comments*

Over 80% of the evaluation forms provided free comments too, many with rich detail regarding aspects of the course that were found to be valuable and suggestions as to how the course might be improved. A selection of comments are provided in Appendices 2 and 3.

Themes that emerged regarding the value of the course related to:

- Its informative nature particularly regarding babies and toddlers, and parenting skills
- Practical information that could be put into practice immediately.
- The interesting, enjoyable and convenient format
- Consistency of the message with other sources
- Good imagery
- Graphics and presentation being good for all learning styles (including helping with dyslexia)
- Quizzes (formative assessment) as a way to reinforce knowledge
- The clarity of the instructions

Themes that emerged regarding improvement of the course related to:

- A request for continuing updates as new research findings emerge
- More examples/ideas to share with parents
- Anxieties about the final assessment
- Further explanation of the growth chart
- Length of course
- Clicking through the course at times being tedious
- The speed of page loading too slow / pages freezing. (These comments were potentially linked to the waiting times for new images appearing on screen)

following narration. Problems could also be due to the number of sound files linked to particular screens).

- The need for better user instructions

A minority of learners in Phase 1 commented that the course was pitched at too low a level as they were already familiar with the issues. Despite no change to the content, this did not emerge as an issue for learners in Phase 2.

#### *Reviewers' comments*

Six reviewers provided detailed feedback. Their comments were positive and the e-course was seen as a potentially valuable means for CPD (continuing professional development) for practitioners from a variety of disciplines. No adjustments were requested regarding the content of the course or accuracy of the material presented.

#### *Technical aspects*

A number of technical problems were reported during Phase 1 with requests for assistance. These included logging in difficulties and problems with pages taking too long to fully load (some screens have several sound files, with new images only appearing after narration and ended). These problems were addressed by introducing a new "Log in to the HENRY" logo icon placed prominently on the website, and further information/instructions regarding the sound and narration were provided on the learner records.

#### *Comparison of feedback between the two Phases*

The quantitative feedback in Phase 2 showed improvements in all areas. There was a 2% increase in those finding the course useful or very useful for enhancing their skills; a 5% increase in those finding the course useful or very useful for improving their knowledge; and a 6% increase in those finding the course useful for working with parents to adopt a health lifestyle. 8% more respondents found the course enjoyable and 7% more would recommend the course to a colleague.

The qualitative comments had a slightly different emphasis from Phase 1. The comments were wider ranging regarding the course content with specific topics mentioned that learners found to be valuable, and what they enjoyed about the course. Suggestions on how the training could be improved included a mixture of comments relating to course content, wording/phrasing of question in the final assessment, length of the training module, making a version suitable for parents, making user instructions clearer.

Technical improvements following Phase 1 resulted in a 9% increase in those finding the course easy to navigate; a 5% increase in those experiencing no problems using the course and a 6% increase in those taking 4 hours or less to complete.

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

HENRY was developed in recognition of the need to intervene early and to help young children and their parents develop healthy lifestyle habits. It sprang from research that highlighted the need for a new professional approach, where difficult and sensitive issues relating to obesity and lifestyle change could be addressed. The resulting organisation provides a variety of training opportunities for practitioners working with babies, toddlers and preschool children and their parents. It takes a holistic approach to the prevention of obesity and systematically addresses the key lifestyle areas.



The *Tackling Childhood Obesity with HENRY* e-learning course is a 'stand alone' component aiming to reach practitioners working in childcare and health settings. The developmental process for the e-course was rigorous, with review of the literature pertaining to lifestyle change in the 0-5 age group, and consultation with experts in the field. The programme was pre-piloted by both potential learners and expert reviewers, before engaging on a large scale pilot involving staff working in childcare and health settings.

The evaluation was conducted on-line using a quantitative and qualitative methodology. The results were remarkably positive showing the value of the course in helping childcare providers and health professionals acquire the knowledge and attitudes required to work effectively in this area. They felt the course was of value for helping them with lifestyle issues, and also in managing babies and preschool children who were already obese and needed weight management. A little unexpectedly practitioners reported a perception that their skills were increased too. The e-course was readily accessible in practitioners' homes as well as work, and technical support was available to assist those inexperienced or encountering difficulties.

While developed for use by learners in the UK, the HENRY team and Virtual College are able and happy to make adaptations to the course if deemed necessary for extension internationally. The presentation is through graphics, pictures and cartoon characters. As the narrator does not appear 'live' re-recording with an American accent (or even in a foreign language) is possible.

### **Summary of key points**

- The e-course has been developed through a rigorous process by experts in the field.
- It allows child care providers and health professionals to gain CPD (continuing professional development) at work or in their own time. A high degree of literacy is not required
- Parenting carer/skills are central to the approach and content
- The target age range is babies through preschool
- The HENRY approach helps practitioners to work more effectively with parents as well as directly with very young children
- The course has been well evaluated by a broad range of professionals working with disadvantaged families in both child care and health settings
- Additional resources, including the HENRY handbook are available to reinforce learning and provide materials for use with young children and their parents
- By the nature of e-learning, the reach of the course is unlimited and the costs are minimal

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## APPENDIX 1: EVALUATION FORM FOR LEARNERS ON THE COURSE

<b>About the <i>Childhood obesity and HENRY</i> course</b>		
1	<p>Overall, how useful has the course been?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very useful; Useful; Not very useful; Not at all useful</li> </ul>	
2	<p>How useful has the course been for increasing your <b>knowledge</b> about obesity and how to work effectively with young children and their families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very useful; Useful; Not very useful; Not at all useful</li> </ul>	
3	<p>How useful has the course been for enhancing your <b>skills</b> in working with young children and their families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very useful; Useful; Not very useful; Not at all useful</li> </ul>	
4	<p>How enjoyable was the course?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very enjoyable; Enjoyable; Not very enjoyable; Not at all enjoyable</li> </ul>	
5	<p>How useful do you think the course is for those working to help young children and their families <b>adopt a healthier lifestyle?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very useful; Useful; Not very useful; Not at all useful</li> </ul>	
6	<p>How useful do you think the course is for those working to help young children and their families where <b>obesity is a problem?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very useful; Useful; Not very useful; Not at all useful</li> </ul>	
7	<p>How long do you estimate the course took you to do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less than 2 hours; 2-3 hours; 3-4 hours; 4-5 hours; More than 5 hours</li> </ul>	
8	<p>Would you recommend this training to your colleagues and friends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes; No</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	
9	<p>Are you interested in buying a Glugs toolkit? (cost: £20 plus p&amp;p)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes; No</li> </ul>	
10	<p>We would appreciate your comments on the course.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What aspects did you find particularly valuable?</li>   <li>• What suggestions do you have for how we might improve it?</li> </ul>	
<b>About you</b>		
11	<p>Where do you work?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a Children's Centre; In a private nursery; In the NHS; In a nursery or infant school; Other (give details)</li> </ul>	

12	Do you have a professional qualification? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nursery nurse; Health visitor; Dietitian/nutritionist; Social worker; Teacher; Other (give details); None</li> </ul>	
12	Have you attended any HENRY group training? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No; Yes</li> <li>If yes, where? If no, are you interested in receiving information?</li> </ul>	
13	I did the course at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work; Home; Mixture of work and home; Other (please specify)</li> </ul>	
<b>Technical aspects</b>		
14	How easy was it to access and navigate through the course content? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very easy; Easy; Difficult; Very difficult</li> </ul>	
15	Did you encounter any problems in using the e-learning course? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yes; No; If yes what were they?</li> </ul>	

## APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONS FOR EXPERT REVIEWERS

- 1 Overall, how useful do you think the course is?
  
- 2 The course aims to increase practitioners' **knowledge** and **skills** so that they can work more effectively in the area of childhood obesity. To what extent has it achieved this?
  
- 3 The course is intended to help practitioners working with young children and their families to
  - a. **adopt a healthier lifestyle** and also
  - b. **where obesity is a problem.**

How well do you think it has achieved each of these goals?
  
- 4 What comments do you have about each of the Sessions:
  - The obesity epidemic and the HENRY approach
  - Healthy Eating Patterns
  - Addressing Food
  - Being Active
  - Parenting for a Healthy Lifestyle
  
- 5 What aspects of the course do you think might be particularly valuable?
  
- 6 What suggestions do you have for how we might improve it?
  
- 7 Did you have any technical problems?

### **APPENDIX 3: A SELECTION OF LEARNERS' COMMENTS REGARDING THE VALUE OF THE COURSE**

"The value and realism placed on the role of parenting. Nearly all parents would love their children to be eating healthily, engaged in physical activity and watching less TV or screens. They do not imagine it is in their power to bring that about. They feel bad about what they are doing and despair of being able to change it. The importance of the three Ss as a way forward. Sizes of portions was useful."

"I found it very valuable. The way the messages were re-iterated made it easy to learn and understand. The characters were attractive and the resources looked very good. I found the course interesting and informative. Also being dyslexic the reading of the material on screen made the training a lot more pleasurable"

"I have thoroughly enjoyed the course and have found it extremely beneficial. I know that I am definitely going to be able to use the information in my role as Family Support Worker. I found the section on 'portion size' particularly useful and also the session on 'Parenting for a healthy lifestyle. I look forward to using the Glugs Toolkit as I see it as an invaluable resource to use with parents."

"I found the whole course very informative, well put together and useful. The aspects that looked at the parenting in regards to challenging obesity were the most valuable."

"The strategies for helping parents was the most valuable section for myself as this is a huge part of my job role. I also enjoyed looking at ways to support the family as a whole and again this is invaluable to my own role. Having the correct statistics and info regarding obesity is something we can use to promote healthy eating and lifestyles in the Children's centre's."

"Advice on feeding babies and giving them only what they need, for example not trying to make them finish a bottle"

"The facts and figures were very useful and the whole course content was an invaluable refresher for me personally (having just returned from extended maternity leave). "

"~ Web links and additional reading ~ Being able to print some of the material off of the screen. ~ Challenges ~ Quality of the way the information was presented. ~ Statistics."

"I found all of it enjoyable. It was easy to follow and informative. I feel the programme will capture the imagination of our families and they will respond well to it. It has been great for raising awareness across our centre also. I was very pleased to see that emphasis on breastfeeding was included within the programme."

"Learning about Early Eating experiences including breast/bottle feeding, statistics given, influences on active living, learning about impact that TV has on the whole family Recapping on parenting skills was a useful reminder I found the course very interesting even though some of it I had covered in the Level 3 Parenting UK Work with parents course. It was colourful, very interactive, at a good pace, user friendly and not too much

jargon. I think the knowledge I have gained will be very useful in all the baby and toddler groups I support and in my outreach work with families"

"I like the way that the course covered a range of health related issues along side the implementation techniques practitioners can use."

"General Information "

"interesting interactive training"

"I loved being able to do this training at my own pace as well as being able to dip in & out of it when I had some spare time. The site was easy to navigate so would enable people who were not necessarily great with computers to undertake the training. I found the training both informative & useful & would recommend it to other colleagues"

"I thoroughly enjoyed the course, it was the best course that I have done. I enjoyed the fact that it was computer based and that I could do it at my own pace, that you could go back and that you could print off what you wanted to. The content was very informative and at the right level."

"It was a very interesting course, better than the one day courses, where we have to listen the boring lectures"

"I did find the course very interesting and i found some of the facts very shocking. It has really opened my eyes to how easy it is for families to get into bad eating habits. Look forward to passing on information to parents."

"Very easy to use. Lots of valuable information"

"NEARLY ALL OF IT! IT WAS VERY INFORMATIVE."

"A lot of the facts were useful and i think would work great with the parents themselves. Some of them i knew already but then others were new to me.....in the area i work in healthy eating is a big issue so i'd like to put this into practice."

"This course compliments the training I have done "Watching Weight in Wolverhampton" and also the Nurturing Programme"

"The activities where you could participate rather than just read."

"Enjoyed the really hands on training: mix of teaching and little exercises. As someone who does not find the time for research and development and is a slow reader it was good to be forced to have the discipline of doing this on-line training with the possibility of audio teaching. The stuff about parenting strategies was really good"

"Re cap questions were useful. Easy to follow, could do the course over more than one session, details of where to get resources from"

"Like being able to see diagrams and have them explain to me."

"very good - much more than childhood obesity."

"The activities and knowledge questions at the end were very useful. The layout of the whole training was clear and very informative."

"all information was valuable. the learning styles were available for all that access this training, visual audio and literacy. If the visual materials are available these would make excellent aids for health promotion displaces, choosing the applicable for parents"

"i found the whole of the course very interesting, really enjoyed doing it, learnt so much, cant wait to put it all into practice."

"The pages were you had to place information on as it made you use the knowledge given to be able to answer these questions and the knowledge test at the end, enable you to test your knowledge on the module undertaken. The contents of each page were bright and captured my attention"

"THE COURSE WAS VERY INTERESTING, I FOUND IT VERY HELPFUL THAT THERE WAS AUDIO AS WELL AS READING. I FOUND THE INFORMATION ABOUT THE GLUG USEFUL BUT A LITTLE REPETIVITE"

"I found all the information and resources covered in each section was relevant to what I do at work. I found it easy to understand and liked the use of interactive tasks to do along the way. This helped me to learn what was being delivered in a way that suited my learning style. It was fun and I enjoyed doing it."

"I found most of the information about how babies and young children develop likes for particular foods and portion sizes informative. I was amazed how obesity patterns can be established so early in a child's life and how by simple awareness and a healthy life style this can be changed around. The advice for helping parents develop the skills needed was good."

"thought the course content was excellent, the instructions were clear and i enjoyed the quizzes and challenges in each section"

"I found the information about the carrot juice study very interesting. Additionally I found the whole course made me think about how I talked to parents and will improve my dealings with parents in the future."

"I found all aspects valuable as it educated me about how we overfeed our children. It fascinating to learn about portion sizes, parenting skills."

"able to open and close made it flexible for myself only working part time"

"I think having the knowledge on healthy eating is a powerful tool. We can then pass on this useful information to parents. This can only be a good thing as it will be beneficial to the whole family. It is important that parents have our support, and by doing this course has taught me the relevant information for me to promote healthy eating, and also to promote well-being within our setting."

"Very easy to follow, information presented in a way so that it was to take in the information. The quiz at the end of each module was very good for consolidated knowledge."

"I found the course helpful, however as part of my work I already have a basic knowledge of this subject matter. It did make me look at babies in more depth and highlighted the need to start early. I feel as though parents would benefit from this but of course it is about changing a way of life and this is not so simple"

#### **APPENDIX 4: A SELECTION OF LEARNERS' COMMENTS WITH SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

"Give non audio option and enable the green button to move on at own pace not reading pace of audio. Not sure how notes part was meant to be used."

"Assessment questions need to be more straightforward with simpler english, some were very difficult as the question was worded in a very roundabout way - felt more like an english test than how I had increased my knowledge or what I had learnt about food, obesity and working with children."

"Could be more practical eg Difficulty of parent's changing behaviour. Quite long - when doing on line and on my own - maybe complete in a group. Final assessment seemed very long Some of the graphs were hard to read."

"Alter the timing! "

"None, apart from continuing to update with appropriate research information."

"Attempt to 'speed up' the transition of the graphics throughout the training to ease the 'flow' of the training experience. (However, it is appreciated that the slowness may have been due to the 'works' computer system used for the training)"

"course was laid out well, but often, after you have finished reading one part, you ended up waiting for next part of page to show, which made course tedious in places, possible being able to click to load next item on page sooner.

"Don't know how you could improve the actual training but i am unsure about some of the content. One particular area i disagreed with was introducing a knife and fork at five years old as i felt this is done much earlier and children are often expected to be using these in pre-school."

"Following this pilot make it available to all as a learning tool."

"I felt that if you did not breast feed it was the worse thing you could do for your child and as i was unable to breast feed my self i did feel that it was looked at in a very un sympathetic way. "



"I found the programme easy to use and well paced and can not think how this can be improved! "

"I would liked to have had feed back on my questions that I had answered incorrectly"

"It took me longer to complete than I expected. Taking notes was useful so you need to tell people that they need to allow longer for this."

"Maybe more facts and figures reflective accounts from practitioners working in this area. What progress has been made through people becoming more aware of the problems on children's diets. This could be added at the end."

"More ideas to share with parents as to how they can improve their lifestyle ie impact of role modelling smoking / alcohol on young children."

"More practical examples/activities of how to engage children in the journey."

"More practical scenarios for meal times like the one you gave us about the child who messes with their food. This will help us advise about specific issues that might crop up in families like war over food. Not enough information about how to enable children to relearn their food cues"

"I navigation through the package was difficult, I am a competant IT user and have been involved in developing e learning packages in Smoking Cessation, I found this package less easy to navigate. It was also a bit repetative but I know this is to help with learning"

"Non I found the whole process very easy to use and navigate."

"None really - just had minor issue with disagreeing with some answers but that could be personal opinion - eg: aged 5 before using a knife and fork? think in most cases and after talking to others this is much younger."

"None really I found that the emphasis on the benefits of breast feeding was good but I also expected more emphasis on 'child led weaning' which you have recommended in your resource materials, otherwise the content and the structure of the course was very good, even though I must be one of your slower learners."

"Perhaps the questions don't need to be quite so tricky!"

"Read out some of the longer notes. I find it hard reading on the screen for long periods of time"

"Some of the question was hard to work out not because of the answer but how the was worded or set specially if the written word is not your strong point."

"It could be easier to work at your own pace, facts on questioning should be checked, and it could be less patronising."

"Some sections could be covered in more depth, particularly practical application of skills. Voice over and slide transition seemed slow, extending the time taken to complete a section."

"The amount of time introducing learning objectives and different sections could be reduced. The course was enjoyable but moved at a slow pace

"THINK YOU HAVE COVERD EVERYTHING."

"To be able to mute the narrator if you wish, to read and go through the pages at your own pace."