

One out of three Portuguese pupils is learning from Get the Best from Your Food

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Teachers and children discovering the theme of the day

The Portuguese Health and Food Programme was initiated in response to the 1997 Jakarta Declaration on Leading Health Promotion into the Twenty-First Century.¹ The declaration calls on the private sector to collaborate with public institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in promoting health. The Portuguese educational programme aims at providing information about health and nutrition. It is sponsored by the Portuguese Sugar Refineries Association and works with the Portuguese Nutritionists' Association, the Basic Education Department of the Ministry of Education, the National Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Environment Promotion Institute of the Ministry of the Environment.

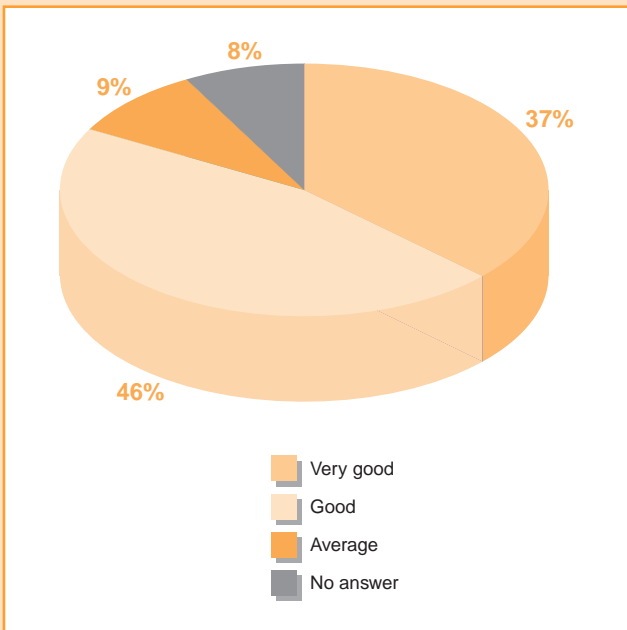
In September 1997, the FAO campaign Get the Best from Your Food was adapted and is now being promoted by the Health and Food Programme. The campaign was launched in Portugal by the Ministry of Education for use in basic schools (schools for pupils between the ages of six and 16 years) and, since then, FAO campaign materials have been distributed to more than 400 000 pupils (33 percent of the total student population) and more than 26 000 teachers and health professionals.

ESPECIALLY FOR CHILDREN

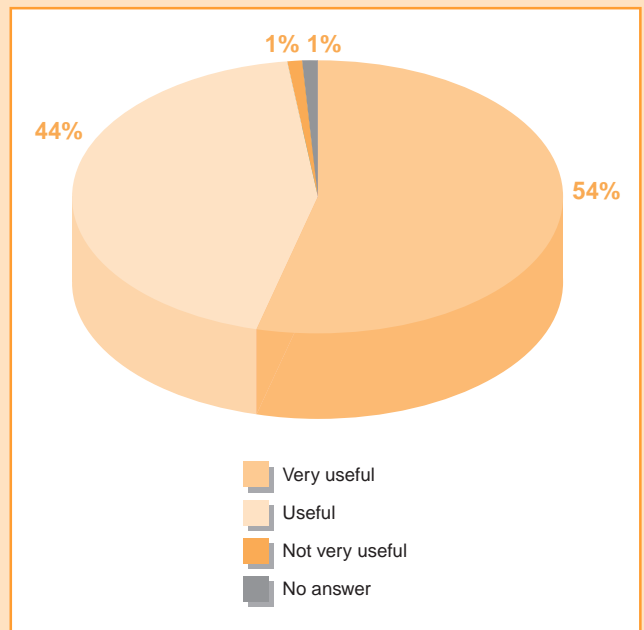
Sair da Casca, the pedagogic and communication agency which conceived the Health and Food Programme, presented the FAO concepts to children in the form of a leaflet with games and stories for six- to ten-year-olds, and a poster about "Ideas to flavour your life". The poster is similar to a Christmas Advent calendar, with windows that children can open to find out about particular topics. Its objective is to integrate the subject of nutrition into schools' routines by showing children that eating is connected, not only to nutrition, but also to social life, pleasure and well-being. The poster allows teachers to talk about a different theme every

¹ The Fourth International Conference on Health Promotion: New Players for a New Era – Leading Health Promotion into the Twenty-First Century was organized by the World Health Organization and met in Jakarta, Indonesia, from 21 to 25 July 1997.

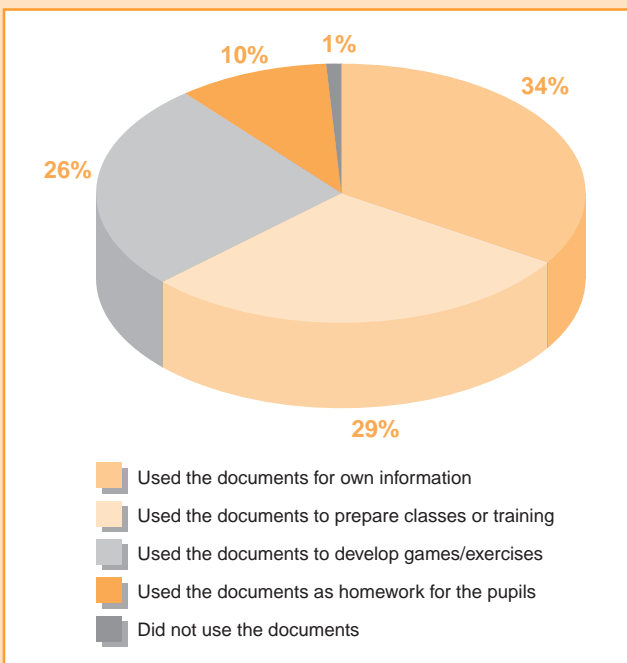
STUDENTS', TEACHERS' AND HEALTH PROFESSIONALS' VIEW ON "GET THE BEST FROM YOUR FOOD" IN PORTUGAL



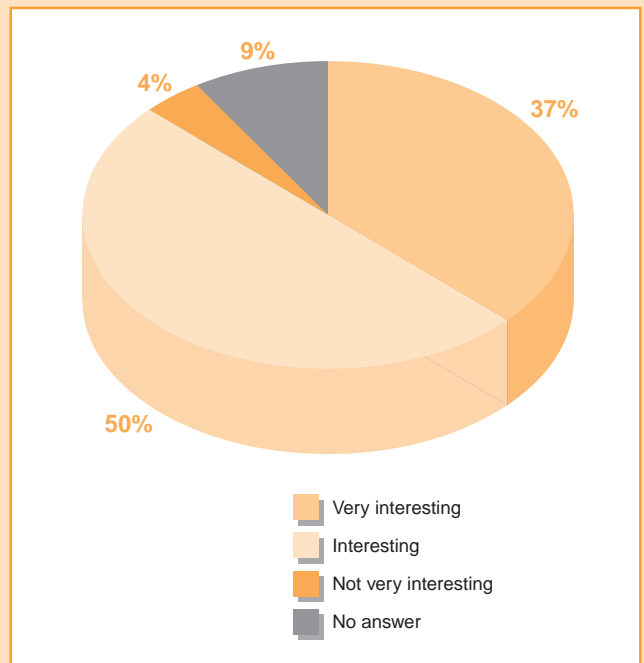
1
General opinion of the material



3
How useful panel participants found the material



2
How respondents used the material



4
Students' general opinion of the subject



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Children working with the nutrition education material

day for a month; for example, the role of water, the value of sleep, or the importance of sharing meals with friends and/or family. Every morning, the teacher asks a child to discover that day's theme, which is then developed with the help of the rest of the class. Teachers receive a guide, which gives information about each theme and suggests appropriate activities based on games, drawings, drama, etc.

Promotion

In October 1998, in order to revitalize the Health and Food Programme, a congress on school and feeding was organized, and FAO nutritionist Teresa Calderón presented the Get the Best from Your Food concepts. At the start of the school year, the Health and Food Programme published a leaflet illustrating the package which was sent to schools and institutions and contained information on how to acquire the materials. Teachers' magazines were sent information about the campaign and health professionals were reached through presentations of the material at conferences. To complete this communication drive, information is regularly published in the programme's newsletter (15 000 subscribers) and on its Internet site (www.pas.pt). To reach the general public, the press was contacted and the FAO leaflet has been distributed with some of the most important parents' and health magazines (80 000 contacts). Examples of the documents have been sent to African countries where Portuguese is the official language.

Evaluation

From September 1997 to November 1998, the Health and Food Programme evaluated the FAO campaign materials and the leaflet designed for children. (The poster "Ideas to flavour your life" is still being evaluated.) A total of 1 147 teachers and health and nutrition professionals answered the questionnaire. Among the respondents, 83 percent found the materials to be good or very good, and 99 percent found the FAO nutrition approach very interesting. ♦