

Warning over poor cooking skills among teenagers

June 18 2015

Young people lack confidence and skills in the kitchen, with many considering microwaving a pizza to be cooking according to a study.

They are also not worried about their health, believing that exercising will compensate for a [poor diet](#) and smoking.

One female first year sports student said she was "just not bothering" about what she ate as she was physically active.

The research by Lancaster, Newcastle and Durham Universities, is published in the *Journal of Public Health*.

The researchers questioned [young people](#) aged 16-20 to find out their attitudes to [food](#) and how this can lead to obesity. Most were living at home and attending school or college but not university.

Some believed they could not [cook](#) or expressed a lack of confidence with one [young woman](#) saying:

"I can't cook. I just can't be bothered...I burn toast."

Their parents mostly bought the food and the teenagers heated the food up, with examples of food they cooked including pizza, chips, [ready meals](#) and cups of tea.

The researchers said: "Cooking tended to be described as "jar" based; microwaving a pizza was considered to be cooking, as was cheese on toast which could indicate limited cooking skills.

"The findings indicate that young people lack confidence in their preparation and cooking skills, not being "trusted in the kitchen" to fend for themselves."

Fixed meal times were not the norm, with most young people arriving home whenever they liked and heating food up at their convenience.

"Just hoy (throw) it in the microwave when you get home" said one young woman.

Food eaten at home did not always mean it was prepared at home, with the teenagers often ordering takeaways and bringing home food from McDonalds.

Greggs was a popular choice and considered to be a healthy outlet, despite the teenagers choosing pasties, sausage rolls and iced buns. McDonalds was considered to be healthy by one participant because it served salads.

The only young person who did not live at home mostly ate takeaways because he considered this to be better value and it was more convenient.

He said: "You have got to walk all the way down the road, you have got to get to Morrison's and you have to buy your food and you end up paying I don't know £3 for a normal pizza and then you are buying chips whatever and end up costing more."

More information: "I'm not trusted in the kitchen': food environments and food behaviours of young people attending school and

college." *J Public Health* first published online March 11, 2015 [DOI: 10.1093/pubmed/fdv030](https://doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/fdv030)

Provided by Lancaster University

Citation: Warning over poor cooking skills among teenagers (2015, June 18) retrieved 6 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-06-poor-cooking-skills-teenagers.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.