

Refugee Nutrition

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NSW Refugee
Health Service

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Fairfield LGA

- 53% residents born overseas
 - Vietnam, Iraq, Cambodia, Burma
 - newly emerging African communities
 - Burundi, Rwanda, Sudan, Ethiopia, Liberia & Congo
- receives highest number of refugees (23.6% NSW total Jul 08 – Jun 09) of any LGA in NSW

Refugee Nutrition - before arrival

- Refugee experiences
 - war, civil unrest, persecution, forced exile
 - food deprivation
 - limited health care
- Impacts
 - malnutrition
 - iron deficiency anaemia
 - vit D deficiency & rickets
 - stunted growth
 - oral health problems

Contributing factors to poor nutrition habits - after arrival

- Food Insecurity
 - Limited knowledge of healthy eating
 - Limited access to culturally appropriate healthy foods, & nutrition information
 - Unfamiliarity with Australian foods & preparation
 - Social isolation
- Higher status attributed to western style foods
- Children's demands for "Australian" foods
- Lack of information/skills training for health & community workers

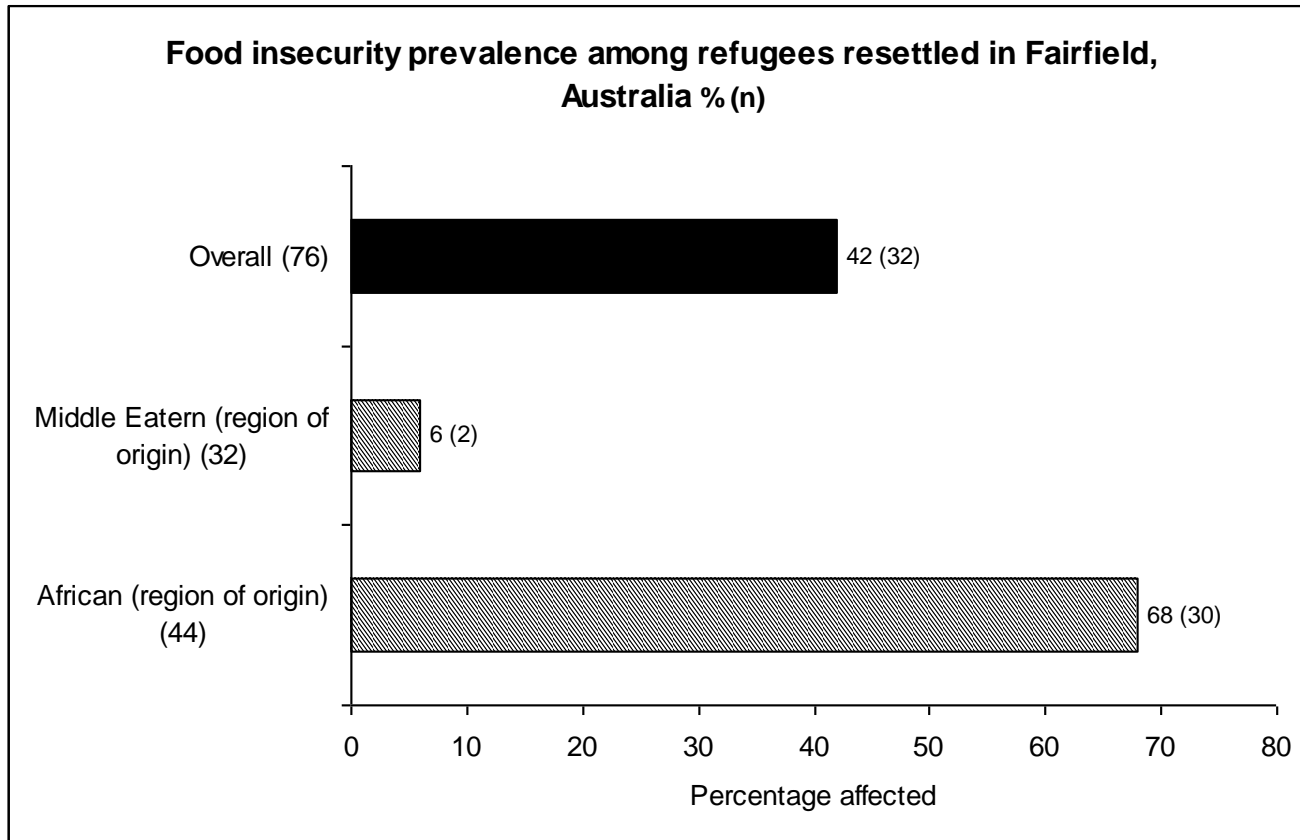
Fairfield Refugee Nutrition Project

- Funded by FaHCSIA through Communities for Children (C4C) Initiative
 - The Smith Family Facilitating Partner
 - Focus: children <5yrs (recently extended up to 12 yrs) in postcode 2165, & their families
- Commenced 2006

Fairfield Refugee Nutrition Project

- Aims
 - Increase the knowledge and capacity of refugee families to access healthy foods
 - Assist the community, health workers and settlement service staff to address nutrition and food security issues

Phase 1: Community Food Security Survey



Phase 2: Education Resource

Aim: to develop a community resource which can be used by generalist health workers for the purpose of nutrition education



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- 16 sections
 - 15 topics
 - one re interpreting & other skills when running a group
 - modules on
 - community background information
 - BCE training
 - delivery methods & associated resources
 - evaluation

Resource & BCE Training Manual

Fairfield Refugee
Nutrition Project

Phase 3: Training delivery

- Bilingual Community Educators (BCE)
- Health professionals
- Community workers
- Settlement service providers
- University students



Nutrition education delivery

- Nutrition education consist of 6 sessions, each of 2 hours

Popular topics

- Healthy cooking
- Healthy lunchbox preparation
- Food literacy and food sampling
- Childhood eating
- Reading food labels
- Supermarket tour
- Food budgeting
- Food storage and food safety
- Personal hygiene









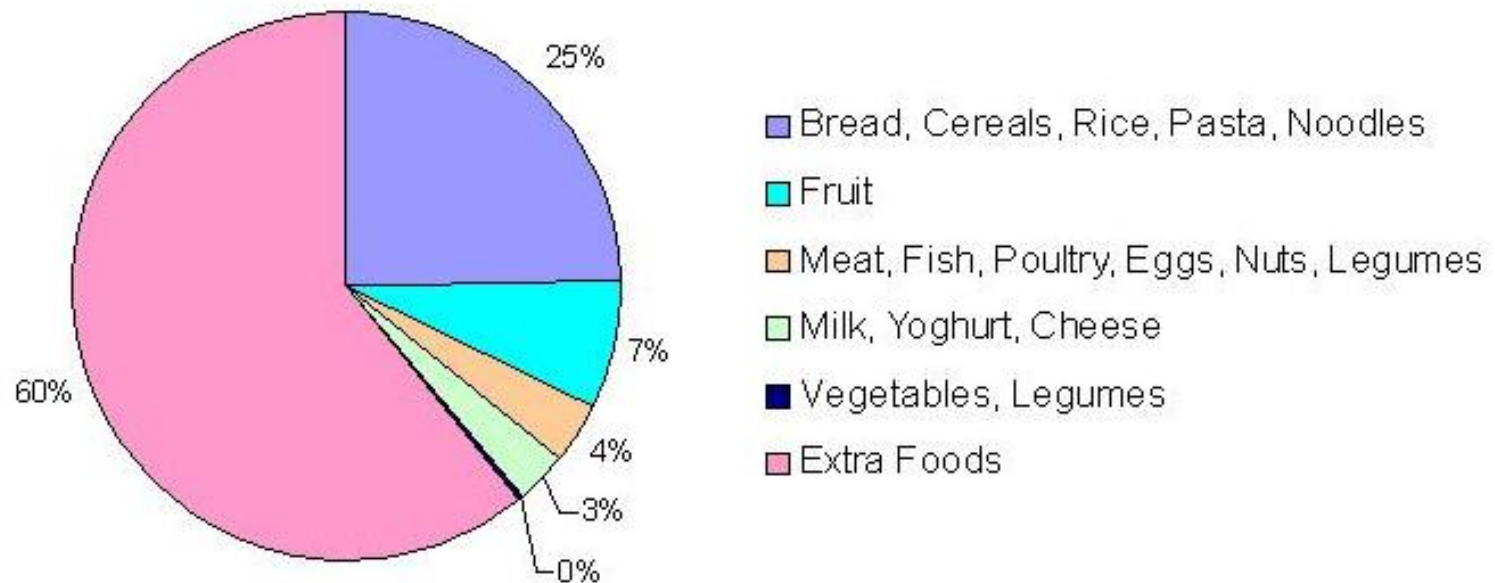
09/12/2009

Lunchbox survey in Fairfield LGA

- 2 primary schools with high numbers of refugee children
- 76 students (39 refugees, 37 non-refugees)
- A cross-sectional survey of school food and beverage



Contribution of core and 'extra foods' groups



Contribution of the AGHE's core and 'extra foods' groups to the overall energy intake of children at school



Other activities

- **Refugee Food Security Action Group**
 - to advocate and address refugee food insecurity issues
 - established in July 2008
- **Community garden project at Fairfield Public School**
- **Provide nutrition counselling (in conjunction with Liverpool Refugee Paediatric clinic)**
- **Community health promotion e.g. community events, resource distribution, media promotion etc**
- **Ongoing R & D e.g. resource development and review**

Next ...

- Refunded until June 2012
- Target group expansion 0-12yr
- 2165 post code (main focus, + reasonable expansion)
- Impact evaluation findings to inform new phase of program