

Exploring Stakeholder Perspectives on the Challenges to a Healthy Diet Faced by Low-Income Families During the Cost-of-Living Crisis

I. Welcome:

Hello everyone and welcome to our focus group session today. Thank you for taking the time to join me to discuss the impact the cost-of-living crisis has had on diet in low-income families. For those who may not know me, my name is Hannah Froome and I am a PhD student at Brunel University London.

You have been invited to participate today because you are currently employed or volunteering with a registered Charity or Food Bank and are familiar with the support charities and food banks provide to families during the cost-of-living crisis. Therefore, I am aiming to gather your expertise on parent feeding practices in low-income families during the cost-of-living crisis and their engagement in related interventions and programs. This is mainly going to be a broad discussion.

There are no wrong answers but rather differing or similar points of view. Please feel free to share your point of view even if it differs from what others have said. Keep in mind that I'm just as interested in negative comments as positive comments, and at times the negative comments are the most helpful.

I wanted to point out that I aim to record and transcribe this focus group. People often say very helpful things in these discussions and I won't be able to write fast enough to get them all down. You will be on a first name basis in this session, however we will not use any of your names in our reports. You will be assured of complete confidentiality.

II. Introducing yourself

Unless anyone has any questions about this session, let's begin. I wanted us to find out a bit more about each other. Would you be able to please tell me your name, what is your role and how long you have been with the registered charity and food bank, how long you have been there for.

Focus Group Questions

iii. Introductory and warm up questions

1. What does a healthy diet mean to you?
2. How would you describe a healthy diet?

Theme 1: Challenges parents are facing to feed their children healthy foods during the cost-of-living crisis

Moderator Script: During this section we are seeking to understand your perspectives on the challenges parents are facing to feed their children healthy foods; such as fruits and vegetables, during the cost of living crisis

Activity 1: List the challenges that parents are facing around feeding their children healthy foods

*The researcher will ask the participant to write on an online Padlet forum about the different barriers and challenges parents may face in regards to their child's healthy eating. They will then be asked about each of these themes and ask for further examples which can be discussed more in-depth.

- 1.) Tell us what you know about the current challenges parents are facing when feeding their children healthy foods?

PROBE 1: Are there any changes from before and during the cost-of-living crisis?

PROBE 2: Are there specific foods that are easier or harder to access?

PROBE 3: Are families more likely to provide healthy foods for their children?

- 2.) Tell us what you think would make it easier (facilitators) for parents to improve their child's eating behaviours during the cost-of-living crisis?

PROBE: 1. Do you think parents intend to improve their child's eating behaviours during the cost-of-living?

PROBE 2: Do you think parents are confident in what their children need to obtain a healthy diet? (e.g. knowledge, cooking skills?)

PROBE 3: What are the most important things that determine a child's healthy diet?

Theme 2: Experiences with child and parental engagement in workshops, programs to improve child eating behaviours

Moderator Script: During this section we are seeking to understand your perspectives on the experiences low-income families are having with charity workshops and programs to improve child eating behaviours

- 3.) How has the cost-of-living crisis impacted charities and the support they can provide to low-income families?

PROBE 1: Are there any increases or decreases in the use of workshops or programs during the cost-of-living crisis?

PROBE: What different types of interventions/activities have you done?

PROBE 2: How often do you see parents and children engaging in charity programs/workshops? How often are these programs run?

PROBE 3: What has worked well when running these programs/workshops?

PROBE 4: Have you identified any difficulties running these programs/workshops?

Theme 3: Ideas for programs to further engage and support families and child eating behaviours during the cost-of-living crisis

Moderator Script: During this section we are seeking to understand your perspectives on existing programs which can further engage and support more families when improving child eating behaviours during the cost-of-living crisis.

- 4.) How can programs or interventions further support low-income parents during the cost-of-living crisis on their children's eating behaviours?

PROBE 1: Do the benefits outweigh the consequences? (if there are consequences)

PROBE 2: Do the charities reach the goals of parents towards their children's dietary intakes?

PROBE 3: How useful do you think digital interventions could be when supporting or encouraging parents on their child's eating behaviours?

Final Thoughts

Thank you all very much for participating in this focus group. Your perspectives on the effect the cost-of-living crisis has on parents and their children's eating behaviors has been very helpful.

- 1.) Ask participants if they have any closing thoughts or questions about the discussion**
- 2.) Ask participants if they have any questions about their participation**

Thank you again for your help. I really appreciate your time and your knowledge. If you have any questions for me at any time, please do not hesitate to reach out. With your permission, I can keep you updated on the next steps of this research. Our aim is to write up and publish the results for this study. We hope your perspectives can be used to provide in-depth discussions around supporting families during the Cost-of-Living Crisis.