



On 13th of June the representatives of Parents Association took part in 3rd STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP organized by HABEAT and Warsaw University of Life Science, Faculty of Human Nutrition and Consumer Science in Warsaw, Poland.

HABEAT is a European project financed from the 7th European Union Framework Programme. It was launched on 1st January 2010, for 4 years. Its key objective is to get understanding of how food habits are formed (and can also be changed) in infants and young children. The tools used are: epidemiologic studies based on existing human cohorts from 4 countries combined with an experimental work carried out in 6 countries so as to collaboratively identify:

- the critical periods in the formation/breaking of food habits
- the key learning mechanisms, their relative impact in the short, mid and long term and their importance according to the different critical periods
- the most effective strategies for breaking habits, i.e. for changing from poor to healthy habits
- Individual reactions to the learning mechanisms and individual susceptibility to changes

During the workshop a number of presentations on the work carried out so far were shown. The first presentation “Feeding disorders – prevention and treatment” by Dr Piotr Socha from The Warsaw Children’s Memorial Health Institute was giving some Polish background on the subject.

The facts worth stressing is that in Polish primary schools 5% of children are obese and 15% overweight, while 10% underweight. WHO data report 25% overweight and 25% underweight in toddlers worldwide. Obesity and overweight indicators in Poland are growing.

Dr. Socha also presented a key learning that if you present a choice of vegetables for consumption it will increase vegetable consumption in the children at the age of 9 year and older. However for the children below 5 year old such a choice does not have any effect on their vegetable consumption.

The results of cohort studies carried out in Portugal, Greece and France for a number of years were presented subsequently and have shown a number of interesting findings from which the following recommendations come:

1. to encourage breast feeding as there is a correlation between breast feeding and fruit and vegetable intake later although it is not clear why it is so
2. to introduce veggies to kids diet before the age of 6th month old.
3. food should not be given as a prize – this results in eating without hunger, thus eating too much which causes obesity
4. meals should be given on regular schedules
5. children should not be forced to eat if they say they are not hungry
6. snacks should not be easy to reach and available at any time, this results in eating without hunger causing overweight problems
7. snack should not be eaten before regular meals



The representative of National Food and Nutrition Institute: Ms. Katarzyna Wolnicka reported the results of the program of free vegetable portion (a choice if given) served at schools for children of first 3 grades of primary school which has been carried out for the last years. The first results are encouraging: 20% increase in consumption of vegetables was reported among the children taking part in the first years of this program.

During workshops in small groups participants were sharing their experience with the subject of how they can influence food habits.

We presented the social campaign "WIEM CO JEM" ("I KNOW WHAT I EAT") started in may 2006 by Warsaw Bureau of Education.

The aim of this campaign was

- to introduce education on good eating practice to children at Warsaw schools and creating healthy eating habits
- to set up standards of meals served at school canteens and assortment of products available in the shops at schools as well as time for consumption of meals at school

The campaign is addressed to kindergartens and school children, teachers and directors of schools and kindergartens and other people employed by this institutions as well as parents.

Our Association Parents in Education was involved in his creation of this campaign. We presented it during the seminar that we organized in 2008 "Zdrowie Dzieci Naszą Troską" ("We Care about Health of our Children").