28 January 2025

Information sheet for the guardian of a young person invited to an interview study and questionnaire

Youth Nutrition Study

The aim of the Youth Nutrition Study is to obtain information on the eating habits of young people in Finland to support health promotion and national and municipal decision-making. The study is carried out by the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) as a part of its statutory duty, the monitoring and research of population health and welfare. The study has received a favourable statement from the regional Ethics Committee of HUS University Hospital (HUS 2404/2024), and research permits have been obtained from the municipalities participating in the study. This information sheet describes the purpose of the study and participation in it.

Implementation of the study

We are inviting over 3,000 students from lower secondary schools and upper secondary schools from 17 different municipalities to participate in the study. We will carry out the study during the school year 2024–2025.

We are inviting the young person to two interviews that will last approximately 60 minutes at a time, in which a nutritional researcher will ask questions about food and eating. We will not criticise or evaluate the young people or their eating habits in any way. We will carry out the interviews at the school during lessons. Both interviews will be face-to-face. During the first interview, we will measure the young person's height, weight and body composition on a scale. The young person does not need to take off any clothes for the measuring, except for outdoor clothing and socks. The young person can participate in the interviews even if they do not participate in the measuring. During the second interview, we will ask the young person to complete an online questionnaire using their personal mobile device or school laptop. The young person will receive the date of the first interview by text message. We will schedule the date of the second interview with the young person at the end of the first interview.

Your contribution consists of completing the guardian’s consent form and background questionnaire. In addition, if the young person is younger than 15, you will be asked to consent to the young person's participation in the study, in addition to the young person's own consent. A person younger than 15 years may only participate in the study with their guardian’s consent.

Participating in the study

You can give your consent to participate in the study and fill out the guardian’s background information form by using the personal user ID and password on the invitation card at thl.fi/nuortenravitsemus/osallistu. Filling out the consent form and the background questionnaire takes about five minutes. If you wish, you can also request a user ID for a second guardian for them to respond to the background questionnaire by email. The young person can fill out their own consent form with the ID and password found on the young person's own invitation card. The consent forms and the guardian’s background questionnaire are available in Finnish, Swedish and English. You can also request paper versions by sending email to: nuortenravitsemus@thl.fi.

By giving your consent, you agree that your personal data will be processed according to the data protection policy and that your study responses can be linked to health and welfare

register data. The background information you provide, and the register data can also be combined with the information obtained from the young person's study and register data.

Voluntariness of participation, discontinuing participation and withdrawing consent

Participation in the study is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to participate in the study, discontinue your participation or withdraw the consent you have previously given without having to specify a reason at any point during and after the study. If you wish to discontinue your participation in the study or withdraw your consent, contact the research staff (contact details below) or the THL registry (kirjaamo@thl.fi). If you discontinue your participation, the data collected before you do so can still be used in the study. If you withdraw your consent, the data collected by the time of withdrawal will no longer be used for research purposes, but will be permanently deleted. However, if the research results have already been analysed or published, the data included cannot be deleted retroactively. Refusing to participate, discontinuing your participation, or withdrawing your consent will not affect your treatment or position now or in the future.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of participating?

- After the study, the young person will receive two cinema tickets as a thank-you gift, if they so wish. They can use the tickets on a film of their choice, within the age ratings.
- If they wish, we can inform the young person of their height and weight measurements.
- The young person will also receive a leaflet on healthy eating for young people after the study.
- The disadvantage of participating in the study is the time it takes to participate.

Research implementer and funding

The study is carried out by the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL). The study is funded by THL, the EU and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

Insurance cover and reimbursement for research subjects

Participating in the study is free of charge for you and the young person.

In accordance with the Tax Administration's instructions, THL will notify the Incomes Register of the value of the film tickets as a thank-you gift, which is why it will appear in the young person's pre-completed tax return. Please note that if the young person is in the preliminary tax withholding register, i.e. they are an entrepreneur, they must report the value of the film tickets to the Tax Administration.

THL has taken out insurance for the research subjects from Pohjola Insurance under the Patient Insurance Act. In accordance with the Patient Insurance Act, patient insurance covers any personal injuries caused in connection with healthcare and medical treatment based on prerequisites laid down in more detail in the Act. The Patient Insurance Centre is in charge of processing reimbursements for patient injuries.

Processing and confidentiality of research data

All parties and people involved in processing your data are bound by a confidentiality obligation. All the collected data will be processed confidentially and in compliance with the

General Data Protection Regulation. The data will be stored in a database which may only be accessed by the research group.

THL may combine the data obtained through the questionnaires and interviews with register data from registers maintained by different authorities and healthcare units. The register data are only used for research and statistical purposes. Personal data are used to combine register data with interview and survey responses. Once the data have been combined, any personal identifiers will be eliminated from the research data. The register follow-up stage of the study will last 70 years. In the study, the name, personal identity code and contact details of an individual research subject are replaced with a unique identification code. Your data and the young person's data are stored encoded in the research data, and you are only referred to with an identification code. It is not possible to directly identify individual research subjects from the data used by the researchers and the study results.

THL cooperates with Finnish and international partners within the framework of cooperation agreements, and your data may only be transferred to EU/EEA countries in a manner where you cannot be directly identified. You can find more information on the processing of your personal data and your rights in the study's data protection policy: thl.fi/nuortenravitsemus/tietosuoja

Enquiries

If you or the young person have any questions or you would like more information, we will be happy to help. You can contact our research group by email, nuortenravitsemus@thl.fi, or by phone, +358 29 524 7253, available on weekdays 9.00–14.00.

Thanking you for your cooperation,

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