The Nutritional Quality and Formulation of Children's Packaged Foods available in Australian Supermarkets: A follow-on study since the introduction of the Health Start Rating

Link to publication record in USC Research Bank:
http://research.usc.edu.au/vital/access/manager/Repository/usc:27051

Document Version:
Author accepted manuscript (postprint)

Citation for published version:

Copyright Statement:
Copyright © 2018 The Authors.

General Rights:
Copyright for the publications made accessible via the USC Research Bank is retained by the author(s) and / or the copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing these publications that users recognize and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

Take down policy
The University of the Sunshine Coast has made every reasonable effort to ensure that USC Research Bank content complies with copyright legislation. If you believe that the public display of this file breaches copyright please contact research-repository@usc.edu.au providing details, and we will remove the work immediately and investigate your claim.
THE NUTRITIONAL QUALITY AND FORMULATION OF CHILDREN's PACKAGED FOODS AVAILABLE IN AUSTRALIAN SUPERMARKETS: A FOLLOW-ON STUDY SINCE THE INTRODUCTION OF THE HEALTH STAR RATING

HOLLY MORRISON, FIONA PELLY, NINA MELONCELLI

*University of the Sunshine Coast, QLD, Australia*

The aim of this study was to examine whether the nutritional quality and formulation of children’s packaged food products available in Australian supermarkets has improved since the introduction of the Health Star Rating (HSR) labelling scheme. Packaged food products marketed towards children were purchased from three Australian supermarkets in July 2016. Nutritional quality was assessed using the Food Standards Australia New Zealand nutrient profiling scoring criterion. Comparisons were made between the nutrient composition and formulation of products originally available in 2013 and still existing in 2016. Of the 252 children’s packaged products analysed, 28.5% displayed the HSR; the majority (81.5%) having a rating of ≥ 3.0 stars. Overall, 53.6% of products were classified as ‘less healthy’, with HSR-labelled products having a significantly higher proportion classified as ‘healthy’ than those without the HSR ($X^2 = 26.5; p < 0.0001$). Reformulation of products that were available in 2013 had occurred in 100% of HSR-labelled products in comparison to 61.3% of non-HSR labelled products. For the majority of products (79.6%), reformulation resulted in an improvement in the product’s nutritional composition and, consequently, a reduction in the nutrient profiling score. In conclusion, despite the introduction of the HSR, more than half of children’s packaged foods sampled are ‘less healthy’. However, early indications suggest that the HSR may stimulate healthier product reformulation.

Funding source: Faculty of Science, Health and Education (University of the Sunshine Coast)

Contact author: Holly Morrison – *ham016@student.usc.edu.au*