

EATING IN LOCKDOWN: WHAT IS THE IMPACT ON OUR EATING HABITS

Only recently, the French were living through a period they had never experienced before - nine weeks of lockdown which confined them to their homes. Researchers at the CSGA studied the impact of lockdown on people's eating habits by running an extensive survey of 500 families. In this study, the parents of children aged between 3 and 11 described their eating practices, viewpoints and habits **before** and **during** lockdown.

The results showed a significant initial change in children's afternoon tea-times and snacks with an increase in consumption of the so-called "comfort foods" like sweets or crisps at the expense of *compotes* or fruit purées which were consumed less. During lockdown, 45% of parents reported that their children had an increased appetite while 20% said their children enjoyed eating more. Lockdown was found to increase reactivity to food with children seemingly more sensitive to kitchen sounds and food smells in their homes. Finally, some parents limited the mealtime "rules" to adapt and be more flexible, for example by letting their children choose menus (13% of parents) or where they ate meals or snacks (31% of parents). Parents also gave their children more autonomy by allowing them to decide how much they wanted to eat. In short, it was less a case of "finish your plate" and more of increased trust being involved.

These original results reveal a trend towards enhanced eating pleasure and educational flexibility during meals which suggests a relatively robust re-appropriation of food during lockdown.

The authors of this study thank the parents who agreed to complete the survey. This study was funded by Horizon 2020, a European Union research and innovation program (Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 764985, Edulia project).

Contact

Sandrine Monnery-Patris : sandrine.monnery-patris@inrae.fr

Kaat Philippe : kaat.philippe@inrae.fr.

To know more

Philippe, Kaat, Chabanet, Claire, Issanchou, Sylvie & Monnery-Patris, Sandrine (*submitted*). Child eating behaviors, parental feeding practices and food shopping motivations during the COVID-19 lockdown in France: did they change? *Appetite*.

Key-words

Child; eating; feeding practices; eating behavior; lockdown; questionnaire



Crédits photo : IStock©