

## **Takeaway for a Change**

This highly innovative healthy eating programme was centred around a Wirral community reporting high child and adult obesity levels. There is a high density of takeaway outlets in this area, which primarily offer unhealthy meal choices. Many families are reliant on this type of food for the majority of their meals, due to their busy lives and the convenience of takeaway food. A two-pronged approach designed to inform and address the above focused on working closely with a) the businesses, to improve the overall healthiness of their products, and b) families, to educate and guide them to make healthier choices.

Fast food businesses, identified via surveys with local residents, were guided and monitored by environmental health practitioners to introduce healthier options to their menus. A joined up approach with 'Eat Well Wirral' provided education and financial incentives (a known barrier) to businesses enabling a change to practices; ensuring consumers purchase inherently healthier products. Interactive and educational workshops for families focused on specific topics where a lack of understanding was highlighted. In conjunction with the workshops, a voucher incentive gave families the opportunity to try a healthier takeaway meal from their favourite takeaway.

Evidence from surveys reported that participants had a natural desire to be healthier, and were unsure of how to undertake this; 98% were excited to try healthier takeaway food, and only 10% of this group disliked the option. Once given direction and guidance, change was embraced from a desire to improve lifestyle. Gaining the trust and working face to face with this type of Cohort has proven to be a very successful engagement method which has delivered focus and change within this community.