

Play it Food Safe campaign

Pilot evaluation

Play it Food Safe. is a public education campaign aimed at raising food safety awareness and improving consumer food handling practices in Western Australia (WA).

A pilot campaign was launched at Busselton in November 2019 and ran until February 2020 to identify the key messages that a broader statewide campaign needs to focus on and the most effective strategy to communicate the food safety messages.

Campaign materials

All campaign materials are available to view and download on the [Play it Food Safe. campaign page](#), which provides an overview on the campaigns:

- Objectives
- Key messages
- Target audience
- Timing
- Campaign materials

Posters and flyers can also be ordered from the Department of Health's [online publication order system](#). Search 'environmental health'.

Evaluation method

Curtin University was funded by the WA Department of Health to conduct the evaluation of the campaign. An online survey of 335 participants was completed prior to the campaign to determine the baseline food safety knowledge and behaviour of the population in the region. After the campaign, an in-person survey of 336 participants was conducted at Busselton to measure the change in food safety knowledge, behaviour, habits and perceived risks of the population.

The effectiveness of the campaign is determined by comparing the findings between the Busselton resident survey participants that recalled campaign messages with those who has not.

Results

Recall

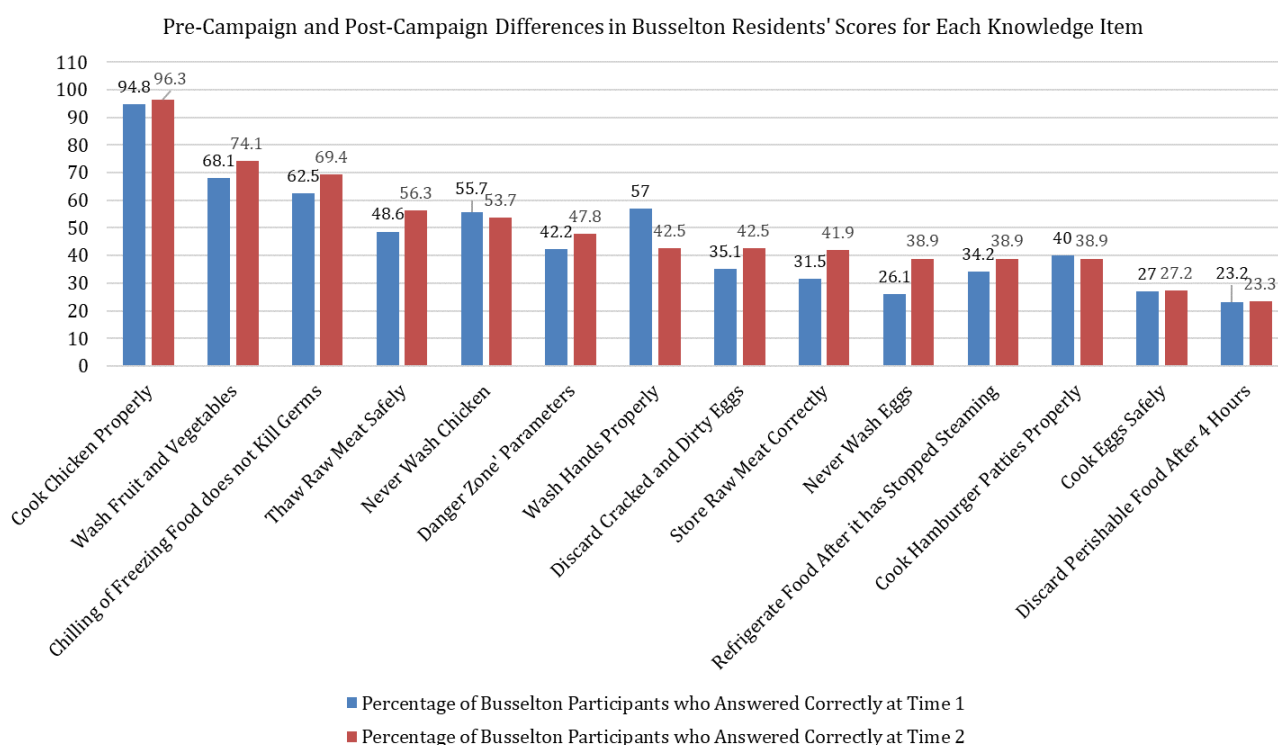
28% of survey participants were able to recall, unprompted, seeing, hearing and/or reading food-safety advertisements between November 2019 and February 2020. When prompted with a list of specific campaign messages, a further 8% of survey participants indicated that they recalled some of the campaign messages.

Awareness change

The food safety knowledge of the participants who are Busselton residents were assessed before and after the campaign. Overall, there was a 4.43% increase in the mean knowledge score after the campaign. The following figure shows that there is a small increase in

resident's food safety knowledge across most food safety knowledge areas. However, a decrease was observed in 3 of the food safety knowledge items.

Younger participants were found to score higher on food safety knowledge.



Behaviours that significantly need improving

- cooking eggs until the yolks and whites are firm

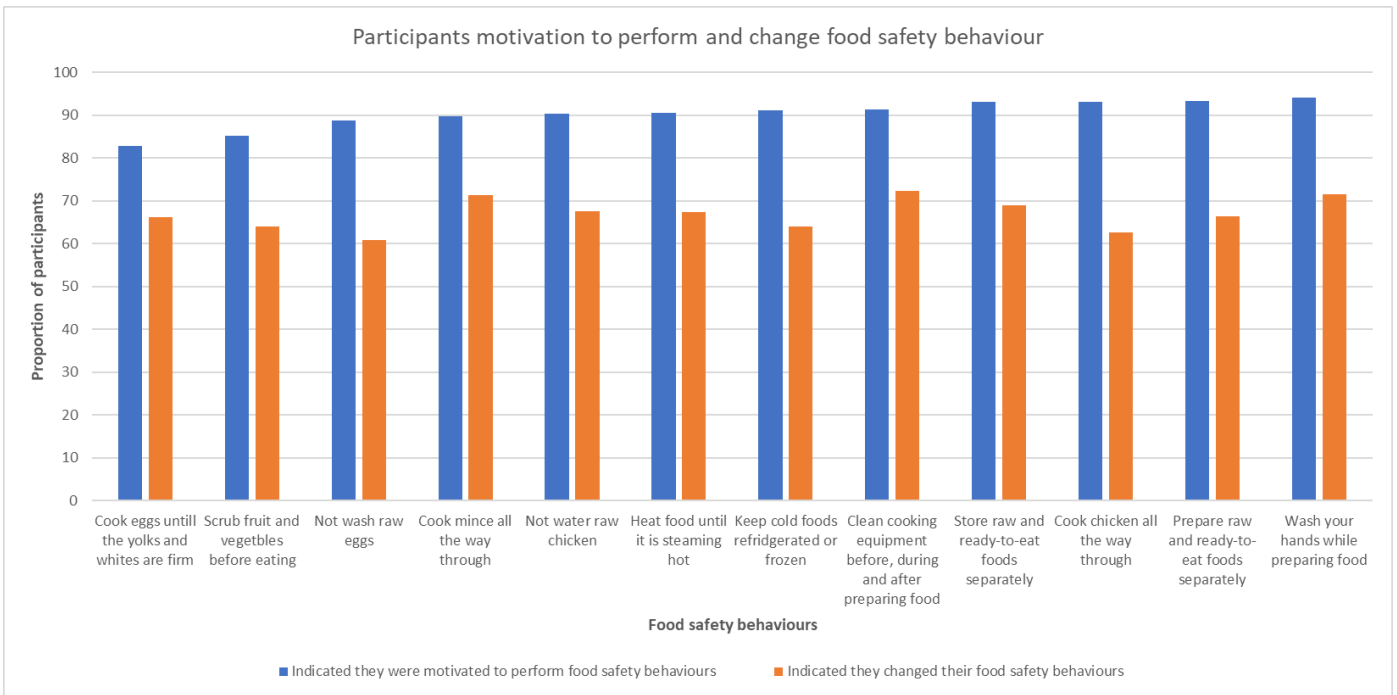
Gaps in food-safety knowledge that need improving

- cooking eggs until the yolks and whites are firm
- discarding food left out of the fridge for over 4 hours
- cooking mince all the way through
- refrigerating food after it has stopped steaming
- never wash eggs

Motivation to engage safe food-handling behaviours

To determine the impact of the campaign, the participants who recalled the campaign messages were asked if they were motivated to perform the food safety behaviours and if they have made changes to their food safety behaviours.

In general, the motivation to perform food safety behaviours ranged from 83% to 94% of participants across the different food safety behaviour assessed. However, not all participants who were motivated to perform food safety behaviours translated their motivation to actual changes.

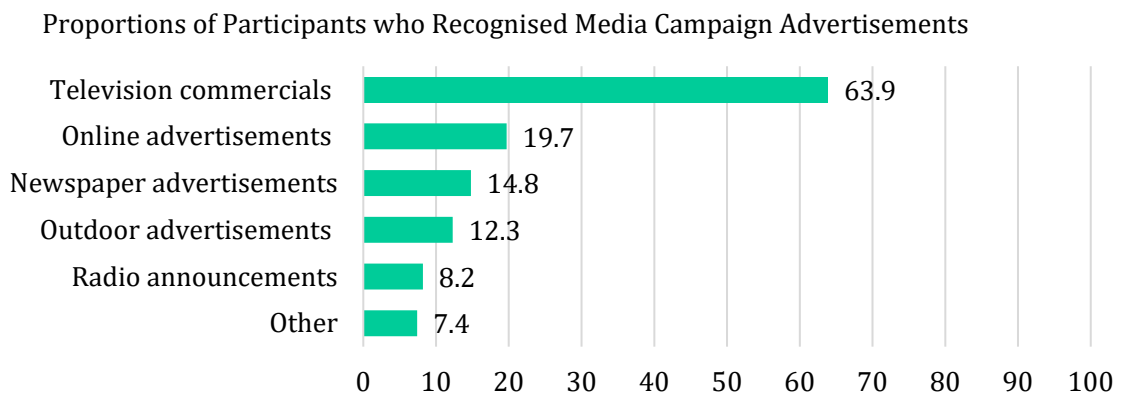


Further statistical analysis was conducted to compare the behaviour change of participants who recalled the campaign messages and those who did not. Significant changes in food safety behaviour were observed in the following:

- Washing hands while preparing food
- Cleaning cooking equipment when preparing food
- Cooking eggs until the yolks and whites are firm and
- Keeping perishable foods refrigerated or frozen.

Effective campaign advertising medium

The Play it Food Safe. campaign messages were most commonly recalled through television. The proportion of participants who indicated they recognised the food safety advertisements by the various media platform is shown below.



Conclusion

The campaign had an impact only on certain safe food handling behaviours and no significant effects on safe food handling knowledge. One explanation for these impacts may be that there were too many messages in the media campaign which may have hindered the uptake and processing of the key messages. Some of the scores for engagement in some target safe food handling behaviours were high to begin with and had little room for further engagement in these behaviours following the pilot campaign.

The findings of the evaluation study will be used to prioritise the key messages that should be focused on and to further refine the communication strategy for the statewide media campaign.

Partnerships – How you can get involved?

As most foodborne illnesses are contracted in the home, public education is an important strategy to reduce foodborne illness in the community.

Many organisations can help to promote the campaign materials including:

- local government environmental health and communication teams
- teaching and/or training institutions that focus on food, nutrition and food safety
- not-for-profit organisations that focus on food, nutrition and food safety
- general practitioners and nurses
- health promotion organisations
- food businesses, particularly businesses that sell food for cooking at home.

2020-21 statewide media campaign

The Department of Health will be running a statewide media campaign from November 2020 to February 2021. We are looking to develop partnerships with local government and other organisations to assist with the dissemination of the food safety message during the campaign.

For further information on the campaign please contact Foodsafety@health.wa.gov.au or call 9222 2222.

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This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with disability.

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