

MEDIA RELEASE

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Children in Scotland welcomes discussion paper on national food policy.

Children in Scotland has welcomed the launch of the Scottish Government's discussion paper aimed at developing a national food policy.

The discussion paper, *Choosing the Right Ingredients*, covers a wide range of potential areas for change, including teaching children how to cook and helping them learn about taste and nutrition at a younger age.

The food policy, which would be the first of its kind in the UK, aims to join up government policy on every part of the food chain.

Commenting on the launch of the paper, Children in Scotland's chief executive Bronwen Cohen said: "We welcome the government's initiation of this timely discussion of food policy in Scotland. Encouraging children to have a sense of 'ownership' of food from the earliest age is vital if we are to counteract some of the health problems associated with unhealthy eating in later life."

"This is particularly true in pre-school settings, where life-long attitudes to food may be first established. In Scotland, many three and four year olds go to school nurseries part-

time and do not stay for lunch. However, in other countries in Europe where young children are offered full-time services they have more opportunities to eat with their own age group and learn how to enjoy food. Starting eating meals in a social setting with peers and participating with food from the early years is likely to offset serious problems arising in later life, such as obesity and eating disorders.”

Many of the issues under discussion by the Scottish Government are explored in issue 10 of Children in Europe, An appetite for life: young children, food and eating, which looks at the cultural, social, educational and aesthetic importance of food. For more information, visit www.childreninscotland.org.uk/cie