



## Food Literacy for teenagers

### Summary of project

Eating habits can often be closely related to other aspects of lifestyle. Studies have shown that there are links between social and educational disadvantage and nutrition related disease. In the program “Food Literacy for teenagers” a number of cooking workshops with young people were held to help transmit messages around healthy eating.

### Who is involved?

The program was implemented in Vienna, Austria by Gutessen Consulting in cooperation with T.I.W., an organisation which offers qualification programs and training for about 3000 disadvantaged young people each year. The pilot cooking program started in 2014 and resulted in the creation of a toolbox for trainers, with 20 step-by-step easy understandable cooking instructions. The target group were teenagers (age 16 to 21), who had failed to finish their schooling.

### Key steps

Until recently, food related knowledge and skills were transferred informally in family situations from one generation to the next, and nutrition was determined by seasonal and regional produce. The target group were those whose food-related knowledge was lacking and the aim of the initiative was to build up competence in self-determined nutritional awareness (purchasing, growing and cooking food).

### How are the young people involved?

In the cooking classes, the young people defined what they would like to eat and would like to cook. In cooking courses, the groups prepared their meals together. The competencies were different. Some had never been in a kitchen before whilst others had some cooking experience. The work with written instructions (recipes) was sometimes a challenge due to because of a lack of reading skills and understanding about units of measurement.

All in all, the teenagers had great fun in cooking and eating together. Producing food made them feel “adult” and competent. Currently there are still cooking workshops with these young people and in 2019 a cookbook in simple language and with image-guided cooking instructions for this target group (cooperation T.I.W., Gutessen Consulting) was completed.





### Positive outcomes

- The topic of food with its emotional components brings motivation.
- Through eating, positive group dynamics are created.
- The topic of nutrition helps to deal positively with cultural and social differences.
- Each participant is able to contribute something to the topic of food,
- Food works! Eating and drinking healthily has a positive effect on health, well-being and the environment.
- Through the course, self-confidence and self-responsibility skills were strengthened.
- Eating is community building and promotes tolerance towards others.
- Clear recipe instructions help a lot.

**Further information:** [www.gutessen.at](http://www.gutessen.at), [www.verein-tiw.at](http://www.verein-tiw.at)

