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## STAGE 2 RESEARCH PROJECT

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# Assessment Type 2: Outcome

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*How can a home cook in the northern suburbs of Adelaide plan, prepare and serve nutritious and high-quality dinners at home whilst being food savvy, safe and hygienic in the kitchen?*

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Research Project B

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**Substantiation: 1500  
Product attached.**

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## **Assessment Type 2: Research Outcome (Substantiation)**

*How can a home cook in the northern suburbs of Adelaide plan, prepare and serve nutritious and high-quality dinners at home whilst being food savvy, safe and hygienic in the kitchen?*

### **Introduction**

In the northern suburbs of Adelaide there are 4643 one parent families.<sup>1</sup> This contributes to the varying age of home cooks, as it might be children or youth cooking for each other, themselves or families. One parent families could have lower incomes than those of two parent families, meaning they may not be able to afford to feed their families. 66.8% of one parent families with dependent children had an income of less than \$800 per week,<sup>2</sup> while only 6.1% had an income of \$1,400 or more per week.<sup>3</sup> In contrast, 42.2% of couple families with dependent children had a weekly income of \$1,400 or more.<sup>4</sup> Along with this, youth and children may lack the time, the skills, techniques, knowledge and understanding of nutrition, hygiene and safety procedures, thus affecting the quality and nutritional levels of the meal. This is why learning to cook is important. Learning to cook gives a person the skills, techniques and knowledge to prepare dishes within the home kitchen. It is essentially a skill used for survival and over time a cook's level of knowledge and skills will develop and their confidence will increase to enable the tackling of complex skills, techniques and production of more difficult meals.

Primary and secondary sources have been collated and the key findings regarding home cooking have formulated to create a website for Home Economics students in Years 8 to 10, website can be seen attached DVD. This report will substantiate the key findings of: the importance of meal time, production of high quality meals, savvy home cooking, use hygiene and safety; nutrition and the teaching of cooking.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@nrf.nsf/Latestproducts/LGA47140Population/People12006-2010?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=LGA47140&issue=2006-2010>

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*

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### The Importance of Mealtime

This contemporary society barriers have been created due to extensive use of technology which occupies most people's life. Mealtime should be family time as it occurs rarely and is the only time which a family is together. Naturally it is used to catch up with family members, talk about the highs and lows of each other's days and for general family bonding<sup>5</sup>. The positives are evident in the research undertaken by the Centre on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA). American researchers say family dinners increase a child's nutritional levels, help communication and bonding between siblings and improve academic performance and healthy eating habits.<sup>6</sup> Along with this, there is a lesser chance of alcohol and substance dependencies, eating disorders, poor eating habits and weight problems.<sup>7</sup>

*"The emotional and social benefits that come from family dinners are priceless."* —  
**Elizabeth Planet, CASA<sup>8</sup>**

### Skills & Techniques

Loving cooking does help, however, it is not completely necessary as cooking may be a necessity to survive.<sup>9</sup> Home cooks need to have the necessary skills, techniques and knowledge to help them produce high standard meals. Research has revealed that home cooks should be able to measure, use various knife skills, mixing techniques and cleverly use the stove top. Also, a home cook should be able to make a bolognaise sauce, a roux and a basic dough.<sup>10</sup> A cook who has these skills and techniques brings a basic level of knowledge and understanding upon which is built and expanded overtime. Figure 1 (over page) shows what skills and techniques various home cooks use. Home cooks may or may not use recipes. Home cooking, may involve the use of family recipes, turning leftovers into a new dish or just ingredients found in the pantry, fridge and freezer.

<sup>5</sup> Participant of Survey 1 and 2 Home Cooking (15 Participants), 2012/2013

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1200760,00.html>

<sup>7</sup> *ibid*

<sup>8</sup> <http://mollylarkin.com/thanksgiving-and-the-magic-of-family-meal-time/>

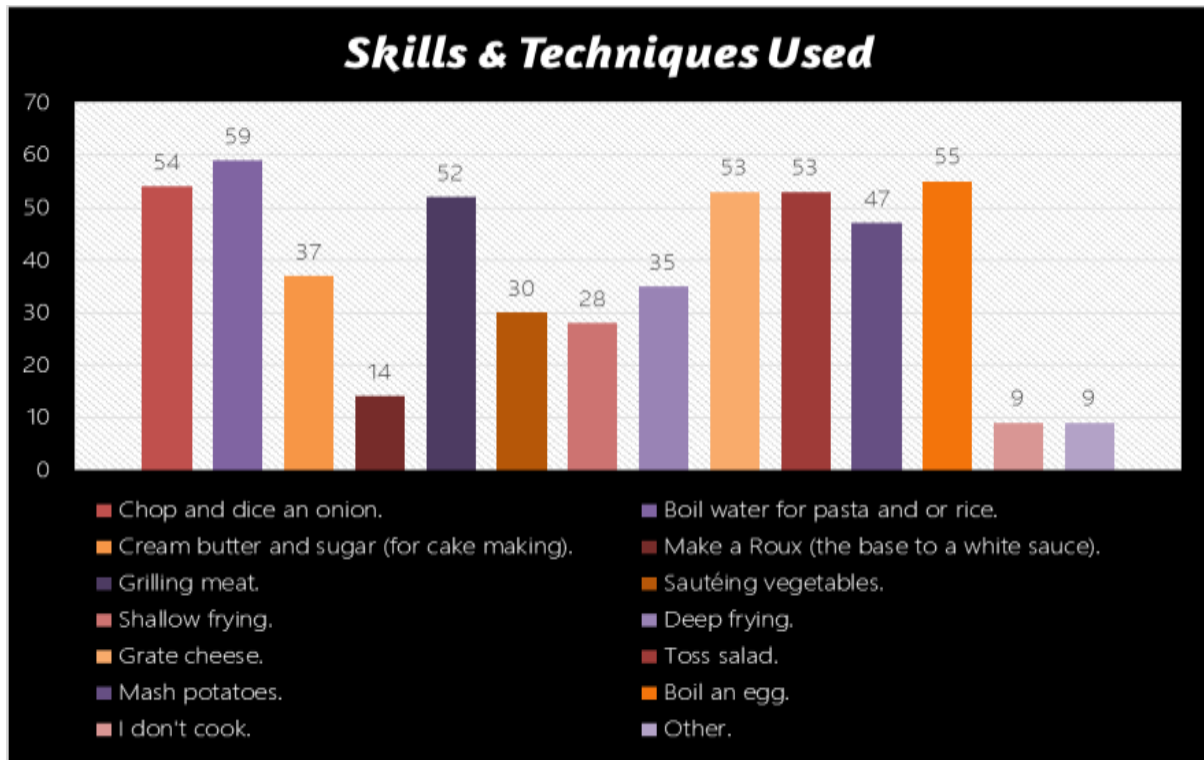
<sup>9</sup> Interview 4, Theresa Walker, Home Cook, April 2013

<sup>10</sup> Start Cooking, Home Economics Victoria, Page 2

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"I feel a recipe is only a theme, which an intelligent cook can play each time with a variation." — **Madame Benoit**<sup>11</sup>

FIGURE 1: SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES USED BY TEENAGERS<sup>12</sup>



## Savvy Home Cooking

When home cooks start to build upon basic skills and techniques the transformation to an informed or savvy home cook occurs. A savvy home cook is someone who is knowledgeable and well informed about the ingredients, cooking methods being used and who is resourceful and efficient in the kitchen.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, savvy home cooking involves using technology, such as electrical equipment. The electrical equipment used is shown in Figure 3 (over page). Electrical equipment can replace manual methods like stirring, beating and creaming, thus reducing the time and speeding up the production of the meal. Budget cookery is where an informed home cook can prepare a nutritious, tasty and high standard meal for a minimal cost.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.cookbooks.com/cookbooks\\_recipes/index.asp](http://www.cookbooks.com/cookbooks_recipes/index.asp)

<sup>12</sup> Survey 3 Teenagers in the Kitchen (64 Participants), 2012/2013

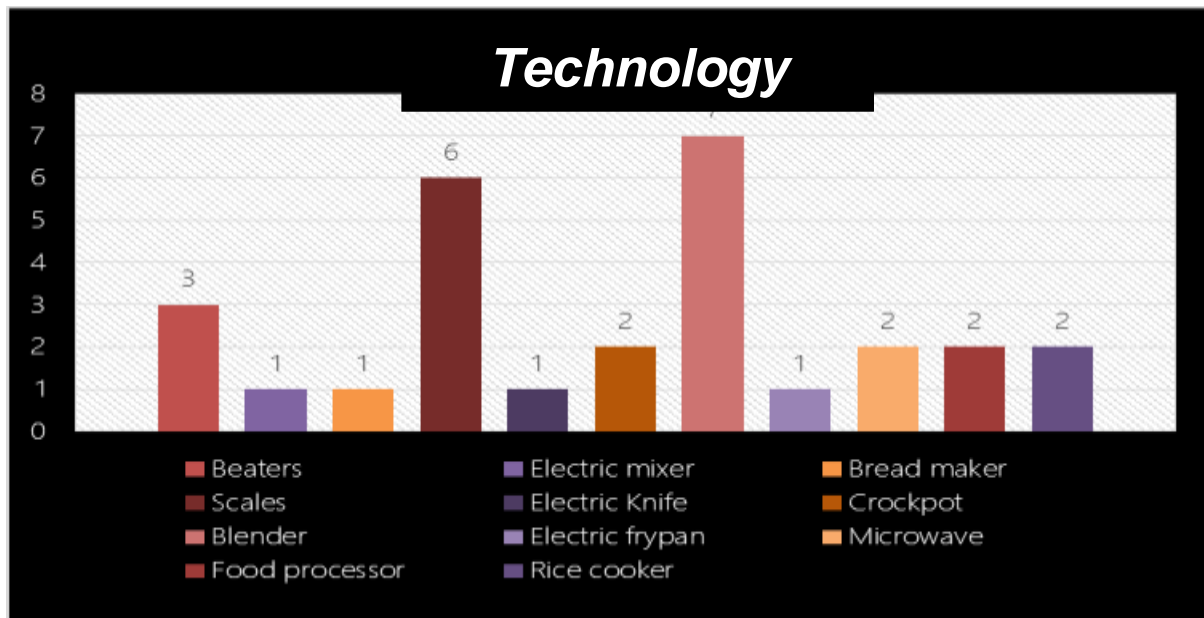
<sup>13</sup> Interview 2, Maria Passalacqua, Home Economics Teacher, January 2013

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.netmums.com/family-food/guide-to-cooking-on-a-budget/cooking-on-a-budget>

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"Cooking requires confident guesswork and improvisation - experimentation and substitution, dealing with failure and uncertainty in a creative way" — Paul Theroux<sup>15</sup>

FIGURE 3: TECHNOLOGY USED BY HOME COOKS<sup>16</sup>



Place", which is French for, 'to have on hand all the ingredients, measured and prepared'.<sup>17</sup> This enables a cook to work efficiently and without interruption, the way professional chefs work.

"Mise-en-place is the religion of all good cooks." — Anthony Bourdain <sup>18</sup>

## Nutrition

Healthy eating underpins everything in life and families in the northern suburbs may lack the knowledge to execute this in their cooking. Correct nutrition will ensure an increase in energy and alertness for functioning throughout the day.<sup>19</sup> Cooking enables the cook to be in control of what goes in the meal and in turn what is consumed.<sup>20</sup> Learning why or how nutrition helps diet and being educated on healthier cooking methods can assist this.

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/115100-cooking-requires-confident-guesswork-and-improvisation---experimentation-and-substitution-dealing>

<sup>16</sup> Survey 1 and 2 Home Cooking (15 Participants), 2012/2013

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/using-the-mise-en-place-approach-to-cooking-prepar.html>

<sup>18</sup> <http://allinitsplace.blogspot.com.au/2011/04/dynamics.html>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.pamf.org/preteen/mybody/nutrition/why.html>

<sup>20</sup> Interview 1, Natalina Gigliotti, Home Economics Teacher, November 2012

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Teenager's food choices are influenced by peers, teachers, advertisements, family, cost and availability.<sup>21</sup> With all these influences, it is important to learn about nutrition and more importantly to cook. It is recommended a teenager consume 5 serves of vegetables, 2 of fruit, 7 of breads and cereals (mostly wholegrain), 2 and ½ of lean meat and poultry, (includes eggs), and 3 and ½ serves of milk and milk alternatives per day.<sup>22</sup> Eating the recommended serves of fruit and vegetables decreases the chance of cardiovascular disease, some cancers, being overweight and obese, and constipation.<sup>23</sup>

*"One cannot think well, love well, and sleep well, if one has not dined well."*— **Virginia Woolf** <sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Start Cooking, Home Economics Victoria, Page 3

<sup>22</sup> Australian Dietary Guidelines, National Health and Medical Research Council

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/food-essentials/how-much-do-we-need-each-day/recommended-number-serves-children-adolescents-and>

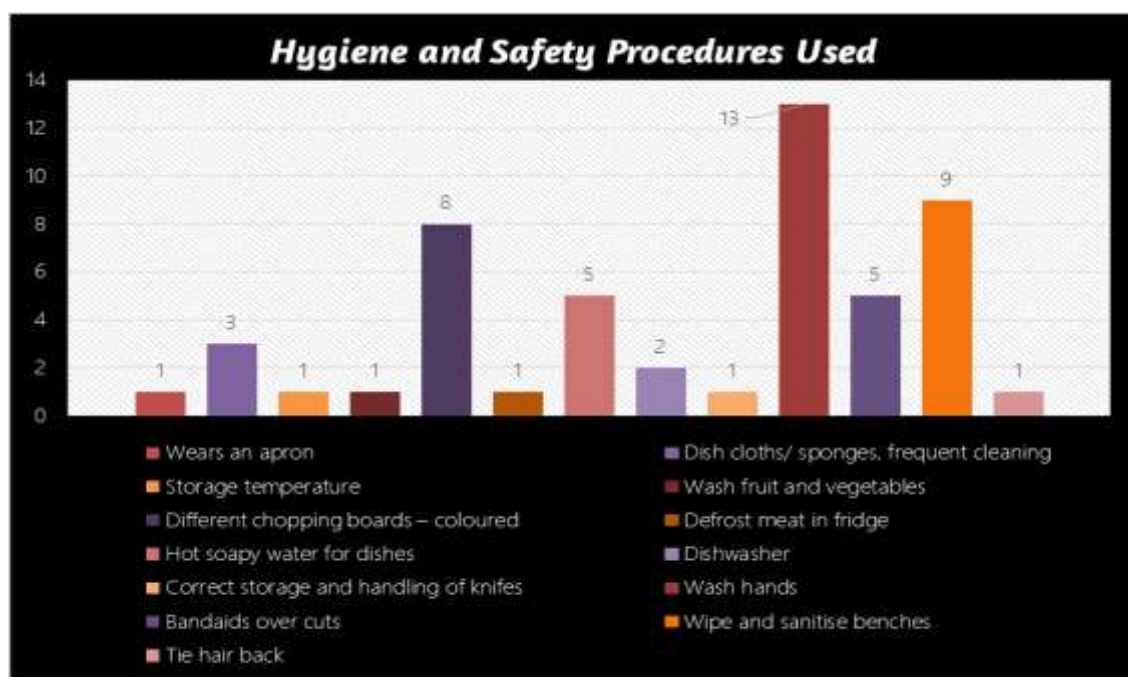
<sup>24</sup> <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/comfort-cravings/201107/the-10-best-healthy-eating-quotes>

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### Hygiene and Safety

Working safely and hygienically within the kitchen should be a cook's number one priority.<sup>25</sup> A survey of cooks showed the following personal hygiene procedures are used. Cooks should wash their hands using soap before preparing food and after handling raw meat; cover cuts with a band-aid and use gloves<sup>26</sup> to prevent the spread of bacteria, wear an apron and enclosed shoes; and hair should be tied back. Figure 4 (over the page) shows safety and hygiene practices used by home cooks.

FIGURE 4: HYGIENE AND SAFETY PROCEDURES USED<sup>27</sup>



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Additional precautions should be taken whilst preparing food, which include keeping cold food at 5°C or below, and hot foods at 60°C or above.<sup>28</sup> Between these numbers is the temperature danger zone. Also, separate chopping boards should be used for meat, poultry and vegetables. In the food industry coloured chopping boards are used to prevent confusion.<sup>29</sup> Dishes should be cleaned in hot soapy water or alternatively using a dishwasher. The industry uses dishwashers to be more time efficient and because it is a better way of removing bacteria, thus preventing

<sup>25</sup> Start Cooking, Home Economics Victoria, Page 12

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>27</sup> Survey 1 and 2 Home Cooking (15 Participants), 2012/2013

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/home/athome.htm>

<sup>29</sup> Observations, Work Experience 2011

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food poisoning.<sup>30</sup> Industry also uses a rotation system when freezing, this allows for dated food to be used and the newer items to be stored at the back for later use. This a good practice for home cooks to adopt.<sup>31</sup> When cooking for people who have specific allergies to food such as peanuts, eggs, milk products and gluten, additional food and safety procedures need to be employed. This may mean; preparing meals separately, having a separate menu,<sup>32</sup> cooking the allergen free food before the food with allergens is cooked, removing all allergens from the meal or having everybody eat the same meal.<sup>33</sup>

## Cooking Education

In preparing a website for students, it was necessary to know how students in Years 8 to 10 learn best. Through observations, it is clear students learn best through practical application, which is included in this website.<sup>34</sup> Junior Home Economics equips students with skills such as weighing, measuring, performing oven and grill management, following recipes, time management, understanding the Australian Dietary Guidelines and what it means to have a well-balanced diet. Additionally, it gives students quick and easy home cooking recipes, knife skills, and food safety and hygiene practices.<sup>35 36</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Interview 3, Cheryl Baker, Head Chef at the Slug and Lettuce, January 2013

<sup>31</sup> Interview 1, Natalina Gigliotti, Home Economics Teacher, November 2013

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>33</sup> Cooking Skills, Stephanie Turnbull, Page 5

<sup>34</sup> Cook like a Chef, Workshop, 2013

<sup>35</sup> Interview 2, Maria Passalacqua, Home Economics Teacher, January 2013

<sup>36</sup> Interview 1, Natalina Gigliotti, Home Economics Teacher, November 2012

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### **Conclusion & Recommendations**

In one-parent households in the northern suburbs of Adelaide, it may be the children or youth cooking. This contributes to the varying age of home cooks. Youth and children lack the time, the skills, techniques, knowledge and understanding of nutrition and hygiene and safety procedures, which affects the quality and nutritional levels of the meal. One household families have lower incomes and this means the family is not being fed correctly and will lack nutrition. This website was created using an assorted range of primary and secondary sources, it offers a home cook living in the northern suburbs of Adelaide, the essentials to enable them to plan, prepare and serve nutritious and high-quality dinners at home whilst being food savvy, and safe and hygienic in the kitchen, along with necessary health information. It is recommended that a cook use the aforementioned information and website, to become a confident home cook.

The website will provide students studying Home Economics with a guide to help them whilst learning to cook. Through reading and learning about cooking theory, students can use the visual representation, text and recipes to execute and learn techniques through practical application. It is recommended that an additional website be produced in the future and it be aimed at intermediate cooks.

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