

Family barriers and facilitators to promote healthy eating among adolescents – A systematic review of qualitative studies

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1. INTRODUCTION

Promoting healthy eating habits is an important strategy to tackle adolescent obesity. Existing systematic reviews have confirmed that family has an impact on adolescent eating habits, but it is not entirely clear *how* and *why* families are, or are not, able to support adolescents in adopting healthy eating.

2. AIM

This review aimed to consolidate the findings from qualitative studies, and identify the family barriers and facilitators of **knowledge**, **attitudes** and **practices** (KAP) of healthy eating in adolescents.

3. METHODS

Databases: PubMed, Web of Science, PsycINFO and Embase

Search terms: Combined for adolescents/family, knowledge/attitudes/ practices, eating habits and qualitative methods

Inclusion criteria: Articles that explored the family factors influencing the eating habits of adolescents (aged 10 to 19 years); **excluded** if not reported in English nor original studies

Review process: Data extraction, quality assessment and synthesis of findings

4. RESULTS – Study characteristics

48 studies were included (**Fig. 1**), the majority from Western countries, single or unrelated parent & adolescent populations (**Fig. 2**).

Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram

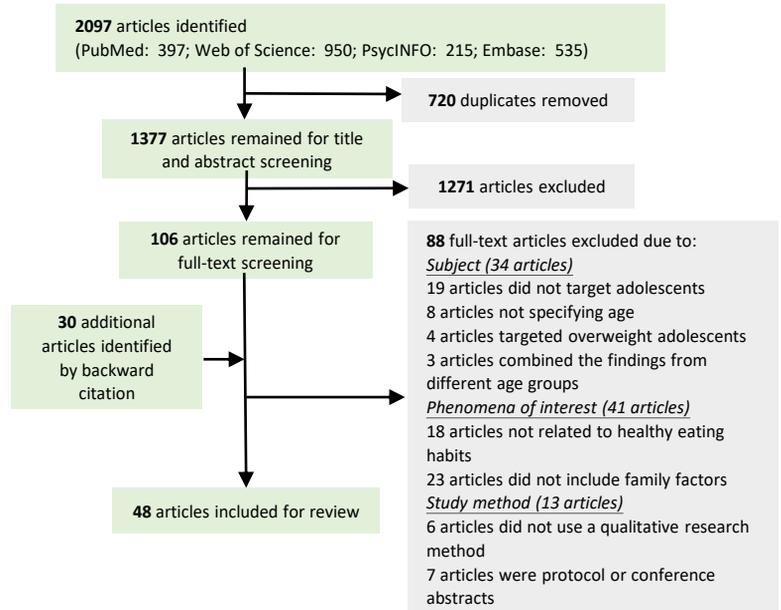


Figure 2. Distribution of 48 reviewed studies by region and population



5. RESULTS

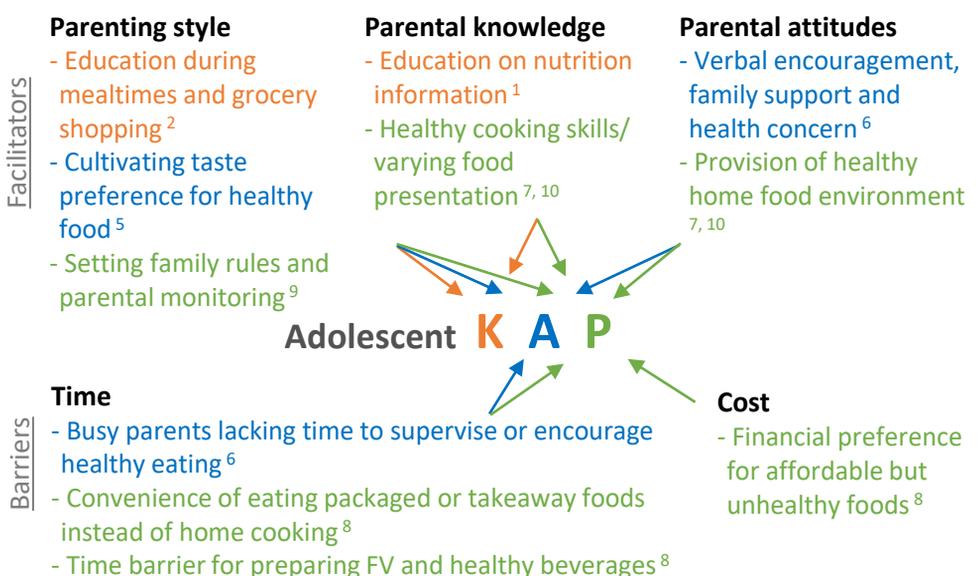
Ten themes on family factors of adolescent dietary KAP were synthesized (examples in **Fig. 3**):

Knowledge – 1) Parental education, 2) Parenting style, and 3) Family illness experience;

Attitudes – 4) Family health, 5) Cultivation of preference, and 6) Family motivation; and

Practices – 7) Home meals and food availability, 8) Time and cost, 9) Parenting style, and 10) Parental practical knowledge and attitudes.

Figure 3. Key family facilitators and barriers of adolescent KAP of healthy eating



N.B.: Referred to the ten themes

6. CONCLUSION

- ✓ Parental supervision and role-mode are important facilitators of healthy eating among adolescents.
- ✓ Time & cost barriers are most relevant to families with working parents and from low SES.
- ✓ Cultural differences, especially in parental attitudes and food choices, call for more studies in Chinese low-income families.

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