

## Breakfast at home every day

### Introduction

Eating breakfast at home every day is a proxy measure of good nutritional intake and healthy behaviour. Eating breakfast is positively associated with increased intake of most vitamins and minerals, better food choices, higher concentration at school and better mental health (Quigley et al 2007). The 2002 National Children's Nutrition Survey showed that children who usually eat breakfast at home had a lower mean body mass index (BMI) than children who do not, even after controlling for the effects of age, sex, ethnic group, neighbourhood deprivation, and physical activity level (Utter et al 2007). Children who do not eat breakfast at home are more likely to consume unhealthy snack foods such as meat pies, chocolate and candies, and soft drink, and are less likely to eat lunch as well (Utter et al 2007).

### What were the survey questions?

Parents and caregivers of children aged from 2–14 years in the 2006/07 New Zealand Health Survey were asked how many times their child had eaten breakfast at home in the past seven days. Those who answered 'seven' (every day) have been the focus of the following analyses.

Readers should note that the New Zealand Health Survey collects information on health behaviour rather than measuring food or nutrient intake, so the quantity and type of breakfast have not been collected. Refer to findings from the 2002 National Children's Nutrition Survey for information on dietary intake related to breakfast (Wilson et al 2006).

### Breakfast at home every day for children aged 2–14 years

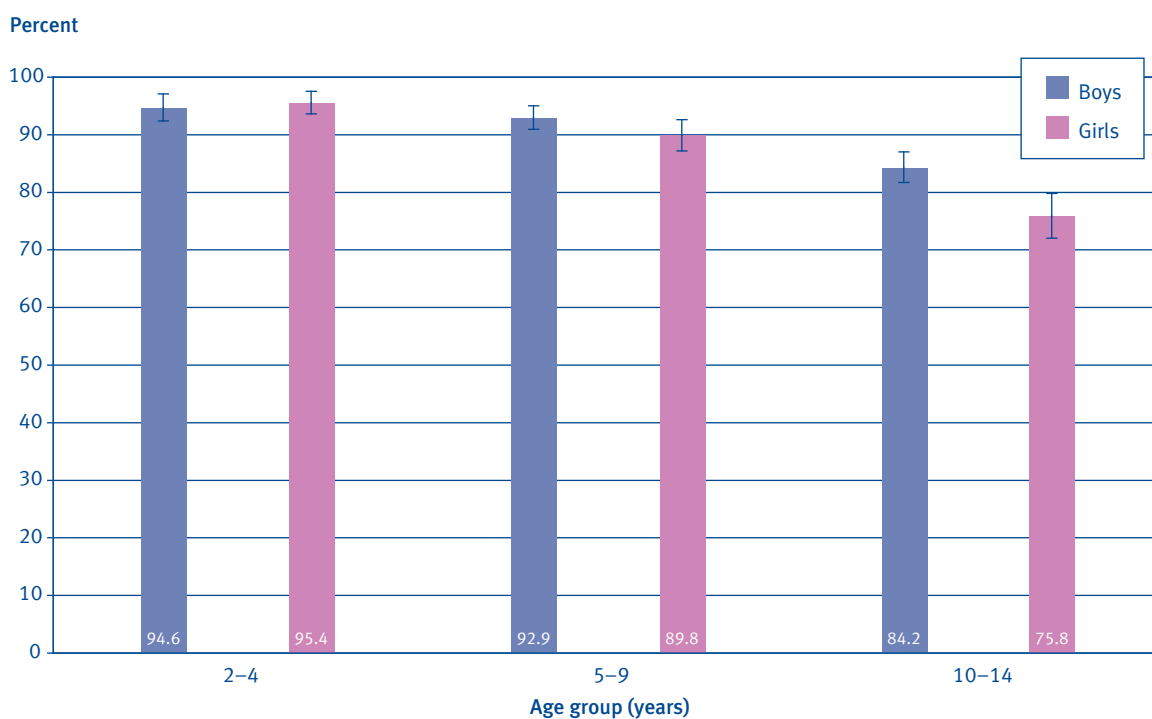
Nine out of ten children aged 2–14 years ate breakfast at home every day in the previous seven days (87.8%, 86.6–89.0). However, one in 14 children, which equates to 54,600 children, had eaten breakfast at home on fewer than five days in the previous week (7.4%, 6.5–8.2).

Boys (90.0%, 88.6–91.5) were more likely than girls (85.7%, 83.8–87.6) to have eaten breakfast at home every day, adjusted for age.

## Breakfast at home every day, by age group

Eating breakfast at home every day was less likely as children got older, with girls aged 10–14 years the least likely of all age and gender groups to have eaten breakfast at home every day. Three out of four 10–14-year-old girls had eaten breakfast at home every day in the previous seven days, significantly fewer than boys in the same age group (Figure 2.4).

Figure 2.4: Children aged 2–14 years who ate breakfast at home every day in the past 7 days, by age group and gender (unadjusted prevalence)

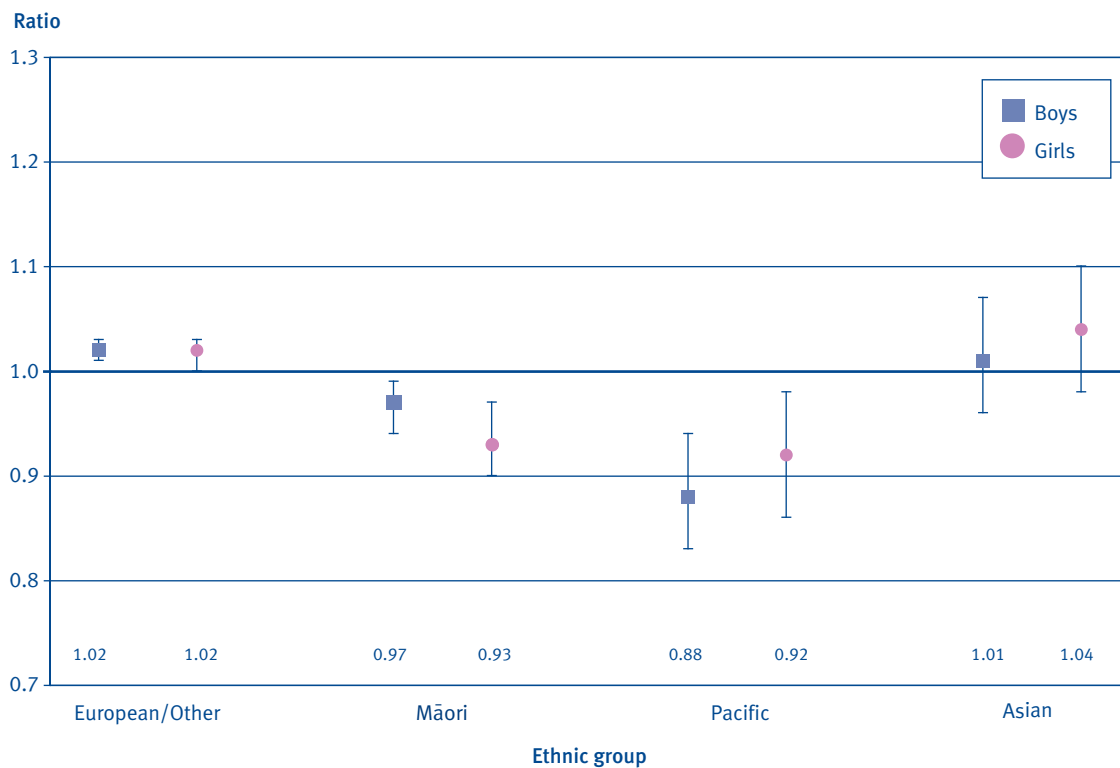


Source: 2006/07 New Zealand Health Survey

## Breakfast at home every day, by ethnic group

After adjusting for age, Pacific and Māori boys and girls were less likely to have eaten breakfast at home every day in the previous seven days, compared to boys and girls in the total population (Figure 2.5).

Figure 2.5: Children aged 2–14 years who ate breakfast at home every day in the past 7 days, by ethnic group and gender (age standardised rate ratio)



Source: 2006/07 New Zealand Health Survey

Notes: Age standardised to the WHO world population. Reference group, with a rate ratio of 1.0 (indicated by the bold line), is the total male or female population aged from 2-14 years. Total response standard output for ethnic groups has been used.

### Breakfast at home every day, by neighbourhood deprivation

Adjusted for age, boys living in the most deprived areas (NZDep2006 quintile 5) (87.3%, 84.4–90.1) were less likely to consume breakfast at home every day compared to boys from the least deprived areas (quintile 1) (93.9%, 90.8–97.0). No differences by neighbourhood deprivation were present for girls.

### Breakfast at home every day, by DHB area

There were no differences by DHB area in the proportion of children aged 2–14 years who ate breakfast at home every day.