Dietary patterns on weekdays and weekend days in 4–14-year-old Danish children - DTU Orbit (20/12/2018)

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Little is known about dietary patterns on weekdays and weekend days in children, and the aim of the present study was to investigate 4–14-year-old children's dietary patterns specifically on weekdays (Monday–Thursday) and weekend days (Saturday–Sunday). Dietary data were derived from the Danish National Survey of Dietary Habits and Physical Activity 2003–8, where a total of 784 children aged 4–14 years completed a 7 d pre-coded food record. Principal component analysis was used to identify dietary patterns in the age groups 4–6, 7–10 and 11–14 years. Consistently, two dietary patterns, labelled ‘processed’ and ‘health conscious’, emerged on both weekdays and weekend days. Factor scores from corresponding dietary patterns were significantly correlated between weekdays and weekend days with the exception of the ‘health conscious’ pattern in the 7–10-year-olds. Within each age group, children with high agreement for the ‘processed’ pattern had a significantly higher dietary energy density, which was reflected in significantly higher intakes of sugar-sweetened beverages and lower intakes of fruit and vegetables, compared with children with high agreement for the ‘health conscious’ pattern (P < 0·05). Moreover, these variables indicated less healthy dietary intakes on weekend days than on weekdays for both patterns. In conclusion, two distinct dietary patterns, labelled ‘processed’ and ‘health conscious’, were identified on both weekdays and weekend days for each age group. While overall major dietary patterns may somewhat track between weekdays and weekends, the specific foods actually eaten became less healthy during weekends.

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