

Are Childhood Nutrition Interventions More Effective When Based on Knowledge Translation Theories?

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Knowledge translation theory used to design childhood nutrition interventions may help to make interventions more effective.

- Knowledge translation is a term for two-way communication between researchers and community members that can be used to promote healthy behaviours based on scientific evidence.

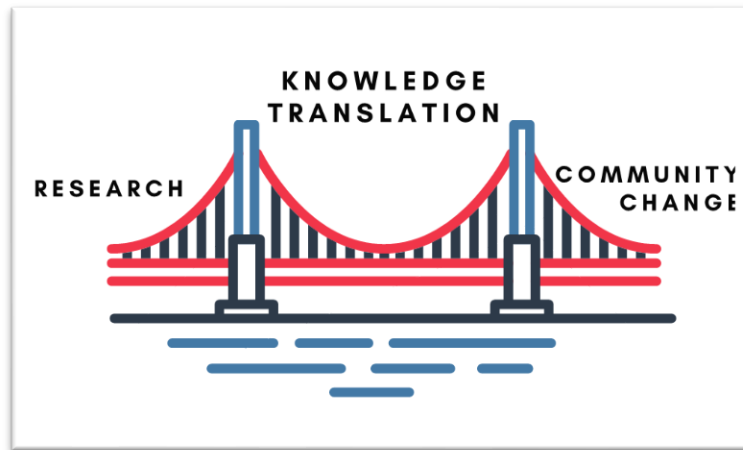


Figure 1: Knowledge translation can be thought of as a bridge between research results and change in a community.

- Knowledge translation theories help researchers decide on ways to use knowledge translation strategies throughout the research process.
- Researchers have called for knowledge translation theories to be used to inform the design of childhood nutrition interventions.
 - These interventions test ways to support healthy eating, such as the Guelph Family Health Study.
- Research Question: How have knowledge translation theories, if at all, been used in childhood nutrition interventions?

What We Did: Searched Past Research

- We searched past research using specific phrases to find childhood nutrition interventions that may have used knowledge translation theories
 - We found 1582 articles

- We included articles if they were written in English, included children up to 12 years old, used a theory when designing the intervention, and had results about participants after the intervention
- Methods
 - We screened the 1582 articles searching for ones that matched our criteria
 - We looked to see if interventions were effective
 - We did this by measuring whether the intervention significantly improved children's diets

What We Found: Results

- A limited number of studies used knowledge translation theories to design childhood nutrition interventions: 8 in total
- The theories were used in similar ways to create unique interventions
 - For example, some researchers used specific parts of a theory in their intervention design, while other researchers used other parts of the same theory to make a different intervention
- Over 60% of the interventions that used knowledge translation theories were effective in changing behaviour

How is This Important to You?

- Researchers may be able to make interventions more effective by using a knowledge translation theory when designing the intervention
- The researchers at the Guelph Family Health Study are using some of the newest and most promising ways to encourage healthy eating in families, including using knowledge translation theory

The Bottom Line

Early evidence shows that incorporating knowledge translation theories in the design of interventions may make interventions more effective. Future research should actively use knowledge translation theories when designing childhood nutrition interventions.

For More Information

- See a recent publication about how the Guelph Family Health Study is using knowledge translation: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s12874-018-0588-5>