

**A Research Report on:**

# **A Healthy Start to School Booklet**

*Prepared for*

***Victorian Department of  
Health and Human Services***

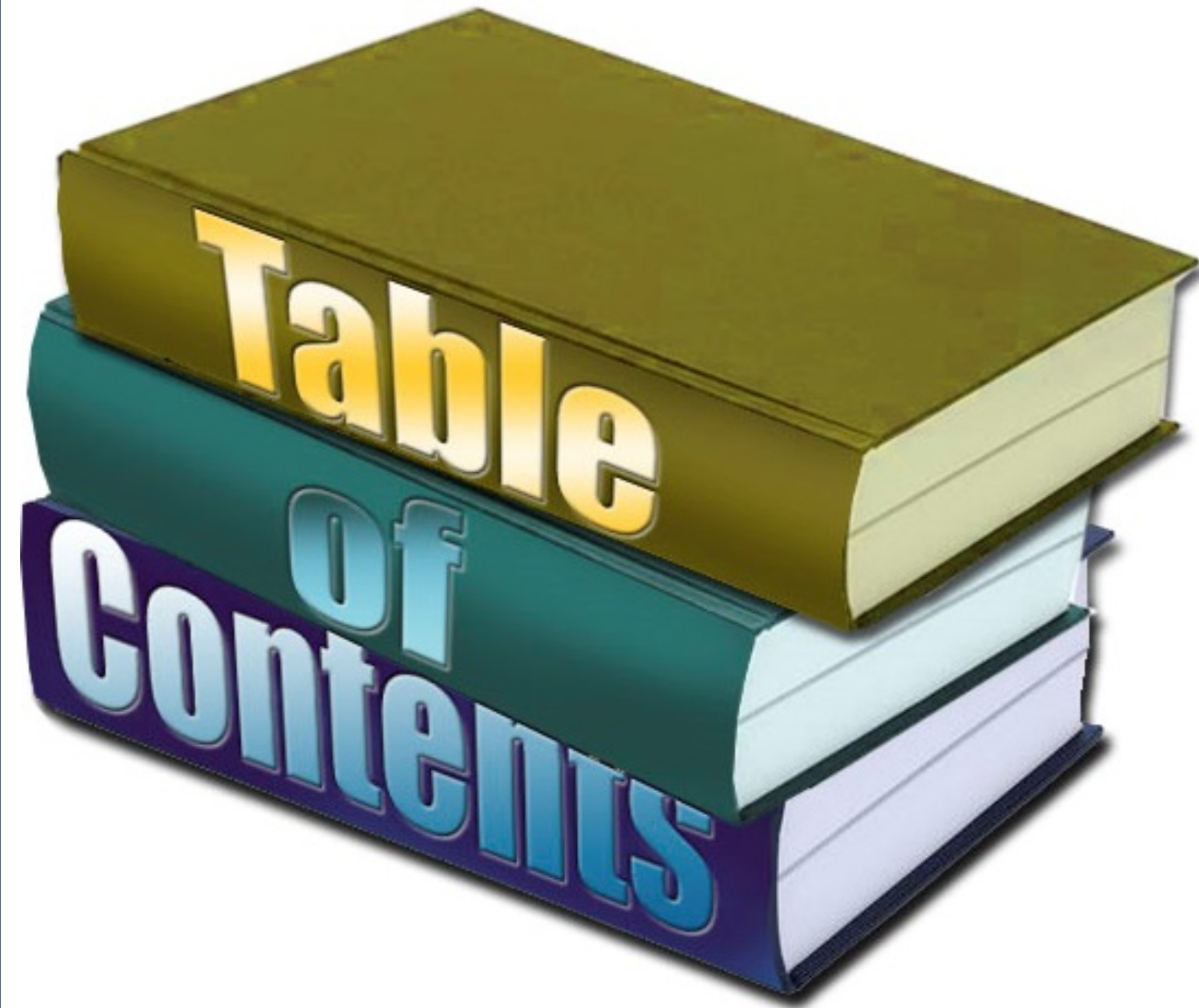
June 2015

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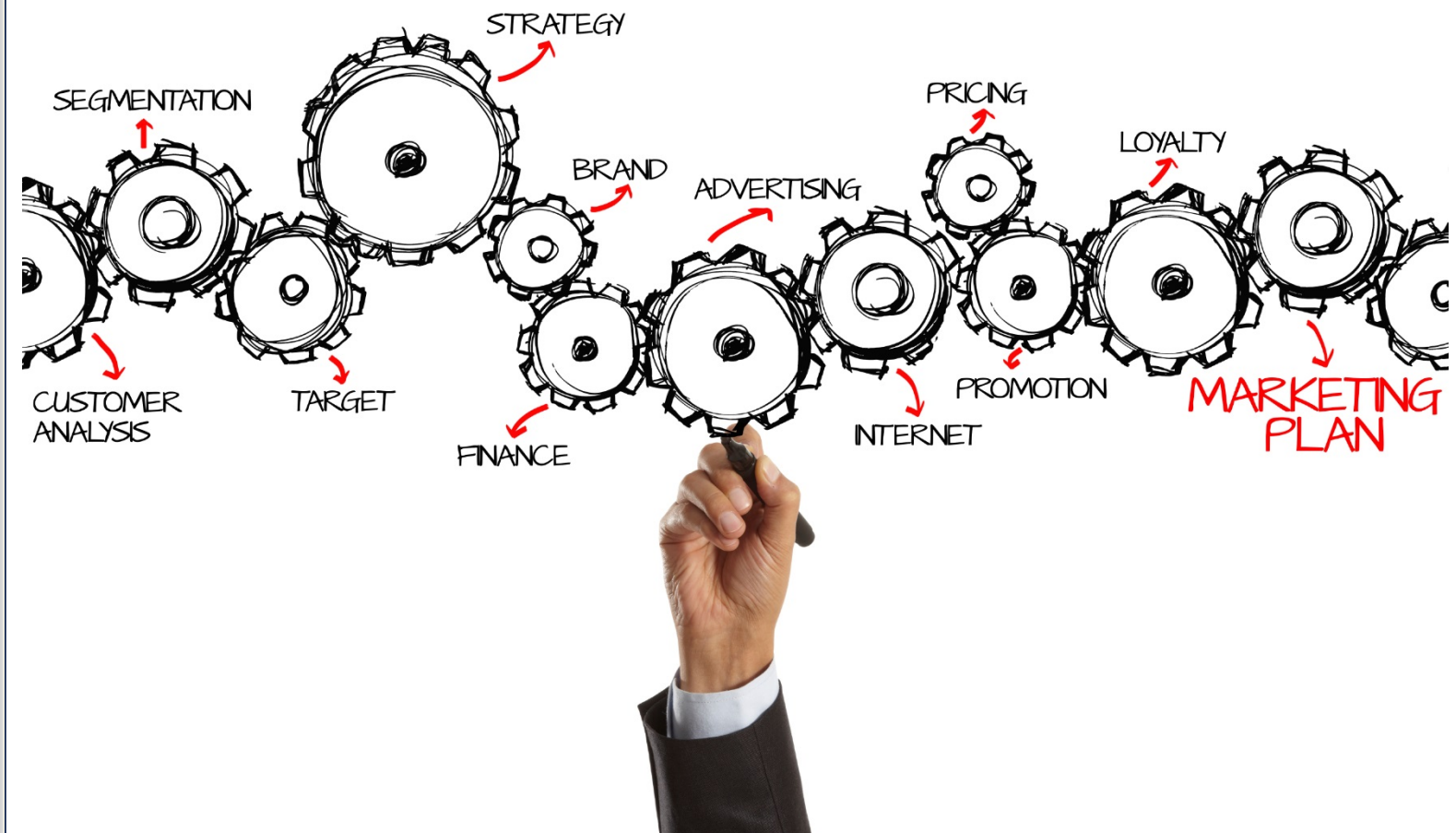
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# Background & Objectives

- The Victorian Departments of Health and Education worked together to produce a booklet called 'A Healthy Start to School'. This resource provides helpful information and advice to assist parents and their children with beginning primary school.
- In 2015, the booklet was included in a 'welcome to school' library bag issued at the beginning of the school year to every Prep child at a government school in Victoria. Approximately 55,000 bags were distributed across the state with the aim of reaching all parents of Prep students at government schools.
- Given this was the first time the booklet was produced, there was a need to undertake an evaluation of the resource to see how it was received by the target audience and provide strategic guidance moving forward. Hence, Di Marzio Research were engaged to assist with this task and the key objectives were to...
  - "Determine whether it increases the knowledge and understanding of parents of prep students in relation to health issues in a school environment;
  - "Understand if it provides parents with reliable, accurate, reassuring, empowering information and advice to help them maintain their child's health in a school environment"
  - "Ascertain how the booklet could be improved in future years."
- On the following page we outline the methodology used to address these objectives.



# Methodology

- The requirements of this study were to seek a representative sample of parents whose child (or children) started prep at Victorian government schools in 2015 to obtain their feedback about the booklet. The most cost effective way to achieve this was via an **online methodology**.
- Our sampling approach comprised of two components...
  - We purchased a sampling frame from Australia Post which has a database for research purposes entitled “The Australian Lifestyle Survey” (details of this survey can be found at <https://www.lifestylesurvey.com.au>). This contained email addresses for approximately 3100 parents of children aged 4, 5 or 6 in Victoria. They were all invited to participate then screened to identify those with Prep students in a Victorian government school in 2015. Those who qualified proceeded with the survey for which we received 216 responses.
  - The same survey was posted on the Better Health channel website. On the back of the booklet, readers were encouraged to provide feedback by completing the survey. We received 22 responses to this opt-in survey.
- Both surveys were launched on 27<sup>th</sup> March and remained open until 31<sup>st</sup> May, 2015 by which time we had received a **total of 238 responses**.
- In the following pages we summarise the key findings and conclusions arising from this research with references to the Tabular Results section in the body of this report (which shows results to all questions asked plus sample details).



# Key Findings

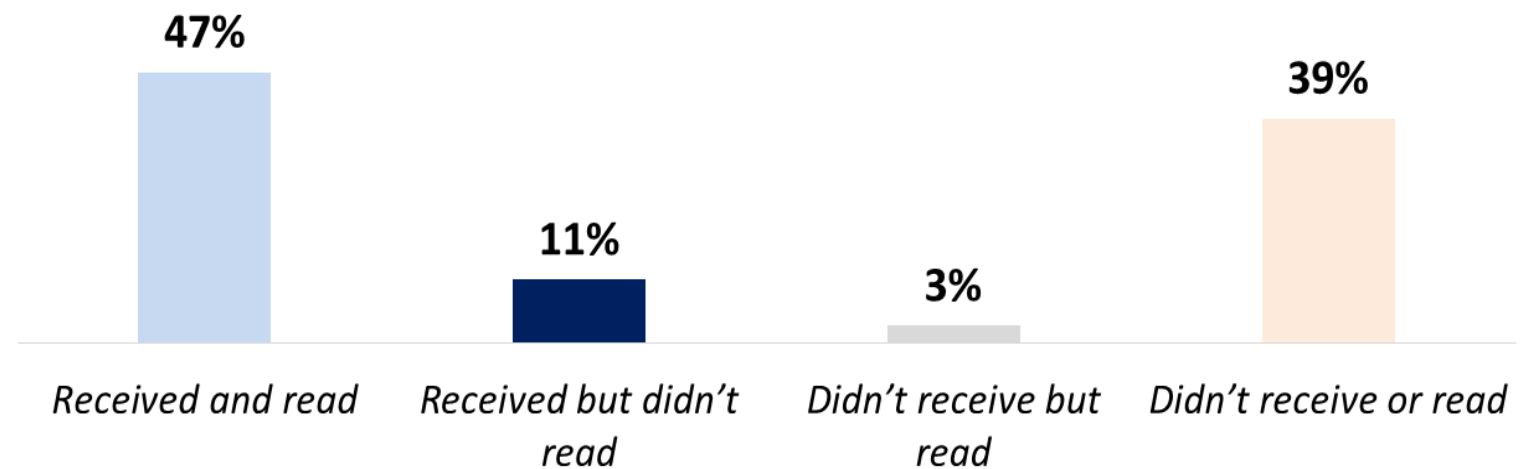


# Booklet penetration

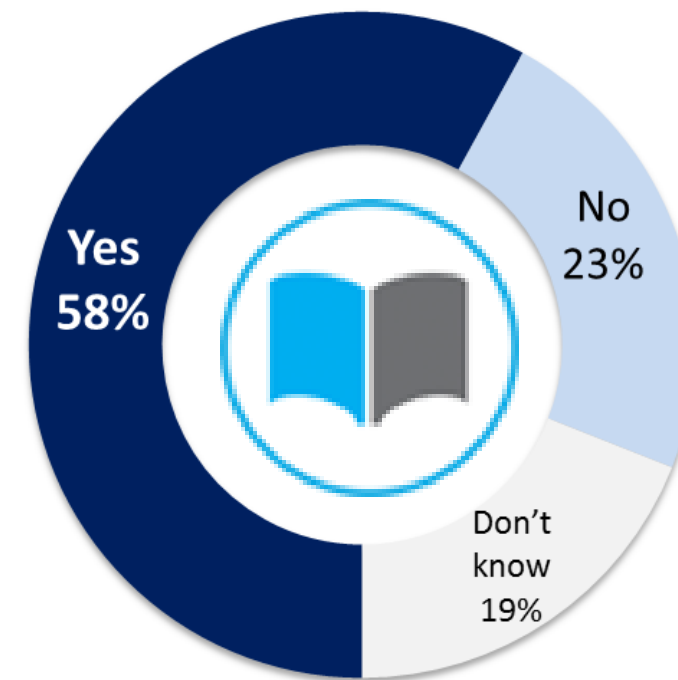
## A sizeable minority of the target audience did not receive the booklet

- We found that 42% didn't receive this booklet (which includes 19% who were unsure whether they received it). This is a pity because it was read by most of those who did receive it (82%) which reflects its perceived importance.
- Receipt of the booklet was more common among:
  - Females – 62% said they received it compared with 52% of males
  - Parents aged 35-39 – 71% c/w 43% of parents aged under 30
  - Parents who don't work full time – 62% c/w 54% of full timers
  - Metropolitan residents – 60% c/w 52% regional / rural
  - Those who speak a language other than English at home – 65% c/w 55% who only speak English at home
- Among those who read the booklet we found higher proportions of:
  - Parents aged 35-39 – 66% c/w 42% of parents aged under 35
  - Metropolitan residents – 55% c/w 37% regional / rural
  - Those who speak a language other than English at home – 57% c/w 48% who only speak English at home

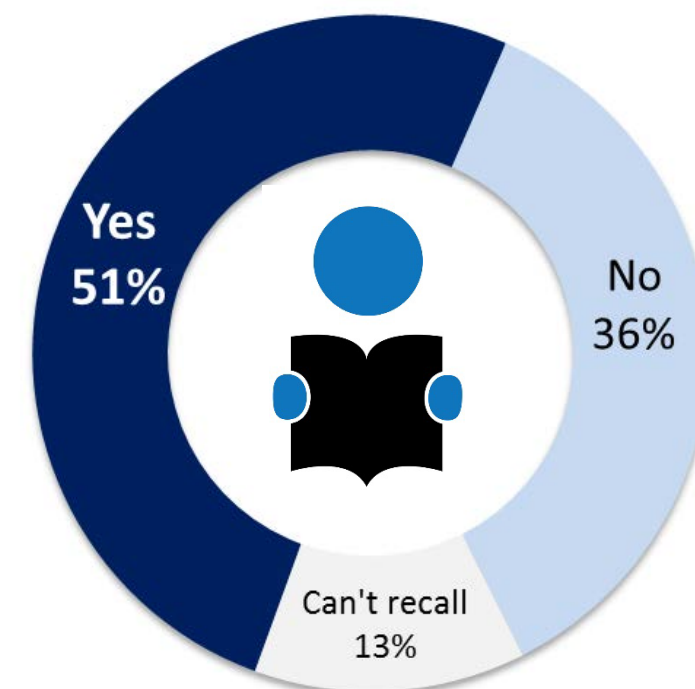
## Booklet penetration



### Received booklet?



### Read booklet?



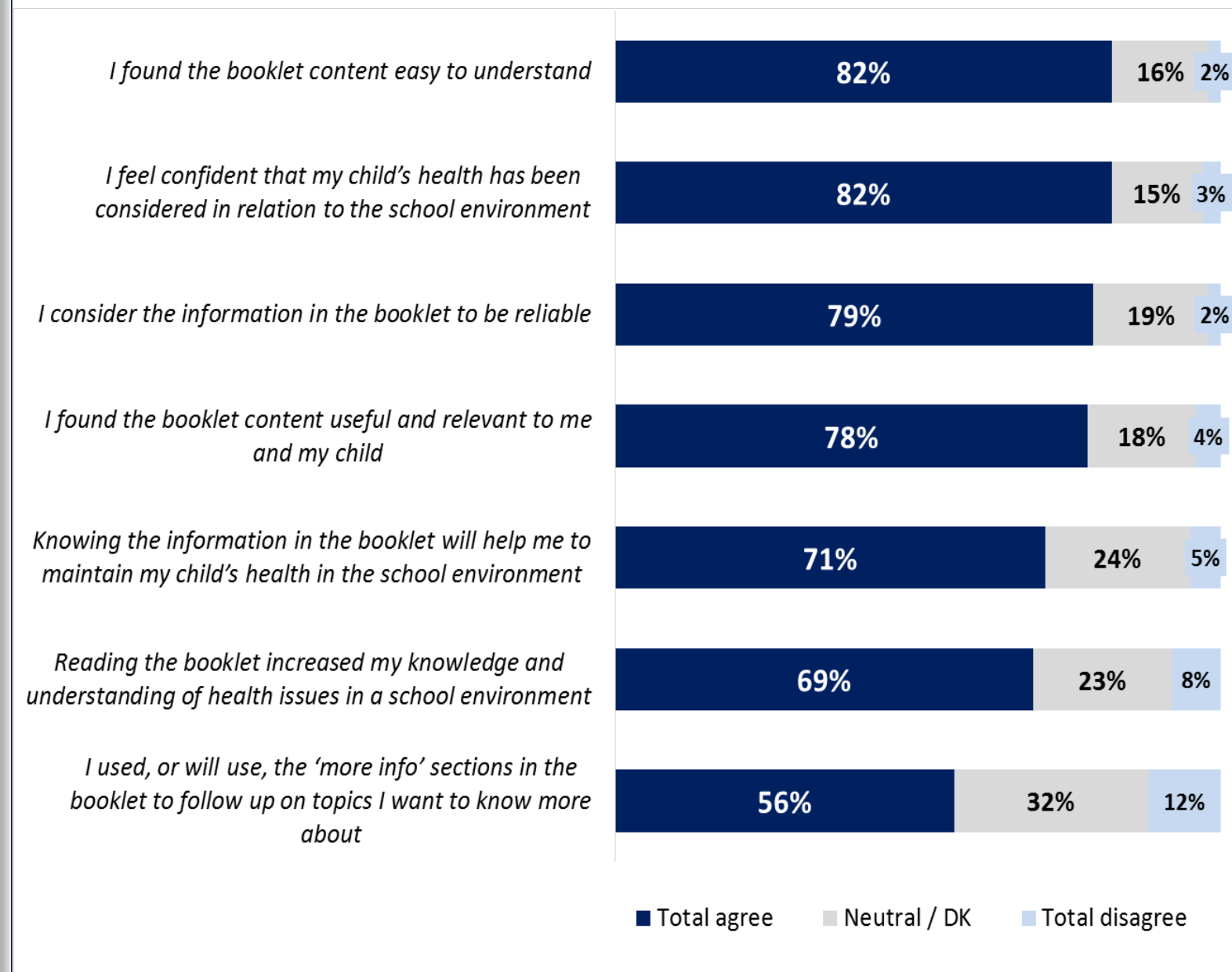
Total sample: n=238.  
Note: Rounding occurs

Refer also Tables 1-3 in the Tabular Results 6

# Attitudes towards the booklet

*It appeals to most readers on all key dimensions and appears to be achieving strategic objectives*

- Those who had read the booklet (51%) were asked to rate it on the dimensions listed opposite. The rest (who had not read it yet) were directed to the online PDF version so they could read it first before completing the remainder of the survey.
- The results displayed opposite indicate the booklet has been quite effective in terms of achieving its objectives as most parents agree (and few disagree) it is...
  - Simple (82% found the booklet easy to understand),
  - Reassuring (82% feel confident their child's health is considered)
  - Reliable (79%),
  - Useful and relevant (78%) ,
  - Empowering (71% agree the information will help to maintain their child's health)
  - Providing them with:
    - information that increases their knowledge and understanding of health issues in the school environment (69%), and
    - access to more information if they need it (56%)
- In the following segments we found a greater than average proportion who agreed with all statements:
  - Parents living in metropolitan Victoria,
  - The tertiary educated,
  - Parents whose first child is in prep, and
  - Those who speak a language other than English at home.
- This highlights that the booklet resonates well with these segments.

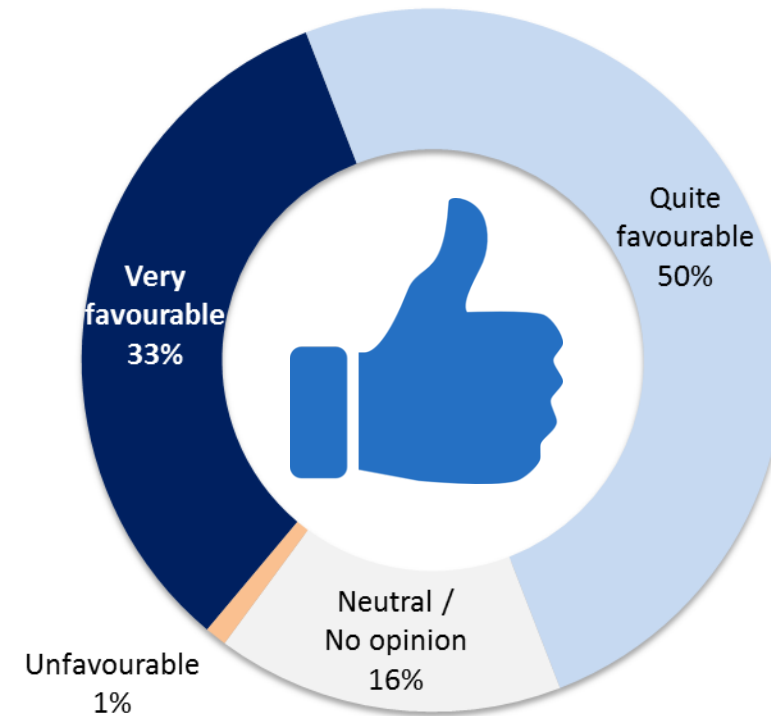


# Overall opinion and likelihood of recommending

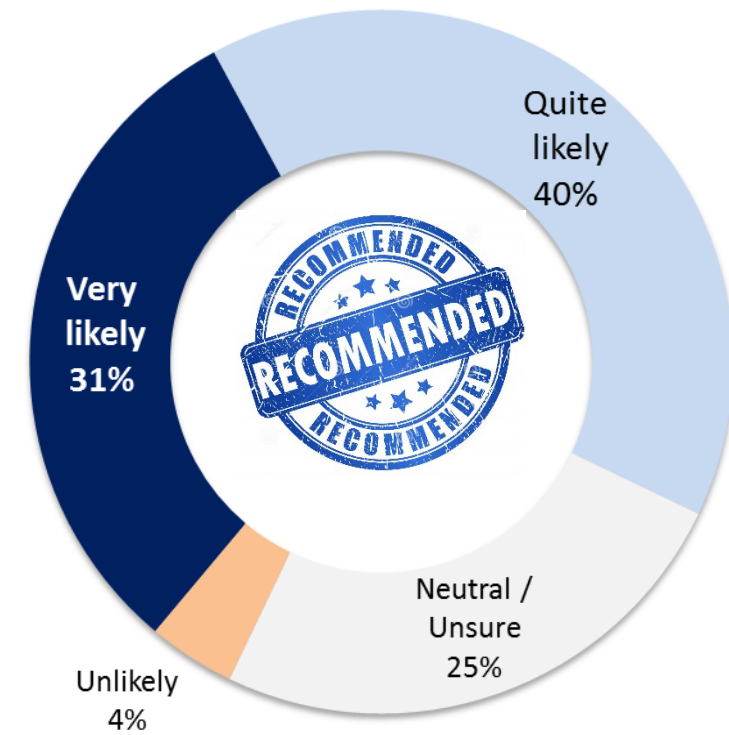
*An appealing resource which most parents are likely to recommend to others*

- This is clearly a booklet considered worth having given that 83% of parents rate it favourably and 71% are likely to recommend it to others.
- Favourable opinions were even more pronounced among:
  - Parents aged under 30 – 88%
  - The tertiary educated – 88%
  - Those who speak a language other than English at home – 87%
  - Parents living in metropolitan Victoria – 85%
  - Parents for whom its their first child in prep – 85%
- Segments most likely to recommend it to other parents include:
  - Those who speak a language other than English at home – 83%
  - Parents aged under 35 – 80%
  - Parents whose first child is in prep – 78%
  - Full time workers – 78%

## Overall opinion of booklet



## Likelihood of recommending booklet





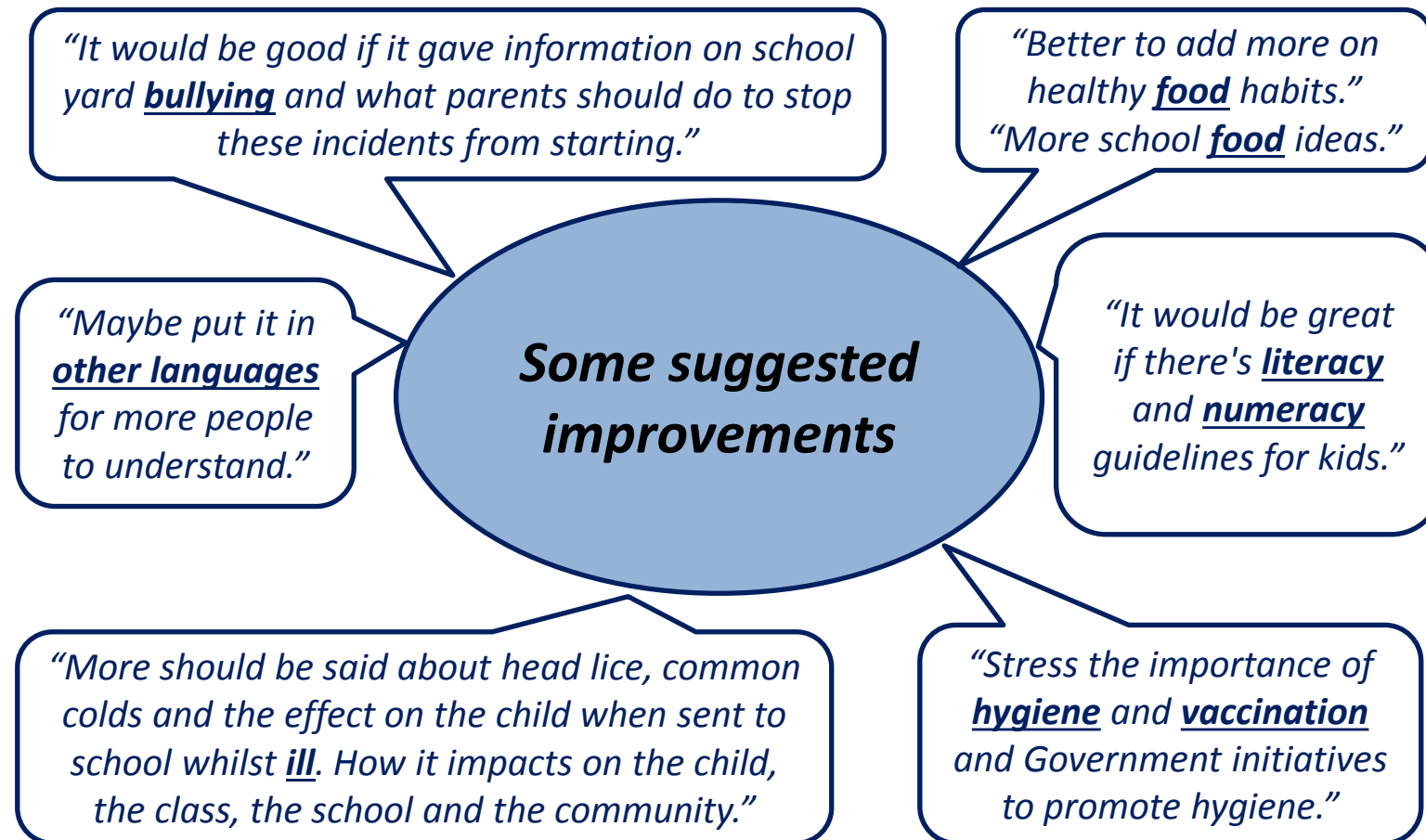
# Suggested improvements

*Most parents happy with the booklet as is but some additional content suggestions were made*

- Given that over 80% of parents were favourably disposed to the booklet, its not surprising that a majority saw no need for change.
- Around 1 in 5 suggested improvements which were mostly content related. A selection of verbatim comments appears opposite with the most common topics of interest displayed in **bold, underlined** font. They include:
  - Healthy food ideas
  - Bullying issues
  - The impact of illness
  - Literacy and numeracy guidelines
  - Importance of hygiene and vaccinations
- The verbatim comments of those who made suggestions are presented in Appendix 2 (P29-30) and these have been coded in Table 6 of the Tabular Results (P18).

**79%** *had no suggestions for change*

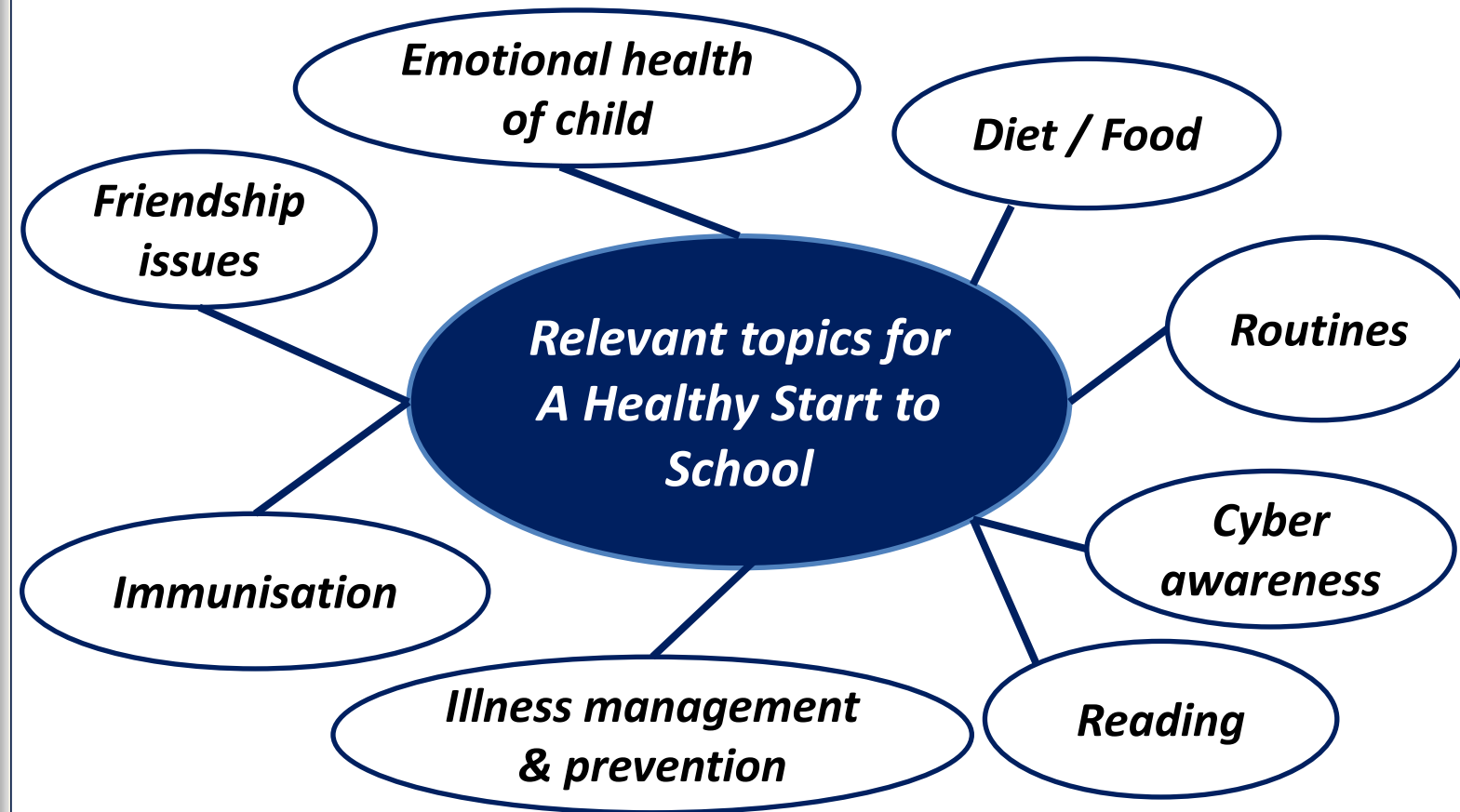
*"It's perfect."  
"I can't think of anything that can be improved. I love the way that it is now."*



# Health related tips

## *A number of helpful tips were provided*

- We asked survey participants whether they had any health related tips which could be included in future booklets. 16% of participants offered suggestions here.
- The most common themes to emerge are shown opposite and the verbatim comments are provided in Table 7 of the Tabular Results (P20-22).



# An Overall Assessment

- This research indicates the ‘A Healthy Start to School’ booklet is a valued resource and welcomed by parents of children starting Prep.
- Its content appears to be addressing most parents’ information needs well and encourages them to recommend this booklet to others.
- Attitudes towards the booklet on all the dimensions measured were very positive indicating that the underlying strategic objectives for this resource are being met.
- We therefore recommend that this resource continues to be produced with similar content, design and layout features. The main challenge seems to be in the distribution strategy as a sizeable proportion of the potential target did not receive it. We feel the approach is sound (i.e. distributing via schools) but the delivery method may need further consideration to ensure more parents receive it.
- Among families who spoke a language other than English at home (26%) over half (55%) indicated they would like the booklet to be translated into the language they speak which included various European and Asian languages (more details shown in Table 12 on P27) so this could also be considered for future editions.



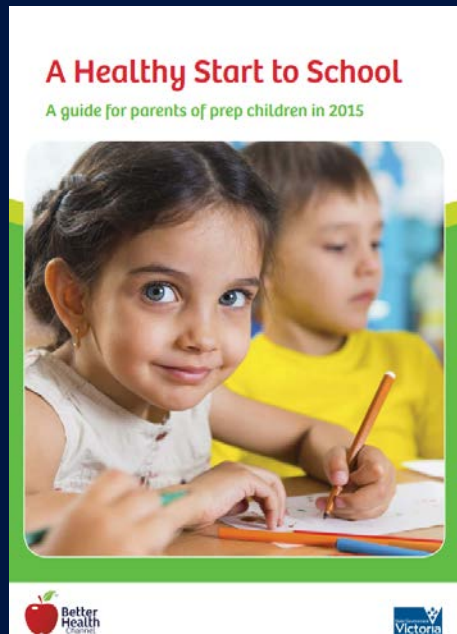
# Tabular Results



# 1: Was the booklet received?

**Q1.** Every year the Victorian Government provides each Prep child at a government school with a 'Welcome to school' library bag. This contains items that are useful and fun for prep students, along with a booklet entitled 'A Healthy Start to School' which aims to provide parents and carers of Prep kids with some timely health information and give them an overview of the role of the school when it comes to children's health.

An image of the front cover of this years' booklet is shown below



Did you receive this booklet this year?

Booklet received?	Total Sample (238) %	Location	
		Metropolitan (186) %	Regional / Rural (52) %
Yes	58	60	52
No	23	22	29
Don't know	19	19	19

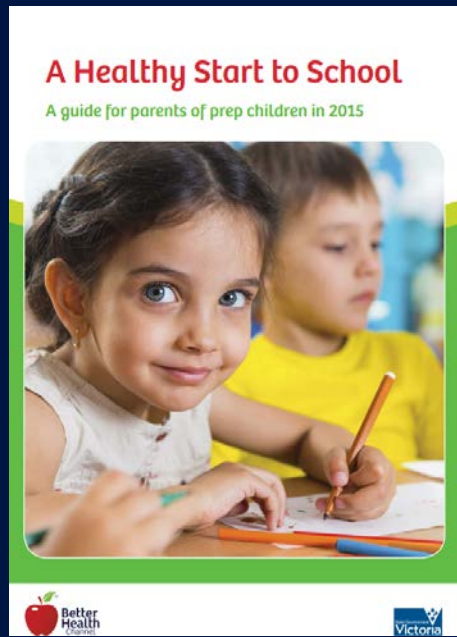
Source: Detailed Tabular Results – Tables 9-10

**Notes:**

1. Brackets show sample size.
2. Rounding occurs.

# 2: Has the booklet been read?

Q2. Have you read this booklet?



Read booklet?	Total Sample (238) %	Location	
		Metropolitan (186) %	Regional / Rural (52) %
Yes	51	55	37
No	36	32	52
Can't recall	13	13	12

Source: Detailed Tabular Results – Tables 11-12

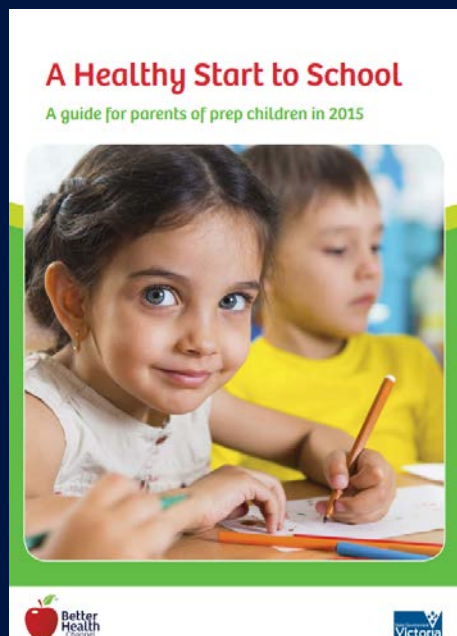
Notes:

1. Brackets show sample size.
2. **Blue** and **red** figures indicate differences between segments that are respectively **higher** and **lower** to a statistically significant degree at the 95% confidence level.
3. Rounding occurs.

# 3: Has the booklet been received and read?

Q1. Did you receive this booklet this year?

Q2. Have you read this booklet?



Received and read booklet?	Total Sample (238) %	Location	
		Metropolitan (186) %	Regional / Rural (52) %
Received and read	47	51	35
Received but not read	11	9	17
Not received but read	3	4	2
Not received and not read	39	37	46

Source: Detailed Tabular Results – Tables 1-2

Notes:

1. Combines results to Q1 and Q2.
2. **Blue** and **red** figures indicate differences between segments that are respectively **higher** and **lower** to a statistically significant degree at the 95% confidence level.
3. Rounding occurs.

# 4: Attitudes towards the booklet (after reading)

- Those who had read the booklet were asked Q3 below
- For those who had not read the booklet, the following instruction was given before being asked Q3:

We are interested to hear your thoughts about this booklet and would like you to read it before continuing with this survey. It should take approximately 15 minutes to read.

A copy of the booklet can be found at the following link:

[http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhattach.nsf/Images/\(Starting\\_School\)Healthy\\_start\\_to\\_school/\\$File/\(Starting\\_School\)Healthy\\_start\\_to\\_school.pdf](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhattach.nsf/Images/(Starting_School)Healthy_start_to_school/$File/(Starting_School)Healthy_start_to_school.pdf)

Once you have read the booklet, please click the > button to continue with the survey.

**Q3.** Thinking about your impressions of the booklet, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements?

	Total Sample (n=238)							
	AS %	A %	N/N %	D %	DS %	DK %	Total agree	Total Disagree
I found the booklet content easy to understand	32	50	13	2	<1	3	82	2
I feel confident that my child's health has been considered in relation to the school environment	22	59	13	3	<1	3	82	3
I consider the information in the booklet to be reliable	29	50	16	2	-	3	79	2
I found the booklet content useful and relevant to me and my child	20	58	15	3	1	2	78	4
Knowing the information in the booklet will help me to maintain my child's health in the school environment	18	53	22	4	<1	2	71	5
Reading the booklet increased my knowledge and understanding of health issues in a school environment	16	53	20	6	2	3	69	8
I used, or will use, the 'more info' sections in the booklet to follow up on topics I want to know more about	14	42	26	10	2	6	56	12

**Notes:**

1. AS = Agree Strongly; A = Agree; N/N = Neither agree nor disagree; D = Disagree; DS = Disagree Strongly; DK = Don't know
2. Rounding occurs.
3. <1= Under 1%



# 5: Overall opinion of the booklet

Q4. Overall, is your opinion of the “A Healthy Start to School” booklet...?

Opinion of booklet?	Total Sample (238) %	Location	
		Metropolitan (186) %	Regional / Rural (52) %
Very favourable	33	37	19
Quite favourable	50	48	58
Neither favourable nor unfavourable	15	13	21
Unfavourable	<1	1	-
No opinion about this	2	2	2
<b>Total favourable</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>77</b>

Source: Detailed Tabular Results – Tables 29-30

Notes:

1. Brackets show sample size.
2. **Blue** and **red** figures indicate differences between segments that are respectively **higher** and **lower** to a statistically significant degree at the 95% confidence level.
3. <1 = Less than 1%

# 6: Suggested changes to the booklet

**Q5.** What changes, additions or improvements, if any, would you like to see made to the “A Healthy Start to School” booklet? (Open ended question)

<i>Suggestions</i>	<i>Suggested improvements (50) %</i>
More food ideas / healthy eating / nutrition guidelines	12
Provide more information / new information (general)	12
More information on bullying issues	6
Guidelines for keeping children away from school while ill / after illness	6
Generally improve it / make it better (NFI)	4
Ensure it is available at start of school year	4
Ensure information is clearly explained / not patronising	4
More information on how to deal with children in formative years e.g. parents tips	4
Literacy / numeracy guidelines	4
Ensure all parents / children receive it	4
More health related info / health issues e.g. temperatures, treating colds, lice	4
More information on importance of vaccinations	4

**Source:** Detailed Tabular Results – Tables 31-32

**Notes:**

1. 79% said no changes, additions or improvements were necessary
2. Brackets show total base answering this question but sub-samples too small to warrant splitting results by location above.
3. Multiple responses possible here but space precludes us showing responses mentioned by less than 4%.
4. Verbatim responses shown in Appendix 2

# 7: Likelihood of recommending the booklet

Q5. How likely would you be to recommend the “A Healthy Start to School” booklet to other parents or carers of Prep children?

Likelihood of recommending	Total Sample (238) %	Location	
		Metropolitan (186) %	Regional / Rural (52) %
Very likely	31	34	19
Quite likely	40	40	42
Neither likely nor unlikely	23	21	33
Unlikely	4	4	4
Unsure	2	2	2
<b>Total likely</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>62</b>

Source: Detailed Tabular Results – Tables 33-34

Notes:

1. Brackets show total sample size.
2. **Blue** and **red** figures indicate differences between segments that are respectively **higher** and **lower** to a statistically significant degree at the 95% confidence level.
3. Rounding occurs.

# 8.1: Health related tips or experiences

**Q7.** We are seeking input from parents of Prep students to include in future editions of the “A Healthy Start to School” booklet and we would really value any comments you might share.

Please tell us about any health-related tips, insights or experiences you would like to share with future parents of Prep students.

Please note, you don’t have to share anything but if you would like to, future Prep parents may appreciate it! Your quote may be used in next year’s booklet alongside the names you supply below but you do not have to supply names to appear alongside your contribution if you do not wish to. The quote may appear next to a photo using models.

Parent	Child	Verbatim comment
Venessa	Jaiya	<i>School is such a big adjustment and, at least in my case, my daughter had a few behaviour changes, she would get very emotional on little things like choosing what to have on her sandwich, or bursting into tears because she couldn't decide on what school shoes to wear... She would be her usual loving self one minute and the next minute she would turn argumentative and defiant.. After the first few weeks everything calmed down, but just support your child listen to their chatter and offer them lots of hugs and kisses and encouragement it does get better!!</i>
Tegan	Chelsea	<i>Chelsea has made a few friends but sometimes their relationships are up and down. It's good to know from the booklet that this is completely normal. It's made it more clear with the advice I am supposed to give Chelsea if she asks.</i>
Peter	Brianna	<i>More information for separated parents &amp; how to assist when having access to children for a limited time - eg: every 2nd weekend, what things to do to keep up to date with the progress of child &amp; which activities etc they are performing</i>
Rachel	Abigail	<i>You feel a bit lost when your child starts prep. This booklet helped me feel a bit more at ease and a bit more knowledgeable.</i>
Yvette	Jett	<i>At first, I found keeping to any pre-existing routine such as daycare etc. useful to help with transition. Things such as getting the child to help pack their bag, or choosing the food they might have in their lunch, really helped Jett through a very different environment. We had moved just before he began school and so knew no one, and this was one way in which we could help.</i>
Nicole	Jasmine	<i>Don't bombard your child with questions about their day. They may be feeling overwhelmed by the big changes already happening and asking about their day can add to the stresses that they may already be facing.</i>
Rob	Sealtiel	<i>Don't be overwhelmed by the amount of reading required by your child in prep. It turned out very interactive! Story time is a favourite before sleep activity that our son does not like to miss or skip!</i>
Carolyn	Mason	<i>We use the nude food at school and some tips on how to do that may help others.</i>
Jan	Emily	<i>Unless the child has a physical issue the emotional health of a new prep child is very important. Some children are academically ready but not emotionally and visa versa. I have found this to be one of the biggest challenges - whether or not to send my child this year or next. Also it is important to note that Australia has the youngest age of school starts in the world. In almost every other country (with the exception of two, I believe) children begin school at 6 or 7 years of age.</i>
		<i>Vaccination is important not just for your child but for the other children they will come into contact with. Vaccination saves lives.</i>

Source: Open ended data

Note: Some participants chose not to provide names

## 8.2: Health related tips or experiences (cont.)

**Q7.** We are seeking input from parents of Prep students to include in future editions of the “A Healthy Start to School” booklet and we would really value any comments you might share.

Please tell us about any health-related tips, insights or experiences you would like to share with future parents of Prep students.

Please note, you don’t have to share anything but if you would like to, future Prep parents may appreciate it! Your quote may be used in next year’s booklet alongside the names you supply below but you do not have to supply names to appear alongside your contribution if you do not wish to. The quote may appear next to a photo using models.

Parent	Child	Verbatim comment
Chris	William	Immunisation is very important as our children start mingling with larger numbers of children Stay happy and your kid will also be happy
George	Joanna	Establishing sleep and diet routines in the weeks leading up to the start of foundation/prep year
Caroline	Matthew	Healthy food for all meals, not just the school lunches. Limiting digital time to improve their creativity.
Jenna	Catriona	Regarding head lice: although 'treatments' can help, the best way to rid your child is to use a 'nit comb' and/or fingernails to remove the lice, and their eggs (most easily done on damp hair). Getting a young child to sit still for this can be difficult, so get someone else to sit with the child and read them a book, tell them a story or similar to distract them from what you are doing. A last resort alternative is to shave the child's head (girl or boy) with a number 4 size comb on the clippers, then remove all eggs and lice. Keeping boys hair short, and keeping girls' long hair in a plait or ponytail, as well as spraying a 'lice preventative' on your child's hair also stops the chance of lice being spread to your child. Also, wash all bedding in hot water and allow to dry in the sun. Vacuum the mattress and floor around the bed, and wash all soft toys and teddies that your child might sleep/play with. To prevent further spreading of head lice, keep your child home if he/she has it until they are 'lice-free'.
		Sick kids should not be brought to school to prevent the germs spreading
Erika	Maria	Healthy food education
Samantha	Benjamin	Sam (my partner) has a series of flow charts for the boys to follow each day. From getting out of bed to getting to school. I think it is a great initiative and just a reminder to parents. People assume we don't require the information so it is a way parents can read in private
Rubab	Sakina	How to allow children to settle in well
Amanda	Eleanor	Nothing you can do to stop kids getting colds Healthy diets/ nutrition/conditions like ADHD treatment with nutrition
Natarsha	Maya	Don't put tomato or hard cheese in sandwiches. Make sure items in plastic packaging is easy to open
Wendy	Yvonne	Keep the booklet handy and re-read it a couple of weeks into term 1 and again at the end of term 1 or before return to term 2. It will remind you about what to expect when you may have forgotten it or overlooked it in the rush of starting school, and immediacy required to deal with an overtired prep.
Sandra	Jasmine	Thoroughly look through your child's bag every afternoon in order to not miss any important forms or information.

Source: Open-ended data

Note: Some participants chose not to provide names

## 8.3: Health related tips or experiences (cont.)

**Q7.** We are seeking input from parents of Prep students to include in future editions of the “A Healthy Start to School” booklet and we would really value any comments you might share.

Please tell us about any health-related tips, insights or experiences you would like to share with future parents of Prep students.

Please note, you don’t have to share anything but if you would like to, future Prep parents may appreciate it! Your quote may be used in next year’s booklet alongside the names you supply below but you do not have to supply names to appear alongside your contribution if you do not wish to. The quote may appear next to a photo using models.

Parent	Child	Verbatim comment
		<i>This book is really great featuring ideas about how to prepare your kids for prep. I like the detail guidelines that government write down for parents.</i>
Tony	Catriona	<i>I found that keeping my child's enthusiasm for school at a high level and by restricting negative comments by older siblings in relation to school my daughters pathway through prep has remained positive and enthusiastic which most definitely has a positive impact on her early learning years.</i>
		<i>I think it's great for parents who might not have the information that the booklet provides and if they don't know where to find the help they might need.</i>
Bill	Smill	<i>An apple a day keeps the doctor away</i>
Yvonne	Charlotte	<i>That the information is 'parent friendly'.</i>
		<i>It's better to apply sunscreen lotion at the prep before sending them out on sunny days whether or not they applied at home</i>
		<i>We walk to school if she gets up early enough. It gives her some exercise before she sit down in classroom. But we drove her back in the afternoon as she is tired after the school day</i>
Rachel	Ash	<i>Healthy snacks and having breakfast in mornings before school</i>
		<i>No vaccinations no prep</i>
Ram	Ajju	<i>Key to perfect start for your kid</i>
Oscar	Lily	<i>Food, cooking, exercise</i>
Jess	Hudson	<i>We kept Hudson home from school for 48 hours after his last gastro symptom so that we were sure he wasn't contagious any more.</i>
Kat	Olive	<i>I hadn't thought through the fact that school would be the first time olive had to make decisions about what to eat when. The teachers do help but she likes me to show her which things in her lunch box are for lunch and recess etc. Also she feels strongly that the right thing to do is to eat everything that's in her lunch box and tells me I often pack too much in there.</i>
Simone	Kristian	<i>A few topics could include- cyber awareness &amp; about nude food! Simple suggestions etc</i>

Source: Open-ended data

Note: Some participants chose not to provide names

# Sample Details



# 9: Gender, Age & Location

- A: Gender:
- B: Which of these age groups do you fall into?
- E: Do you live in a...?

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Total Sample (238) %</i>
Male	39
Female	61
<i>Age</i>	
Under 25	5
25 – 29	13
30 – 34	26
25-39	25
40-49	26
50+	4
Prefer not to say	2
<i>Location</i>	
Metropolitan location	78
Regional / rural location	22

Source: Detailed Tabular Results – Tables 36, 37, 43



# 10: Work Status & Education

C: Are you...?

D: What is your occupation?

<b>Work Status</b>	<b>Total Sample (238) %</b>
Employed full-time	45
Employed part-time	27
Engaged in home duties	20
Retired	1
A student	3
Not employed	4
Prefer not to say	<1
<b>Education</b>	
Secondary incomplete	3
Secondary complete	16
Trade / vocational qualification	21
Tertiary qualification	11
Prefer not to say	3

Source: Detailed Tabular Results – Tables 40-41

# 11: Relationship to student & first child in Prep?

**G:** What is your relationship to the Prep student?

**H:** Is this your first child (who you care for) to begin Prep?

<i>Relationship to Prep student</i>	<i>Total Sample (238) %</i>
Parent / guardian	93
Grandparent	4
Other relative	3
<i>First child in Prep</i>	
Yes	60
No	38
Prefer not to say	2

Source: Detailed Tabular Results – Tables 45-47

# 12: Other language spoken at home?

- I:** Do you speak a language other than English in your household
- J:** What language do you speak?
- K:** Would you like to see the booklet translated into that language in the future?

<i>Speak language other than English at home?</i>	<i>Total Sample (238) %</i>
Yes	26
No	72
Prefer not to say	1
<b><i>Other language spoken</i></b>	<b>(53)</b>
Greek (4), Italian (4), Other European (5)	25
Chinese (7 mentions), Mandarin (4) Cantonese (1)	23
Sinhalese (4), Hindi (4)	15
Vietnamese (4)	8
All other responses (14)	26
Prefer not to say (12)	23
<b><i>Like to see booklet translated into that language?</i></b>	<b>(53)</b>
Yes	55
No	42
Prefer not to say	4

Source: Detailed Tabular Results – Tables 49-51

**Notes:**

1. J & K only asked of those saying Yes to L.
2. K not asked if respondent said prefer not to say in J.

# Appendix 1:

## Questionnaire

Double click and zoom in to view questionnaire

### **NOTES** *(These do not appear on the questionnaire)*

There are two different ways to participate in this survey:

- An invitation seeking the target audience via the Australia Post database – they will receive an email requesting participation from AFS. This group may or may not have read the booklet.
- An opt-in link on the Better Health Channel website for those who have read the booklet and noticed on the back that they can provide their feedback. They are now being asked screening questions (originally they were not).

There will be two survey links (asking the same questions) – one for each source of respondents so we can differentiate them in the analysis and for costing purposes.

### **INTRODUCTION FOR AUSTRALIA POST SAMPLE**

Hello. On behalf of the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services, we are seeking feedback from parents about an information booklet designed to assist with your child's transition into school.

If you have not already read this booklet you will be able to do so as part of this survey which asks for your opinion and any improvements you might like to suggest. This survey should take less than 10 minutes and to read the booklet will take approximately 15 minutes.

Please be assured that all information and opinions you provide will be used only for research purposes and we adhere to the principles of the Privacy Act. No individual responses will be divulged in reporting the findings from this survey unless you give your permission to do so.

This survey is being conducted on behalf of the Department by Di Marzio Research and AFS Smart Askers. If you wish to check the legitimacy of these firms and this survey, you can call the Australian Market and Social Research Society (AMSRS) Surveyline on 1300 364 830.

We thank you for your time and co-operation and hope you enjoy participating in this survey.

# Appendix 2:

## Suggested improvements

### Verbatim comments from Q5

**Q5.** What changes, additions or improvements, if any, would you like to see made to the “A Healthy Start to School” booklet? (Open ended question)

### Suggested improvements from Q5

*I would need to be given one at the commencement of school, not seeing it by accident half way through term two*

*As a nurse, I feel it would be useful for parents to know what is 'normal' for children with their temperature and behaviour while sick. Many parents look at their children as tiny adults, so to know when to worry about illness would be great.*

*More school food ideas*

*It would be good if it gave information on school yard bullying and what parents should do to stop these incidents from starting.*

*Maybe put it in other languages for more people to understand*

*No grains*

*More info please*

*Take out the sidebar stories, they were annoying, they break the continuity of reading and I don't care at all about other parents or their children.*

*Make it better*

*Stress the importance of hygiene and vaccination and government initiatives to promote hygiene*

*Good one to know*

*Everything was perfect.. Food related tips for kids may be included*

*Perhaps more information about other health services available to parents outside of the 'school system'.*

*More about exercise*

*What the school is obliged to do in regards to contacting you for illness, bullying etc.*

*More should be said about head lice, common colds and the effect on the child when it is sent to school whilst ill. How it impacts on the child, the class, the school and the community.*

*Change canteen food*

*More funding to schools needed.*

*Difficult for you given we are all different in how we bring up our children, my partner is a child psychologist (depends if you consider this an advantage) thus I would expect she has a better understanding of dealing with children through these important years*

*Its perfect*

*I can't think of anything that can be improved. I love the way that it is now.*

*I didn't like the side pictures/stories as it broke the flow of what I was reading.*

*Vaccinations - more emphasis*

*Its things we already know*

*Other design*

# Appendix 2 (cont):

## Suggested improvements

### Verbatim comments from Q5

**Q5.** What changes, additions or improvements, if any, would you like to see made to the “A Healthy Start to School” booklet? (Open ended question)

### Suggested improvements from Q5

*Talking about bullying and cyber safety about what schools are doing around this as often this is a health issue too*

*Maybe a bit less patronising*

*It should clearly explained, and expressed*

*Include a section on children who don't speak English, due to new arrival to this country. This may cover accepting and embracing different cultures and languages. And may also give parents tips on how to communicate with the parents of these children who may also not speak English, which would help with inclusion into the school and local community.*

*All good*

*Condense the information more as it is a bit daunting at first glance*

*The title*

*Maybe a guide to finances involved when starting school*

*It would be great ideas if there's little guide about literacy and numeracy guidelines for kids*

*If your child is sick, leave them at home or with a carer and do not bring them to school. This will minimise the spread of the virus.*

*All good*

*Maybe something about what will be expected academically e.g.. It's ok that your child can't read or write yet*

*An opportunity to partake in on line discussions*

*Better to add more on healthy food habits*

*More tips from other parents*

*Encouraging healthy eating is always positive*

*To make sure all parents get the booklet*

*More such information on a frequent basis*

*A lot more info*

*More info to reveal*

*No mention of allergies and/or religious dietary requirements.*

*I would be good to give a guideline of how long to stay home after having gastro. Lots of parents send their kids back to school as soon as they are feeling better, without knowing that they are still contagious.*

*Think this information should be provided via the school website - very wasteful having booklets etc printed off. Web based information is easier to find at a later date etc*

*I feel that whilst this information can be useful to some parents, it is stuff we have been told ad nauseum since our children were born, from doctors, midwives, maternal health, kindergarten teachers and information packs given to us at hospital etc.*

*I have only just seen the booklet online as we still have not received our prep library bags. This is incredibly disappointing and I feel the 'boat' has been missed as so many children will have a adopted an unhealthy start to school which is now hard to change. The reason (according to our school) that we have not received our bag is that there weren't enough sent to the school. How is this possible? There are only 10 preps in my sons' class.*

# Appendix 3:

## Additional comments

That's the end of the survey. Thank you for your input and assistance shaping future editions of the "A Healthy Start to School" booklet.

If you have any additional feedback or comments about this survey or the booklet, please provide them below.

Once again, thank you for participating in our survey.

### Additional comments

*I only wish I had received one!! Jett is number 6 of 7 children, and things change so much between each Prep child. I read things in this booklet I didn't know about, such as tracking down a community dentist - very useful now we have moved to a city we have never been to before.*

*Perhaps more info on school food ideas. Information on private parts and how to talk to your child about inappropriate touching*

*Good job in organising the information available, particularly for parents who require support. My wife is a qualified teacher so we understand the big change for a child when they start at school. Even with this experience the booklet was useful*

*It is a worthwhile addition to the start of the students school life*

*This has given our family plenty to think about.*

*This is an excellent booklet*

*Its great to see the books in different languages*

*Thank you for doing this research*

*I like Victoria Government who care very much about kids and society*

*A similar booklet for the children would be great.*

*Make sure all parents are encouraged to read it*

*Interesting survey, maybe you could have sent this survey to the school so they could fill out the questionnaire.*

*Very disappointed that we haven't received this booklet or the library bag. When I asked at our school, I was told the school received the incorrect number (too few) and the school were not prepared to hand out bags to some students and not others (fair enough). When will this be rectified?*

*I thought the whole bag was fantastic and a lovely surprise. Thank you.*

*Difficult for me to comment on the personal usefulness of the booklet as I feel I located or was aware of the information prior to reading the booklet. As I feel I am quite proactive and resourceful in trying to find out this information. However I can see it is very beneficial to some people who may not have the means or knowledge to be as proactive*

*I found the information on friendship and its transient nature particularly useful.*

*The booklet was very helpful to me*

*It is great to be able to participate in optimising my child's education*

*Very good relevant publication.*