

What health aims and topics are more popular for teens and parents using a health app?

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Purpose: In the context of developing Aim2Be (an app that support youth and their families in adopting healthy eating, physical activity, screen time, and sleep behaviours), this study qualitatively described what content appealed most to teens and parents.

Methods 301 teens (13-17yrs) and one of their parents (46 ± 7yrs) were given access to an early version of Aim2Be for 4.5 months. Web analytics were used to determine which of the 16 health topics teen users (N=294) engaged with and completed and which of the 23 articles were most often consulted by parents.

Results The top five aims set by teens were: Drop the pop (34%), Be a mindful eater (18%), Be a veggie fan (17%), Be sugar smart (14%) and Be well-rested (14%). Teens reported highest rates of completion for these aims with the exception of Be well-rested as Break your addiction (screen time) was the fifth most completed. Of the parents who accessed the articles (90%), the following topics were most popular: learning about the app and aims (51%), parenting (37%), supporting family health behaviours (37%), and drinking water (37%).

Conclusions: Overall, teens were most interested and most successful in making health behaviour changes related to healthy eating. However, to curtail childhood obesity results demonstrate the importance to engage teens in physical activity and screen time topics. As parents were highly engaged in articles related to promoting healthy family behaviours, future interventions should support parents to engage their teens in family meals, physical activity and screen time limits.

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