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Full of beans

Computer games, 'fat' suits, and entertaining quizzes will be used by Northumbria University academics to teach the public about healthy eating.

Staff and students are putting on an interactive exhibition at the Life Science Centre aimed at providing children and the general public with information about healthy living and increase awareness of the problems associated with poor diet.

The 'Be Full of B.E.A.N.S (Brain Energy Activity Nutrition Success)' exhibition, which runs from Saturday 16 February until 22 April, is aimed at children and parents and is an opportunity for academics to share their research to the

general public in a fun and accessible way.

Advice on how to increase fruit and vegetable intake, how to increase physical activity levels, and the importance of food and cognitive function will be provided by experts in the fields of nutrition, sport and exercise sciences and psychology.

Dr Julie Young, lecturer in Human Nutrition and Food Science at Northumbria, is leading the exhibition. She said: “Our aim is to increase nutritional knowledge and awareness via a number of fun interactive activities in order to help reinforce this information at an early age and enable children to take the steps towards a healthier, longer life.

“The interactive element of the public engagement exhibit will open up dialogue, promote discussion and may, in addition, help to increase awareness of the implications of poor diet and lifestyle in young and older people.”

Visitors to the exhibition stand will be asked to fill in questionnaires about their nutritional knowledge and also participate in active gaming, including Wii Sports, prior to and after engaging with the team and the exhibit. Data will also be captured during the collection of anthropometric measurements from participants.

Following the close of the stand in April, the exhibition will be scaled down in order to be taken to schools for outreach activities and community centres.

Ian Simmons, Director of Science Communications at Life, said: “This exhibition comes to us at a particularly pertinent time when the whole of society is examining what we eat and how it affects us. It will be an additional enjoyable and educational activity for our visitors who will be progressing the important research already underway at Northumbria.”

Be Full of B.E.A.N.S will run at the Life Science Centre, Times Square, from Saturday 16 February until 22 April. The exhibition is open to the general public at weekends and during school holidays between 10am and 5pm. It is open for school visits on weekdays. For more information, visit www.healthylivinguk.org

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Contacts



Rik Kendall

Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
Business and Law / Arts, Design & Social Sciences
rik.kendall@northumbria.ac.uk
07923 382339



Andrea Slowey

Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
Engineering and Environment / Health and Life Sciences
andrea.slowey@northumbria.ac.uk
07708 509436



Rachael Barwick

Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
rachael.barwick@northumbria.ac.uk
07377422415



James Fox

Press Contact
Student Communications Manager
james2.fox@northumbria.ac.uk

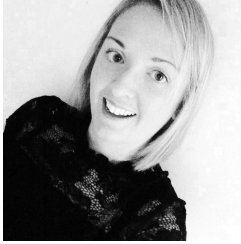


Kelly Elliott

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

kelly2.elliott@northumbria.ac.uk



Gemma Brown

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

gemma6.brown@northumbria.ac.uk