

## Poll shows top demands for family diners

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A survey into dining trends of families has shown that a third would prefer to have smaller portions of dishes from the full menu as opposed to ordering from the children's menu.

The poll by HospitalityGEM found that 91% of respondents expected a separate children's menu to be available when they visited a pub.

The results showed that while 52% of people do prefer to order through a separate children's menu, 36% favour smaller portions of dishes from the full menu for young guests.

Health considerations are also incredibly important for most customers with children; 66% said they would like to see calorie, health and allergen information displayed on the menu. This is the case for the majority of age groups, with the exception of the over 65's. While 72% of 18-25 year olds wanted to see this information, only 45% of the over 65s did.

The research found that a mini roast dinner was the most popular dish for children, followed closely by chicken nuggets.

In terms of pub facilities, 26% of respondents felt that the most important way to appeal to families was to provide a separate dining area for those with young children. Family specific special offers, and availability of colouring books and goodie bags, were also highlighted as attractive.

Steven Pike, managing director of HospitalityGEM, said: "For those pubs wishing to be more than just wet-led, and wanting to appeal across all of the day parts, then it is clear that making younger guests feel welcome offers a great opportunity to boost income. It's also very positive to see that the vast majority of customers think that pubs are already doing enough to make their venues suitable and attractive for those with children.

“Elsewhere in the hospitality sector, chain restaurants scored particularly highly in catering for children, so it may be worthwhile for those keen to improve their offering further to look at brands in this area for inspiration. We’ve found from diner feedback that each chain often has one or two things they do well or differently, which means there are sure to be some specific aspects from these brands that other operators can apply to their own business.”