



# NIP ALLERGIES IN THE Bub

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## NIP ALLERGIES IN THE BUB – AN INITIATIVE OF THE NATIONAL ALLERGY STRATEGY

This project has been informed by the Infant Feeding Implementation Meeting held with stakeholders in March 2017 and overseen by a Working Group comprising key stakeholder consultation.

### Key focus group findings

- Separate parent (4) and health professional (3) focus groups were held in Perth and Sydney.
- Knowledge of the current guidelines for allergen introduction was high among health professionals (HPs), but poor among parents.
- Parents who did have some knowledge of allergen introduction strategies, had outdated information, current at the time of their eldest child.
- There was little knowledge or understanding of the fact that allergies could be prevented with early introduction of common food allergens, and some parents reported low feelings of self-efficacy and control in regard to whether their children developed a food allergy.
- When the current guidelines were introduced to participants, they were quickly understood and absorbed, and had legitimacy due to the endorsement of ASCIA and the medical community.

### Website and campaign design

- 'Nip Allergies in the Bub' was clearly the most effective brand concept for parents and HPs alike
- Imagery showing children with food was favoured.
- Participants favoured photographic images of babies rather than graphical or humorous imagery.
- It was felt that communications would most engage parents of children in the right age group if they illustrated an explicit link between the introduction of food allergens and babies of the right age.
- It was considered essential that the website provide useful resources and information in order to answer any questions raised by the initial brand promotional materials.
- Resources such as fact sheets should be targeted at both parents and HPs, with an understanding that HPs are likely to be a formal conduit for parents to receive the information.
- The research underpinning the current guidelines should also be made available.

### Resources developed

- Nip allergies in the Bub website containing practical information for parents about when and how to introduce the common food allergens (including food ideas), how to optimise eczema management (including videos and infographics), frequently asked questions.
- The website also contain a health professional section with links to new e-training courses (food allergy prevention; paediatric atopic dermatitis) and information about infant anaphylaxis as well as links to useful existing resources.
- A 1300 support line, staffed by trained health professionals, has been established for consumers and health professionals.

### ABSTRACT

#### Background

ASCIA Guidelines for infant feeding and allergy prevention were released in 2016, based on evidence from recently published studies and ASCIA infant feeding advice that was first developed in 2008. The National Allergy Strategy (NAS) identified the need to develop a communication strategy about key recommendations in the 2016 ASCIA Guidelines.

#### Method

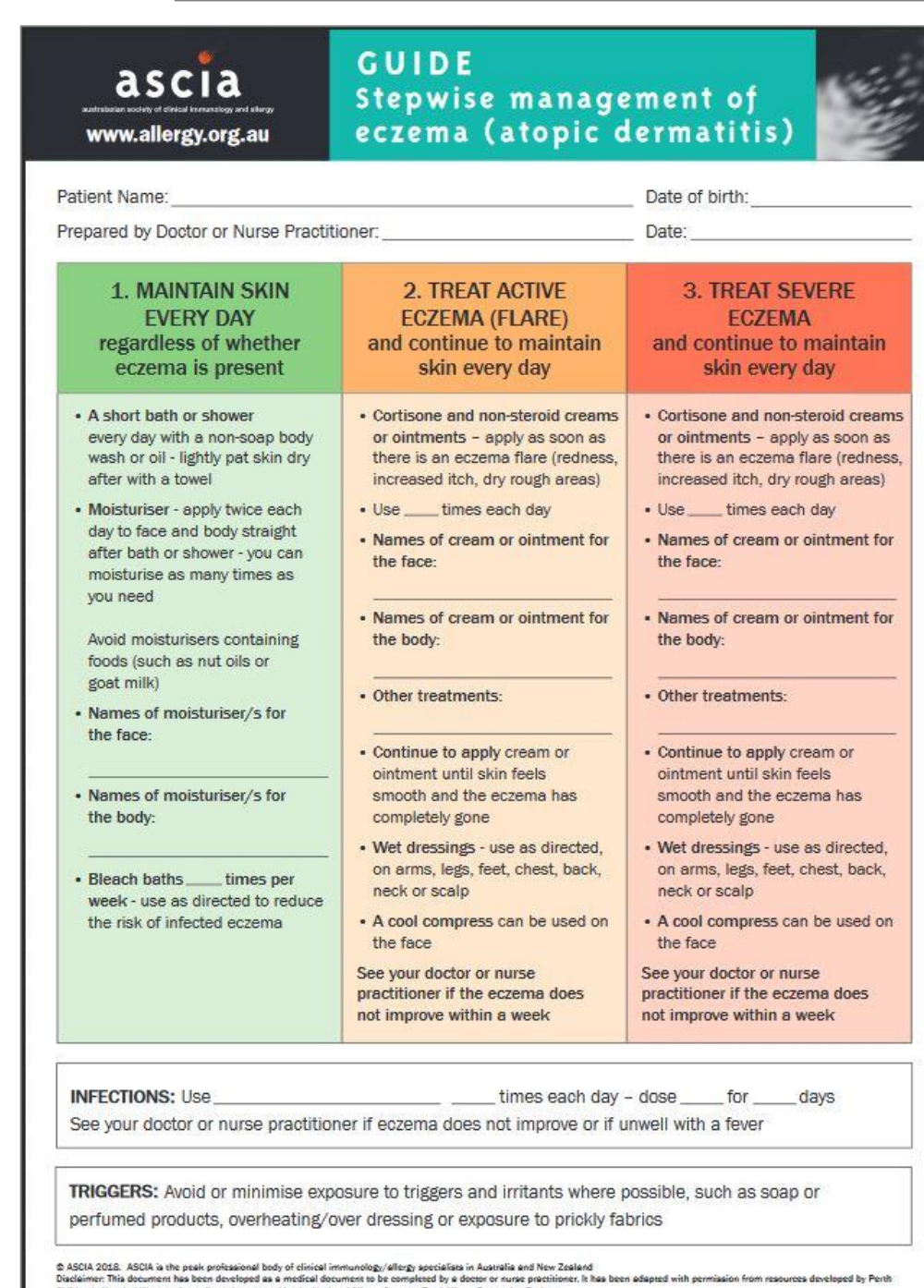
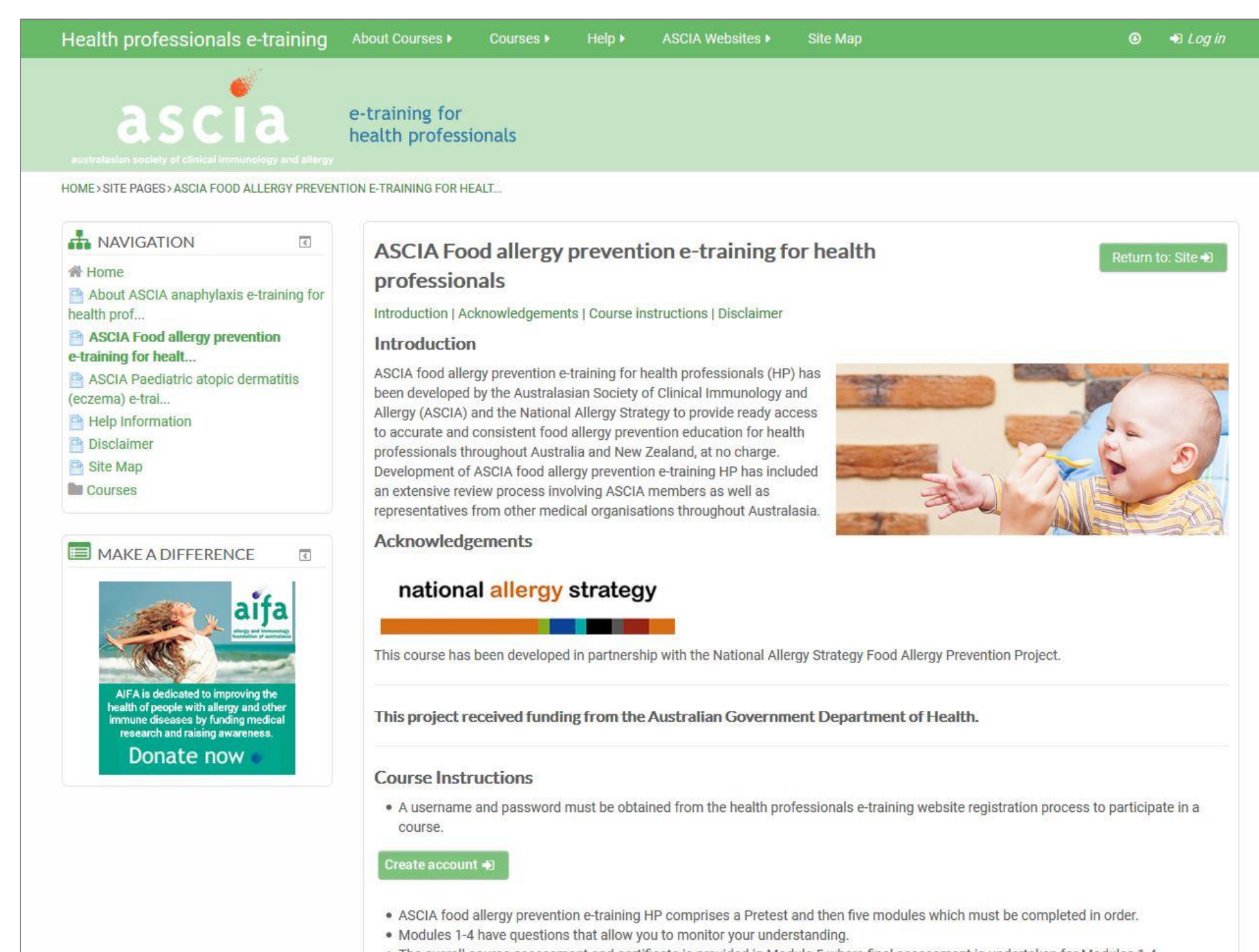
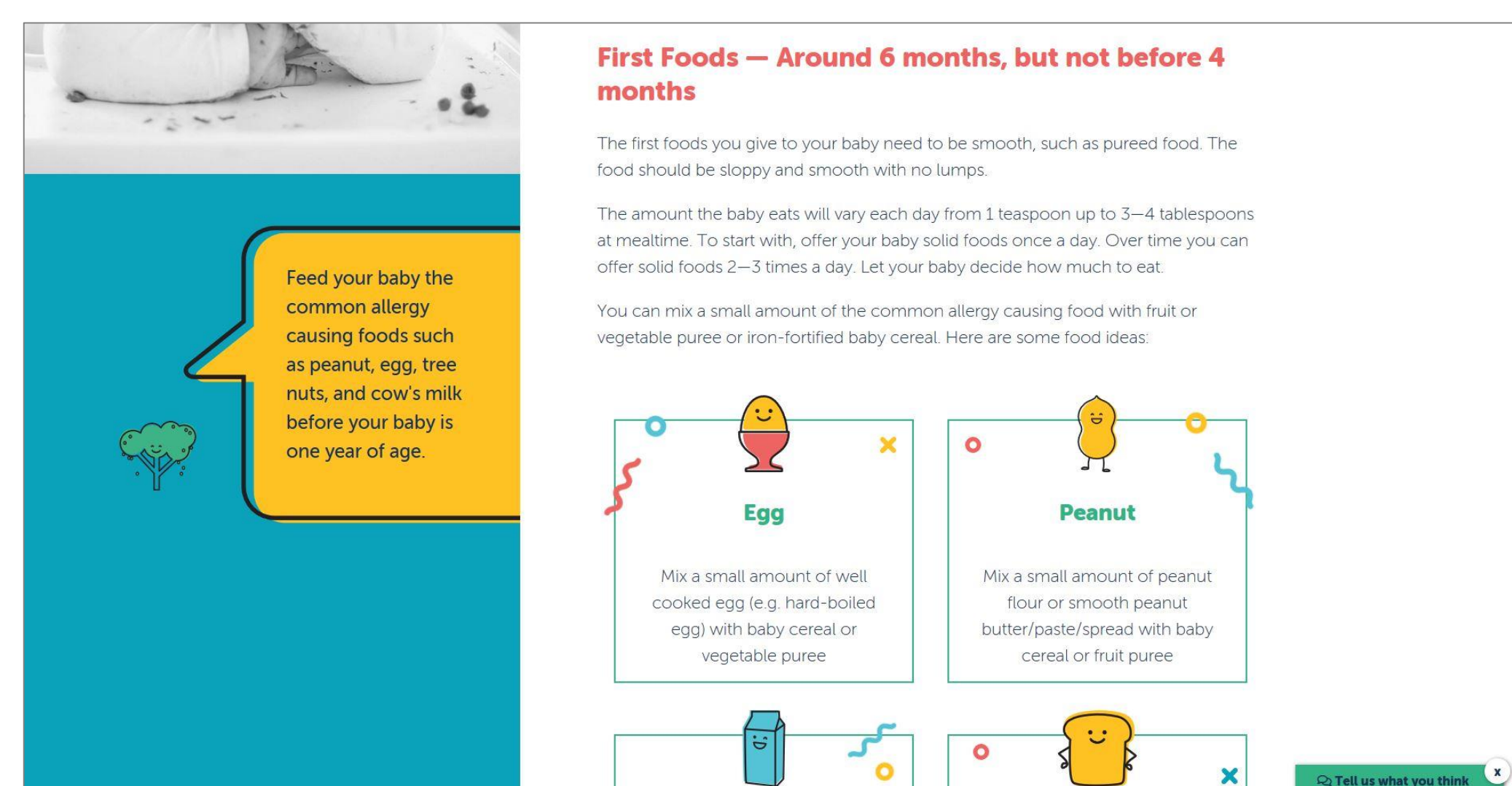
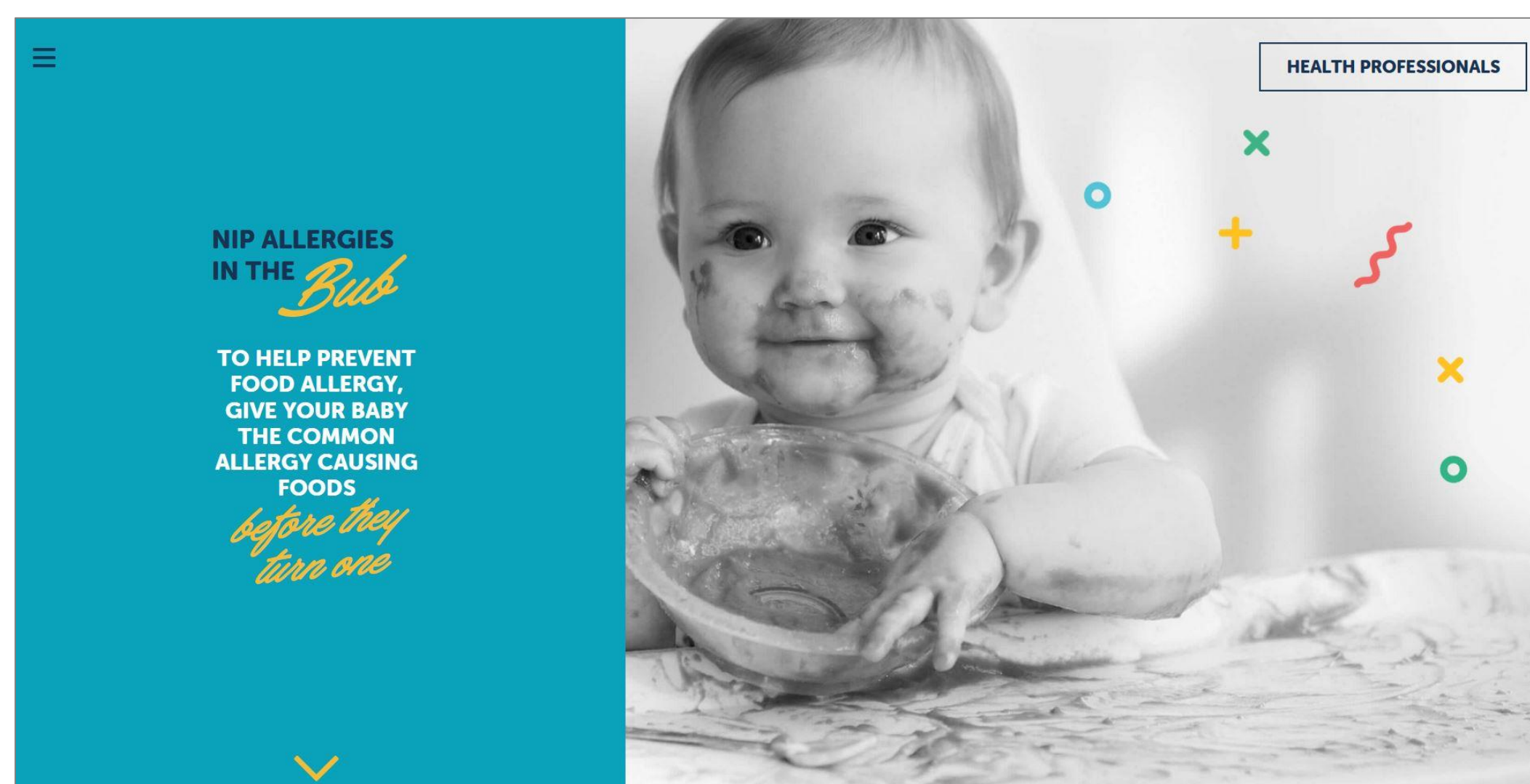
A social marketing company was engaged to develop four possible brand concepts for focus group testing. Seven focus group sessions (four parent sessions; three health professional sessions) were conducted to determine resource needs and consumer friendly key messages.

#### Results

The consumer and health professional focus groups identified 'Nip allergies in the Bub' as the most meaningful brand for consumers and health professionals. A credible, easy to understand website containing relevant information about infant feeding and food allergy prevention was clearly identified as a resource need by parents and health professionals. Health professionals further identified the need for professional resources to exist as a separate component of the website.

#### Discussion

The NAS Nip allergies in the Bub website funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, aims to provide a public health rather than medicalised approach to infant feeding and food allergy prevention. The website provides information from the ASCIA Guidelines and information about optimising eczema management to prevent food allergy sensitisation, in a consumer friendly format. It contains reliable, easy to find and practical information to help parents follow the ASCIA Guidelines, including ideas to help with the introduction of common food allergens and optimise eczema management. The website also provides an information hub for health professionals including access to new online training and other resources.



The National Allergy Strategy is an initiative of the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA) and Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia (A&AA). This project received funding from the Australian Government Department of Health.

Food allergy prevention project resources: [www.preventallergies.org.au](http://www.preventallergies.org.au)

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