

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

A Process Evaluation of a Food Access and Food Literacy Program to Increase Fruit and Vegetable Intake Among Low-Income Families

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Introduction

- ◆ Though diets rich in fruits and vegetables have been shown to increase academic performance and decrease the rate of chronic diseases, most school-aged children and their families fail to consume the recommended amount of five fruits and vegetables a day.
- ◆ The Brighter Bites program is a collaborative community-academic effort uniquely designed to include the integration of food literacy with food access to increase healthy food options in low-income communities.

Methods

- ◆ The intervention design consists of three components:
 - CATCH, an evidence-based nutrition and physical activity program
 - Nutrition education for families, which include weekly recipes and recipe demonstrations, and parent nutrition handbooks
 - Weekly provision of 50 servings of a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, donated by the food bank
- ◆ The program was implemented for a total of 16-weeks, including 8-weeks in the fall and spring semesters.
- ◆ A co-op concept was used during program implementation.
- ◆ Self-reported questionnaires were collected from parents (N=462) after 8-weeks of program intervention to assess reach, dose, fidelity, and program satisfaction.

Evaluation Processes			
Process Measures	Process Component	Instruments	Frequency
Implementation of all program components	Fidelity	Weekly distribution process survey	Weekly
Participants' attendance	Reach	Attendance roster; Parent process survey	Weekly
Dose of intervention components	Dose delivered	Parent Process Survey; number of times families picked up produce, use of produce, read and used nutrition handbook	Twice (at mid-point and end of intervention)
Program effectiveness	Satisfaction	Parent Process Survey	Twice (at mid-point and end of intervention)

Results

- ◆ Process evaluation results showed that over 79.2% of participating families received eight weeks of produce distribution.
- ◆ A high program dosage in parent reported use of fruits (92.6%) and a lower dosage in the use of vegetables (88.5%) was reported.
- ◆ Overall, all program components were implemented as intended and 81.3% of the families reported being satisfied with the various components.
- ◆ The cost for the provision of the produce bags to families each week was estimated at \$2.00 per family.



brighter bites



Conclusion

- ◆ This project provides a model for evaluating programs to improve intervention delivery and outcomes related to food access and literacy in low-income communities.
- ◆ Findings from the process evaluation show the importance of conducting formative evaluation to help identify gaps in program implementation, especially in multi-component interventions.

