Building resilience in low-income elementary children one recipe at a time

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Presenter Disclosures

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Resilience

• Able to recover quickly
• Flexible
• Tough
• Hardy
• Strong
How do you Develop Resilience?

• Resilience is not hereditary

• Involves behaviors, thoughts and actions that can be learned and developed in anyone.
Developing Resilience

• The capacity to make realistic plans and take steps to carry them out.
• A positive view of yourself and confidence in your strengths and abilities.
• Skills in communication and problem solving.
• The capacity to manage strong feelings and impulses.
Resilience Building in Kitchen?

- Kick and Cook-a-Palozza
  - Physical activity + nutrition education
  - Grades 4-6 @ Boys and Girls Clubs
  - Six weeks – 2x week 90 minute classes
  - Resumed 8 weeks later and repeated
- Goals
  - build self-efficacy
  - translate learning into the home
Methodology

- Baseline and end self-efficacy survey
- Weekly observation forms
- Anecdotal comments /reflective journaling
- Groceries and recipe sent home at the end of every class
Population

- 60% at poverty
- 63% receiving free lunch
- 64% African American
- 21% Latino/Hispanic
- 10% Caucasian
- 9-15 students at each site: majority female
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<th>Yes</th>
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<th>Criteria</th>
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<td><strong>Did the participant wash hands before starting without a prompt?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Did the participant retrieve all recipe ingredients without error?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Was the participant able to organize the work station with all of the necessary equipment?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Did the participant pay attention and follow directions?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Did the participant use all utensils, including knives, safely and correctly?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Did the participant display the cooking skills being worked on during this week’s recipe (i.e. whipping, boiling, shredding, sautéing, etc)?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Did the participant taste all of the foods and participate in the discussion?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Did the participant clean the work station without prompting after the class ended?</strong></td>
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During the Second Session

• We found:
  • Students did not know how to read a recipe
  • Did not know how to use measuring cups and spoons
  • Did not voluntarily wash their hands
  • Did not know how to slice, dice or chop

• Over-estimated their abilities in the benchmark self-efficacy survey
• Mindset was optimistic and hopeful – shows existing self-confidence
Recipes Scaffolding

- Easy: Assembly with Fruit Tacos
- Advanced: Main dish with peeling, chopping, sautéing
- Much encouragement given throughout the class
- Groceries and recipe sent home and encourage to make it again
- Over 90% of the children did repeat the recipe at home with an adult
How Did Cooking Build Resilience?

• Gave lots of opportunities for participation (72 classes over 9 months)
• Provided a consistent team of caring young adults and facilitator
• Offered a structured environment where success was expected
• Center-wide applauding of their food product
Ingredients:
2 c Shredded Hash Brown Potatoes (frozen) thawed
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1/2 pound turkey kielbasa, cut into 1/2-inch pieces (about 2 cups)
1 large sweet onion, chopped
1/2 teaspoon caraway seeds or dill seed
8 large eggs
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
2 scallions, sliced
Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough Dip

• **Ingredients:**
  
  5 ounce package of firm tofu
  3 ounces of light cream cheese
  2 tablespoons of old fashioned oats
  2 tablespoons of unsalted Sunbutter
  3 tablespoons of brown sugar
  1/2 teaspoon of pure vanilla extract
  1 tablespoon of unsweetened vanilla soy milk
  1/4 cup of chocolate chips
Postmortem

• 100% of the ending self-efficacy surveys showed students at the highest level in all questions
• Observation surveys showed significant improvement in all but one area – hand washing
• Still a strong preference for having staff double check them verbally instead of self-check with recipe
Goal Accomplishment

• The child believed they could and they did
• The children went home and demonstrated knowledge and skill to important adults in their lives
• The participants loved the class
• This facilitator did too