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concerning the personal and social value of vegetables in the diet. Subsequently a university social responsibility rubric was used to score statements where student described the influence that sharing vegetable likes and dislikes had on personal rules and biases. Using a standard rubric allowed for both assessment at the class level and aggregation of multi-class performance data at the university level.

Conclusions and Implications: Signature assignments enhance teaching and learning and contribute to university analytic studies on student success in achieving identified learning outcomes.

Funding: None.

Nutrition Across the Life Cycle

P42 Associations Among Diet Variety, Mealtime Behaviors, and Diet Quality in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

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Background (Background, Rationale, Prior Research, and/or Theory): Increased food selectivity in children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) may lead to limited food variety and risk for certain micronutrient deficiencies. Despite evidence of limited food repertoire and picky eating behaviors in this population, little is known about diet variety and its relationship with other indicators.

Objective: This study aims to assess diet variety and its associations with mealtime behaviors and diet quality in children with ASD.

Study Design, Setting, Participants, Intervention: A cross-sectional study was conducted with parents of 37 children aged 2 to 17 years with ASD in Florida.

Outcome Measures and Analysis: A 24-hour recall phone interview and a mealtime behavior survey were completed by each parent. An Overall Variety score was created by counting total number of calorie-containing food and beverage items. Variety sub-scores were calculated for healthy foods, moderation foods (foods to limit), neutral foods, and fruit and vegetables, based on USDA recommendations. Diet quality was assessed using the Revised Children's Diet Quality Index (RC-DQI). Descriptive statistics, correlations, and Mann-Whitney U tests were performed.

Results: Overall variety scores ranged 8–21 (mean = 14.8 ± 4.0). Scores for healthy foods, moderation foods, neutral foods, and fruit and vegetable had means of 6.8 ± 3.7 , 4.9 ± 3.0 , 3.0 ± 2.0 , and 3.0 ± 2.4 , respectively. Diet quality was correlated with overall variety ($r = 0.39$), healthy foods ($r = 0.50$), and fruit and vegetable scores ($r = 0.49$; all $P < .05$), but not with moderation foods or

neutral foods scores. Children with above-median healthy foods variety had significantly higher diet quality scores ($P = .004$). Total mealtime behavior score was not correlated with overall variety. "Picky eaters" had significantly higher moderation foods scores, compared to "non-picky eaters" (5.9 ± 3.3 vs. 3.1 ± 1.9 , $P = .02$).

Conclusions and Implications: Children may eat more variety of foods when healthier options are offered, which may lead to better diet quality. Nutrition education programs to improve food selectivity and picky eating behaviors in children with ASD should focus specifically on increasing healthy foods instead of using moderation foods.

Funding: University of South Florida.

P43 Exploring Mealtime Behaviors and Attitudes of Families with Preschoolers

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Background (Background, Rationale, Prior Research, and/or Theory): Frequent, positive, and healthy family mealtimes have the potential to improve children's diet and weight status, making them a possible intervention target. However, few studies focus on family mealtimes with preschool-aged children.

Objective: To examine mealtime behaviors and attitudes of low-income families with preschool-aged children in rural Colorado.

Study Design, Setting, Participants, Intervention: This descriptive, cross-sectional study targeted families from six Head Start/preschool centers.

Outcome Measures and Analysis: A 49-item questionnaire was adapted from previously published surveys and included topics on mealtime location, frequency of eating out, mealtime atmosphere, technology use, and mealtime attitudes. English and Spanish versions were sent to parents via child's backpacks. Descriptive statistics and Pearson's chi square tests were performed.

Results: The majority of respondents ($n = 119$) were mothers (82%); 48% identified as Hispanic; 39% had a high school degree or less; 83% were at or below 185% of poverty; and 18% of households were single parent. Most reported eating dinner as a family 7 days/week (77%) and eating at a table frequently (74%). There was a low frequency of eating out, with most families averaging 1–3 times/month. Hispanic parents reported setting more limits on technology use during meals ($X^2(3, n = 112) = 8.47, P = .037$). Parents with lower education ate dinner in the living room more often ($X^2(7, n = 115) = 14.062, P = .05$), had children who watched more television during meals ($X^2(3, n = 116) = 12.91, P = .005$), and ate less frequently at fast-casual restaurants

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