P49 (continued)

BS, Baylor College of Medicine, Dept. of Pediatrics; Louise Parker, PhD, Washington State University, Dept. of Human Development; Louise Parker, PhD, Washington State University, Dept. of Human Development; Thomas Power, PhD, Washington State University, Dept. of Human Development; Sheryl Hughes, PhD, Baylor College of Medicine, Dept. of Pediatrics

Objective: Determine if peer educators can simultaneously deliver 3 arms of a randomized control trial while maintaining curriculum fidelity.

Use of Theory or Research: Implementation Science principles

Target Audience: Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program participants (n = 540, enrolled) in Washington and Colorado; experienced peer educators (n = 11).

Program Description: A randomized control trial with 3 arms, each with English and Spanish classes. The same educators taught Control, In-class, and Online arms. All participants, including the Control arm, received 9 lessons using the Eating Smart • Being Active (ESBA) curriculum. In-class participants watched videos on parent feeding behaviors (adapted from previous work) and participated in related educator led activities. Online participants received texts with links to 7 videos and activities between face-to-face lessons but no in-class content. Evaluations occurred at Pre-, Post-, 6- and 12 months post.

To address fidelity, educators received extensive training and practice opportunities. Multiple observations in each class series and educator-supervisor discussions assessed and reinforced fidelity.

Evaluation Methods: Detailed class observation forms, tailored to the specific intervention arm, assessed adherence to ESBA and parent feeding information as well as any cross-contamination of parent feeding behavior information between arms. Open-ended phone interviews with educators post-program.

Results: One hundred and twenty-eight observations, 58 in English and 70 in Spanish, with 40-45 per arm. The Control group received no parent feeding behavior information; ESBA lessons were delivered as intended 89% of time. In the Online group, minor parent feeding behavior information was shared during 7% of the observations; ESBA lessons were followed 87% of the time. The In-class group delivered the parent feeding behavior information appropriately 84-90% of the time. Most issues were minor and, typically, involved hurried discussions or reviews of previous material.

Conclusions: With proper training and support, peer educators are capable of maintaining fidelity while delivering multiple arms in a randomized control trial. Researchers interested in studying educational programming delivered by peer educators should invest resources to establish and maintain fidelity for quality research.

Funding: States Department of Agriculture (Grant USDA 2015-68001-23311). The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the USDA, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products,

or organizations imply endorsement from the US government.

P50 Evaluating the Utilization of School Gardens in Florida Through a Teacher Survey

Crystal Almond, MS, University of Florida; Michael Swain, MPH, michaeljswain@ufl.edu, University of Florida, 3028 McCarty Hall D, Gainesville, FL, 32611; David Hanson, PhD, University of Florida; Victoria Hunter Gibney, MPH, University of Florida; Karla Shelnett, PhD, RD, University of Florida

Objective: To evaluate the use of school gardens accompanying nutrition education for 3rd through 5th graders provided by the UF/IFAS Extension Family Nutrition Program (FNP) through process evaluation.

Use of Theory or Research: Prior research establishes the benefits of school gardens, including improved preference for healthy foods and increased physical activity but are difficult to maintain because of limited time, funding, and engagement. In addition, there is variability in how gardens are utilized.

Target Audience: Florida 3rd to 5th grade teachers (n = 209) of classrooms that received FNP nutrition education and garden support during the 2018-2019 school year.

Program Description: FNP provides and helps to maintain over 200 gardens annually through financial and staff support. Gardens are only supported at schools where FNP provides nutrition education.

Evaluation Methods: An online survey tool was developed through an expert panel consisting of FNP programmatic and evaluation staff and aimed to measure the use and support of gardens. Sixteen questions queried teachers on their classroom's use of the garden, outside support, integration in educational curriculum, and production.

Results: Teachers (n = 35) representing over 500 students reached by FNP nutrition education completed the survey. Students spent an average of 2,639 minutes in the garden throughout the school year. This ranged from 480 to 5,400 minutes. A majority of teachers report using the garden as a teaching tool outside of FNP-provided nutrition education (88%). All respondents reported that students were involved in at least planting, weeding or harvesting. Once harvested, food is most commonly used for taste tests (91%). Twenty-three percent of respondents reported that schools partially fund gardens.

Conclusions: There is variability in how SNAP-Ed funded school gardens are utilized and supported. Possible implications include using highly utilized gardens as examples when working with schools and working through barriers such as time and resources. The results also demonstrate that gardens should not be treated as dichotomous variables when used in evaluation. Limitations include a low response rate, possibly caused by time constraints faced by teachers. This could cause a nonresponse bias. In-person surveys delivered by local staff may increase response rates.

Funding: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Education.