P53 The Potential Problem of Picky Eating: A Pilot Study Among University Students of Food a Nutrition

So-Young Kim, PhD, sonyah@sch.ac.kr, Soonchunhyang University, 22 Soonchunhyang-ro, Asan, Chungcheongnam-do, South Korea, 31538; Eunju Lee, PhD, Dae-gok Elementary School

Background: Nutritional imbalances among adults are currently being recognized, particularly among those in their early 20s. Previous studies suggest that this problem might be related to adult picky eating (PE) behaviors. It has been taken for granted that university students majoring in food and nutrition, as prospective nutrition professionals, have already developed well-balanced dietary habits. However, this predisposition seems to be no longer entirely valid.

Objective: This pilot study aimed to explore the potential problem of PE among university students majoring in food and nutrition.

Study Design, Setting, Participants: The study included a total of 87 South Korean students majoring in food and nutrition. The Self-Designed Food Bridge Program was applied to identify the underlying causes of PE and examine the possibility of overcoming it. The program included planning and practicing step-wise exposures to target foods that were the subject of PE.

Measurable Outcome/Analysis: Descriptive statistics were calculated, and distributive differences between the success and failure groups in the program were analyzed using a chi-square test.

Results: Vegetables were the most commonly disliked foods (74.7%). About 46% of all students mentioned negative experiences as a reason for food dislikes. Almost half (45%) of these negative experiences were due to external coercion: forced eating (30%) and vomiting after forced eating (15%). About 66% of the students achieved relatively positive results in overcoming PE. The proportion of failures tended to be higher when the reasons for food dislike included negative experiences.

Conclusions: The results imply that students majoring in food and nutrition can be subject to PE. Despite some limitations, this study is meaningful in that it raises concerns over the potential problem of PE and its treatment among prospective nutrition professionals. The study is also expected to serve as a basis for further research on adult PE.

Funding: Soonchunhyang University.

P54 Youth CAN: Cultivating Community Change Through Youth-Driven Health Initiatives

Ana Altares, BS, Colorado State University; Dana Sobel, BA, Colorado State University; Savannah Hobbs, MEd, Colorado State University; Tracy Nelson, PhD, MPH, Colorado State University; Magdalena Serpa, MPH, MD, Colorado State University; Laura Bellows, PhD, MPH, RDN, laura.bellows@colostate.edu, Colorado State University, 1571 Campus Delivery, Fort Collins, CO, 80523-1571

Background: The Youth CAN (Change.Activity.Nutrition.) project engages and empowers adolescents to

become agents of change for health within their community. Students become active researchers through youth-led participatory action research (YPAR), an innovative approach to youth-driven community assessment and project development.

Objective: To engage low-income, urban youth to identify an issue; connect with community stakeholders; and propose, develop, and implement a community-based project to promote healthy eating and active living.

Study Design, Setting, Participants: Two cohorts of high school students were recruited to conduct community assessments; cohort 1 (n=20) consisted of students from a neighborhood high school and cohort 2 (n=30) included participants in a summer leadership program at a local, non-profit organization.

Measurable Outcome/Analysis: Youth shared their experiences through multiple mediums of YPAR: PhotoVoice (photography), Spoken Word (poetry), and Street Art (graffiti-style artwork). Project themes were compiled and used to facilitate discussions between youth and community stakeholders using the World Café method. Perceived barriers and facilitators to healthy eating and active living were explored and discussion outputs were synthesized into common themes to determine potential community-based projects.

Results: Students' projects were displayed in an exhibit to inspire dialogue for the World Café. PhotoVoice (n=32), Spoken Word (n=8), and Street Art (n=10) projects portrayed the lived experiences of youth in their community. The World Café consisted of discussions driven by youth (n=20) with input from community stakeholders (n=20). Themes included addressing the current school lunch environment, implementing community gardens, and introducing composting at schools. Students are currently working with community stakeholders and researchers to design and implement a community project.

Conclusions: Youth empowerment is fundamental in building connections within the community and yielding community projects to promote health. Future research efforts should incorporate multiple applications of YPAR into nutrition education programs to engage a broader youth audience.

Funding: The Rockefeller Foundation.

P55 Providing Nutrition Education to Refugees: Successful Strategies and Barriers to Success In Current Programs

Jessica Gough, BS, Utah State University; Heidi Wengreen, PhD, RDN, heidi.wengreen@usu.edu, Utah State University, 8700 Old Main Hill, Logan, UT, 84322-8700; Habiba Nur, MS, Utah State University; Martha Archuleta, PhD, RDN, Utah State University

Background: Refugees face many changes in purchasing and preparing nutritious food for their families upon relocation. Nutrition education can be an important part of improving nutrition and health for refugees.

Objective: To survey current providers of refugee nutrition education in the United States about current program

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