

P011 Exploring How Community Research Partnerships May Affect Enrollment and Graduation Rates for the University of Georgia EFNEP

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Background: Federal nutrition education programs like EFNEP (the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program) use a peer educator model to teach low-income Americans about healthy eating behaviors. Collaborative partnerships are an essential means to the sustainability and reach of the EFNEP program. The University of Georgia (UGA) EFNEP has not previously measured the impact community research partnerships may have on enrollment and graduation rates for EFNEP programming.

Objective: To examine how the research process for recruiting, incentives offered, and continued contact with a community research partner affect UGA EFNEP enrollment and graduation rates.

Study Design, Setting, Participants: Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM) partnered with UGA Extension/EFNEP to examine how a community nutrition intervention may affect nutrition outcomes of expecting mothers and fathers (Project DINE). UGA EFNEP provided an eight-week virtual nutrition education to three counties (rural and metro-areas). Participants were African American, expecting a baby, and enrolled in Healthy Start. Participants who completed the program received up to \$200 per person (\$400 per couple) in financial incentives.

Measurable Outcome/Analysis: Enrollment, participation and graduation rates data were analyzed using the USDA NIFA Web-based Nutrition Education, Evaluation and Reporting System (WebNEERS). Study participants' data were analyzed and compared to data for EFNEP participants in similar communities who were not enrolled in any research project

Results: For FY21, preliminary data indicate that UGA EFNEP Project DINE participants (n = 64) had a graduation rate of 51.6%, whereas, UGA EFNEP participants from these communities (and who were not participating in Project DINE) (n = 159) had a graduation rate of 33.3%

Conclusions: Community research partnerships may positively affect UGA EFNEP graduation rates. More research is needed to explore specific relationships between graduation rates and factors such as research recruitment methods, financial incentives, and target populations.

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P012 Withdrawn

P013 Kids in the Kitchen Teaches Youth and Families Nutrition, Food Safety, and Cooking Skills to Improve Kitchen Self-Efficacy

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Objective: To increase comfort and confidence in youth and families in the kitchen by teaching nutrition, food safety, and cooking skills, all while encouraging positive family interactions.

Use of Theory or Research: Social Cognitive Theory with emphasis on Experiential Learning.

Target Audience: Youth of all ages and their families participated via Zoom from their home with adult supervision

Program Description: Kids in the Kitchen Virtual Cooking Club is a youth program comprised of live cook-along sessions. Throughout each session, nutrition and food safety principles are taught through recipe modification, safe food handling, and balanced meal choices. Each session consists of 2 recipes structured over 2 hours in the evenings. Youth (with their guardians) attend scheduled Zoom sessions and cook together with the instructors from their home kitchens.

Evaluation Methods: Anonymous surveys are shared through Zoom polls during the class to assess skills, knowledge, and self-efficacy in the kitchen. Survey questions were adapted from the iCook 4-H program (Mathews et al., 2018).

Results: From April 2020 through December 2021, 31 virtual cooking sessions were offered throughout Idaho and Georgia, leading nearly 1,200 youth and adults from 30 counties across 6 states to receive this hands-on educational program. Average attendance was 40 participants with 72% of attendees coming to 2+ sessions. Participants reported gaining nutrition and food safety knowledge (92%), increasing cooking skills (93%), and improving self-efficacy for cooking (93%). One hundred percent of recipes had been made again by participating families.

Conclusions: This interactive nutrition and cooking program showed impactful outcomes while reaching new audiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. The virtual format allowed more youth to participate with their guardians from the comfort and safety of their homes, encouraging positive child/parent interaction by cooking