First Year Evaluation of Program Assistants Perceptions of Arkansas EFNEP Youth Curriculum and Youth Evaluation Summary Impact Results

Introduction:
In program year 2012-2013 Arkansas EFNEP implemented the Kids in the Kitchen youth curriculum developed by University of Missouri-Columbia. The curriculum encourages youth to eat healthier meals and snacks as a result of hands-on cooking experiences. A survey was conducted to gather feedback from 1862 and 1890 EFNEP program assistants. Their perceptions on ability to follow lessons as intended, effectiveness of curriculum to deliver core principles, ease of implementation, and students’ attitudes towards lessons were assessed. The new youth assessments were simultaneously introduced during this time and behavior changes captured with the Youth Evaluation tools through Web-NEERS. The poster summarizes the curriculum feedback and the first year evaluation tool results for Arkansas EFNEP.

Objectives:
- To receive feedback about the Kids in the Kitchen youth curriculum
- To see if improvements made youth indicators areas aligned with program assistant perceptions of effectiveness of curriculum

Results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Total Responding</th>
<th>Total Possible</th>
<th>% Responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kids in the Kitchen</td>
<td>1112</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFNEP Agents and Professionals</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Results from EFNEP Agent and Preprofessional Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>% (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What role does the Kids in the Kitchen play in the statewide effort?</td>
<td>15.0% (197)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The information you gathered about the Kids in the Kitchen is accurate</td>
<td>45.0% (279)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Kids in the Kitchen is a curriculum that covers all areas needed</td>
<td>45.0% (279)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Kids in the Kitchen helps to improve youth nutrition</td>
<td>55.0% (279)</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
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</table>

Conclusions:
The Kids in the Kitchen survey results showed positive qualitative feedback from the University of Arkansas EFNEP agents and program assistants as well as participants. The survey results illustrate that the agents and program assistant are mostly satisfied with the Kids in the Kitchen curriculum (Table 2) with the majority reporting (55.9%) they would recommend the program to other agencies. Most of the responding educators felt the curriculum addressed four of the five EFNEP domains reasonably well. The first domain, diet quality, was omitted in the educator survey, and therefore was not addressed. As illustrated in Figure 1 educators’ perceptions aligned reasonably well with three of the four domains measured. Specifically the Food Resource Management Domain has placed emphasis on Food Security. Diet Quality, Physical Activity, and Physical Activity domains are mirrored each other. Food Safety was quite divergent with Youth Evaluation Impact Web-NEERS data not reflecting the perceptions of the educators. Overall, the results show that the Kids in the Kitchen curriculum is effective at influencing youth diet quality and less effective at changing the other measured EFNEP domains. The survey responses from educators also reflect the idea that Kids in the Kitchen may be less effective at addressing the Food Resource Management, Food Security and Physical Activity domains as well. Our findings suggest that either more training in domains other than diet quality be provided to EFNEP educators and/or more supplementary materials be added to the Kids in the Kitchen curriculum to enhance those subject matter areas.

Methods:
The Kids in the Kitchen curriculum was implemented during the 2012-2013 EFNEP program year. The curriculum delivery was either conducted in a school classroom setting or an after school base program. The lesson instruction focuses on encouraging youth to eat healthier meals and snacks, along with hands-on cooking and food safety practice experiences. The program assistants were asked to teach a minimum of six lessons to the groups. Also, during this time the Web-NEERS youth evaluation tools were implemented. The youth tools are designed to evaluate any behavior changes that may occur during the duration of the program. The program assistants were asked to evaluate a least 50 or more youth participants using those evaluation methods. After the end of the program year 2013, a survey was administered to solicit feedback regarding Kids in the Kitchen from 1862 and 1890 EFNEP agents and program assistants. Descriptive statistics were summarized and responses compared to Web-NEERS youth evaluation data.

Sources:
University of Arkansas end of the year EFNEP Report
University of Arkansas Pine Bluff end of the year EFNEP Report
Kids in the Kitchen (3rd Ed.) (2012). University of Missouri Extension
Qualitative Feedback about Kids in the Kitchen:

Q: Please share any of your favorite youth or adult comments about the KIK curriculum.

“One mother said her daughter sang the fruit lesson song, “Did You Ever See a Kiwi?” for weeks after first learning it.”

“One community leader stated, “They don’t get this nutrition information from television. It is important that nutrition classes are taught in our community.”

Q: Please share or provide examples of healthy-eating behaviors you observed with your KIK youth group or classes.

“I observed the youth willing to try different foods while making their food group funny faces.”

“The teachers say they noticed the students are more thorough with their hand-washing.”

“One group of kindergarten students, who have completed KIK, now tells their teacher when they have a healthy snack.”

Q: What did you (program assistant or agent) like best about teaching the KIK curriculum?

“The lessons are easy to understand and to teach.”

“I enjoyed cooking in front of the kids and seeing them get excited learning about healthy eating habits, and learning about foods they didn’t think they would.”

“I’m proud that they all really remember the Food Safety Rules.”

“I love the students’ reactions to the contaminated sandwich. They are emphatic about not eating “that” sandwich and have no hesitation in offering their critiques.”