



iCook 4-H Project: Collecting Impact Observed from Participants and Leaders about a Six-Session 5-State Program for Family Dyads

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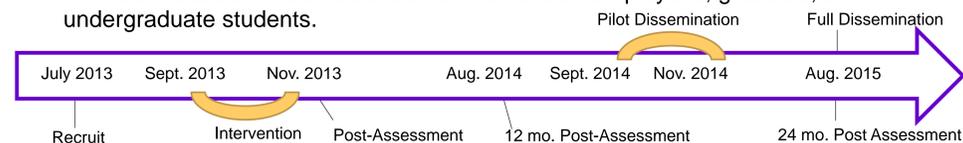
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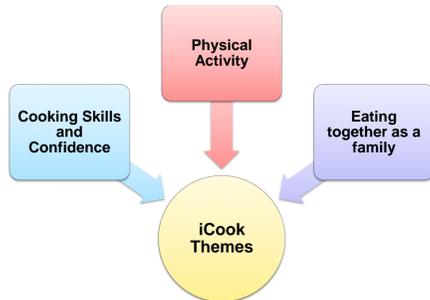
Background

- iCook 4-H is a 5-state wide research project with the ultimate goal of preventing childhood obesity.
- Participants were 8-10 year old youth and their primary food preparer who participated in 6 classes that centered around cooking, physical activity, and family meal time.
- The iCook session leaders consisted of Extension employees, graduate, and undergraduate students.



Core Themes

- Cooking Together--** children learned how to prepare a healthy recipe each class, and parents assisted in the cooking process.
- Playing Together-** both parents and children participated in physical activity
- Eating Together-** All dyads sat down at each session and ate a family meal together.



Session	Culinary Skills	PA Skills	Nutrient Focus	Family Engagement
1	Cool Cooks Tools	Goal Setting for eating and PA	Fruits and Vegetables: More Matters	Dinner Time Talk Strategies
2	Food Safety Basics	Stretching	The Whole Story on Whole Grains	Division of Responsibilities
3	The Art of Meal Planning	Healthy Downtime	Nutritious Beverages	Family-focused mealtime with controlled use of "screen time"
4	Grocery Shopping	Know your Heart Rate	Focus on Healthy Fats	Improve family communication through daily food preparation
5	Eating Together	Active Play	Dairy Does It	Identifying games for the whole family
6	Spices and Seasoning	Building Strong Muscles	Power Protein	I love it, I like it, No thank you, Differences in taste

Objective

- To collect highlights from program leaders and participants about comments overheard, observations, and feedback post 4-month and post-12 month of the iCook 4-H curriculum.
- To better understand the impact iCook 4-H curriculum had on learning outcomes for the children, and reactions the parents had during the 12 week, 6-session long classes.



Methods

- Two separate surveys were administered; in 5 states for the leader survey (n=6) and 3-states for the participant survey (n=2)
- Elicit feedback about the delivery of the iCook 4-H curriculum and how the themes translated into the home environment

	Leader Survey	Participant Survey
Response (n)	N=15	N=20
Time Point	4-month post intervention	12-month post intervention
Objective	Designed to elicit feedback about what the leaders heard and observed from both the parents and youth.	Designed to elicit feedback about impressions of the iCook 4-H curriculum.
Format	Online and focus group format	Paper format

iCook 4-H Demographics

- Family dyads (n=223)
 - 9 to 10 year old children and adult main food preparer
- 42% of dyads reported participating in government assistance programs
- Mean BMI of children was normal, adults were overweight
- Dyads agreed that:
 - Hard to find time for family meals
 - Manners are important at meal time
- Children had more confidence in culinary skills when assisted by an adult

Child Demographics	n(%)
Gender	
Female	144 (62%)
Male	90 (38%)
Race	
White	159 (68%)
Black	36 (15%)
Hispanic	32 (14%)
Native American	11 (5%)
Asian/Other	9(4%)

Dyad	Age (mean±SD)	BMI (mean±SD)
Child	9.36 ± 0.6	19.44 ± 4.2
Adult	38.84 ± 8.1	29.59 ± 7.5



BMI Percentile	CDC Weight Status Category	Male n(%)	Female n(%)
<5%	Underweight	1 (5%)	3 (3%)
5-84.9%	Healthy	45 (57%)	63 (59%)
85-94.9%	Overweight	12 (15%)	18 (17%)
>95%	Obese	14 (18%)	20 (19%)

Adult Demographics	n(%)
Education	
High School/Come College	100 (43%)
Associated/Bachelors	92 (39%)
Advance Degree	31 (13%)
Participant of government assistance programs	
Yes	91 (42%)
No	127 (58%)

Results- Common Themes from Survey and Focus Groups

Session leaders from all states reported similar highlights stating that parents were impressed with the cooking skills that their children were capable of and they tried many of the healthy recipes at home. The participant responses supported this data. All food preparers and youth reported that iCook 4-H had a positive effect on the time they spent cooking, eating, and playing as a family. Family mealtime posed challenges to most dyads and parents faced competition for family meal time from "technology." They reported that both parents and children enjoyed the physical activities and talked about trying the activities at home.

Common Responses from Session Leaders

"I heard comments like 'we eat together more and we get to hear about each others days.' And 'I'm learning more about my parents/ siblings.'"

"Some parents said they faced struggles with family meal time and getting their kids to put away electronics or not read at the dinner table"

"A little girl was so passionate about the iCook cooking classes that she asked her parents for cooking utensils for Christmas. "

"The biggest challenge for most of the families was definitely time! With multiple kids schedules, work, and downtime, it seemed challenging for the parents to fit in a family meal during the week."

Common Responses from Participants

It made my family time ^{more} fun, because we could talk about food more. I feel more involved when we make meals, and I tend to want to play with family more.

We prepare meals together with everyone helping instead of just eating together.

OH YEA - if others are like me (who needed guidance) it gives them a chance to interact w/ others, learn about nutrition, get answers and all sorts of things.

because it is fun and easy and it teaches you how to cook healthy things.

Conclusions

Findings from this qualitative study add evidence that the iCook 4-H core themes were being transferred to the home environment. The leader responses to the questions showed that the iCook 4-H curriculum successfully taught children cooking skills, had children and parents actively participating in physical activity, and promoted the importance of family meal time. The leaders' responses to the survey showed that parents gained confidence in their child's ability to prepare recipes and be of help at home during the cooking process. The participant responses showed that iCook 4-H had a positive impact on their family time, and that they would recommend the class to other. There was also evidence that families faced challenges with having regular family meals based on limited time and busy schedules. This lends support to the issue that confronting barriers to family mealtime may need to be addressed in the program as it is refined for dissemination.

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