

UCCE CalFresh Continues to Help Improve Healthy Eating Behavior

The Issue

UCCE CalFresh education targets schools with more than 50 percent of students receiving free or reduced price school meals. (CalFresh is the name of the food assistance program formerly called food stamps.) The program aims to increase fruit and vegetable consumption, increase variety in food choices, and promote healthy lifestyles for youth. Teachers, youth program leaders, and other extenders at the participating sites are trained to deliver UCCE CalFresh nutrition curricula such as Reading Across MyPyramid, Happy Healthy Me, and Eating Healthy from Farm to Fork. UCCE CalFresh in Santa Clara County provides nutrition education curricula to 60 qualifying low-income schools and agencies who reach 6,754 children. CalFresh nutrition educators collect teacher evaluations annually to improve delivery and outcomes of the program.

What has ANR done?

UCCE CalFresh developed a retrospective, web-based teacher evaluation tool as a method for evaluating the effectiveness of their youth nutrition education program. The Teacher Observation Tool (TOT) collects information on teachers' perceptions and observations related to changes in knowledge and behavior of students and themselves after delivering UC developed nutrition curricula. In 2012, 156 teachers and after-school leaders in Santa Clara County completed the TOT.



The Payoff

Improving the school food environment

Results indicate that at least 86 percent of the teachers and after-school leaders in UCCE CalFresh Santa Clara County report a positive change in their students' food behavior as a result of the program. For example, teachers reported that 98 percent of students learned to identify healthier food options and a majority reported choosing fruits and/or vegetables in the cafeteria or during classroom parties more often by the end of the school year. UCCE CalFresh impacted teachers' behaviors as well with 84 percent of the teachers and after-school leaders reporting their own personal behavior had changed by using the program in their classroom. More than 91 percent of the teachers reported making healthier personal food choices and 87 percent of the teachers now encourage students to be physically active.

Clientele Testimonial

“Jeff Tibayan has been working with us for the last two school years. The nutrition information, activities, taste tests, and role modeling has added more health and nutrition information to our program. He is great and we consider him part of our Kidango family!” – Valerie Barsuglia, Site Director for Kidango at Meyer Part-Day Preschool



Contact

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