

Healthy Habits Cooking Camp

Objective

The Healthy Habits Cooking Camp is a SC 4-H program to empower and educate youth (ages 9 to 14) on nutrition and culinary arts. With social cognitive theory, camp enhances culinary nutrition through hands-on experiences. Camp provides health conscious versions of regional foods, practice of culinary skills, and increases ability to interpret food labels and recipes. Participants are taught safe knife and sanitation skills, lessons on five ethnic cuisines and technique thus enhancing kitchen confidence.

Methods and Design

Participants at 2019 camps were given a 41-item questionnaire at the end of the 5- day camp. This consisted of a multiple-choice nutrition quiz, a dichotomous (yes and no) food preparation survey, and a cooking technique self-efficacy scale. Data was entered into SPSS software and a frequency analysis was conducted.

Results

Participants (n=77) from 5 of the summer camps were evaluated. Nutrition quiz data suggests that proficiency (mean scores of 70% or higher) within; MyPlate knowledge, protein sources, food group servings, healthy snack choices, and food safety/sanitation. Within the food preparation questionnaire, levels of confidence were proficient within; preparing fried rice, flavoring rice with coconut milk, making plantain chips, preparing quesadillas, chopping salad, making fruit salsa, and filing/rolling a corn tortilla for an enchilada. The cooking technique self-efficacy scale revealed proficiency in; blender use, stir-frying, making fried rice, baking, knife skills and mise en place practice.

Conclusion

These results demonstrate that by the end of camp, proficiency was evident within nutrition knowledge, food preparation, and cooking techniques.