Health Education and Communication for Youth: Development of and Insights from a Nutrition Workshop at Hosanna House

Manahel Fatima[1,2], Isabel Miles[2,3], De'Saundra Sullivan[4], Grace Drnach-Bonaventura, EdD, MPH[2]
[1]The University of Texas at San Antonio, [2]University of Pittsburgh School of Public Health, [3]Baylor University, [4]Hosanna House

Hosanna House Background

- Hosanna House (HH) is a community center serving Wilkinsburg, PA
- Seeks to end a life cycle of poverty and helping individuals reach their maximum potential[1]
- Former Horner Middle School was transformed into HH to help revitalize the community after disinvestment
- Provides healthcare, childcare, career support, and many other resources

Objectives

- Promote health and wellness by directing a nutrition workshop
- Plan free clinic dental days and back to school health fair
- Support HH's mission of improving community health by increasing resource accessibility through outreach calls

Health Education Initiative

- 20-minute interactive nutrition education workshop for 9–12-year-old summer camp students (n=13)
- Topics: food groups, portion sizes, skipping meals, healthy eating
- MyPlate introduced; take-home parent handout provided
- Interactive discussion and participation throughout

Methodology

A gain framed nutritional message methodology highlighting the benefits of healthy eating was used in the presentation[2]

At the end of the workshop, students answered two reflection questions independently:

1. What is one thing you learned from this presentation?
2. Is there anything you might do differently after today's presentation? If so, what?

An **interactive** nutrition education workshop for youth can promote healthy eating **knowledge** and encourage healthier eating **intentions**

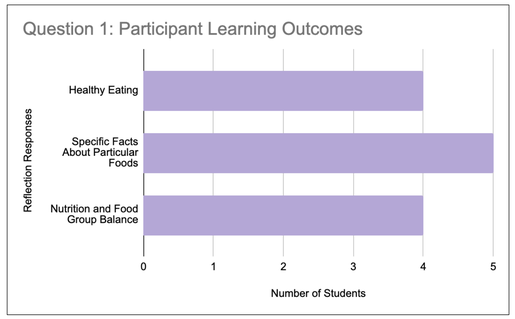


Figure 1. Question 1 Student Reflection (n=13)

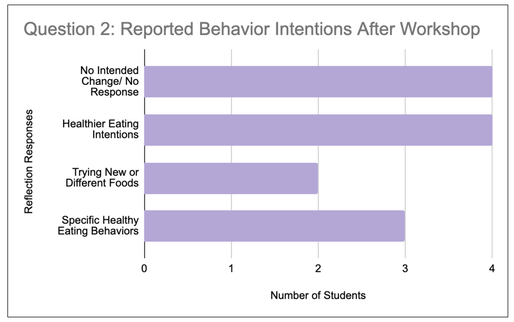


Figure 2. Question 2 Student Reflection (n=13)

"I am going to make sure I eat at least 2 things off the MyPlate"

"I will look at the sugar before I eat things"

"I learned an avocado is a vegetable"

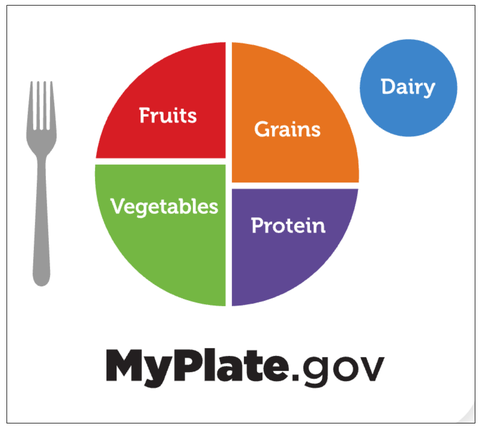


Figure 3. My Plate Model[3] Used in workshop curriculum as well as parent handout



Figure 4. Nutrition Workshop at Hosanna House (Permission to use from Hosanna House)

Discussion

- 100% of students reported they learned something from the workshop
- 69% of students reported intending to adopt a healthier eating habit after the workshop
- Students' reflections suggest the interactive nutrition workshop provided knowledge and showed behavioral intent about healthy eating, food groups, and the MyPlate model
- Parents play key role in shaping children's eating habits; therefore, MyPlate model handout was sent home

Limitations

- Small sample size (13 students)
- Limited workshop time
- Findings reflect short-term learning

Future Directions

- Conduct more workshops with larger groups
- Include pre and post assessments

Public Health Significance

- Health education promotes healthy eating behaviors
- Nutrition education may help youth develop healthy dietary habits and improve nutrition knowledge[4]
- This initiative supports HH's mission to improve community health

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REFERENCES