

Healthy, Happy Families

(Practice Tested)

Summary of Evaluation Methods

A pilot evaluation of Healthy, *Happy Families* (HHF) was conducted using a randomized pre/post-test design. HHF materials were delivered at the end of regularly occurring EFNEP or CalFresh courses. The 13 participating counties were randomly assigned to one of three groups. The intervention groups either received the HHF handouts with lessons (n = 4) or HHF handouts only (n = 5), and the control group received the nutrition education lesson without the HHF materials (n=4). There was naturally occurring variation in the number of nutrition education courses across the counties, with some offering 4 courses and others offering 8. As a result, 4 of the 8 HHF lessons were selected for the evaluation: *Begin Healthy Habits Early, Trying New Foods, Encouraging Positive Behavior, and Enjoying Family Meals*. Participating parents completed surveys of parenting and attitudes about child feeding at the beginning of the first class within one-week after the last HHF class.

Evaluation Audience

The evaluation was conducted with 236 mothers (79% Hispanic) of children between the ages of 2 and 5 years, who were participating in an EFNEP or CalFresh course in one of the 13 participating counties.

Curriculum Audience

HHF lessons are designed for parents of preschool aged children 2 to 5 years of age.

Summary of Evaluation Results

The two intervention groups were combined due to a lack of variance in their pre and post-test scores. Comparisons of the pre-post test scores by group (intervention vs. control) revealed that parents who received the HHF materials demonstrated significant improvement in both general parenting and attitudes about feeding as compared to parents in the control group. Specifically, they reported more positive change in their consistency in parenting and follow-through with discipline, and in attitudes about limit setting around food and introducing new foods.

References

Ontai, LL, Lipscomb, ST, Sitnick, S., Hatton, H, Lamp, C. Healthy, Happy Families evaluation: Integrating parenting into child obesity prevention with low-income parents of young children. *Forum for Family and Consumer Issues* 2013, 18(3): Online. <https://ncsu.edu/ffci/publications/2013/v18-n3-2013-winter/index-v18-n2-december-2013.php>

Lamp, C, Ontai, LL, Dogan, S, Spezzano, T. An integrative approach: inclusion of parenting information in nutrition education programs. Poster presented at the 5th Biennial Child Obesity Conference, June 2009. Los Angeles, CA.



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