

# Happy Healthy Me... Moving, Munching, and Reading Around MyPlate (HHM)

(Practice-tested)

## Summary of Evaluation Methods

Happy Healthy Me (HHM) has nine lessons focused on: MyPlate, each of the five food groups, healthy snacks, exercise, and handwashing. Each lesson includes a featured book, interactive activities that build on the book reading, classroom enhancements, a physical activity, a family letter, and a recipe. HHM was originally tested and refined with expert and practitioner input, as well as pilot tested in several “real world” program settings. As the curriculum was adopted by UC CalFresh and EFNEP county programs across the state, additional outcome evaluation data became available. This summary includes outcome evaluation data from UC CalFresh’s retrospective Teacher Observation Tool (TOT) and EFNEP’s Eat Well + Move student survey collected during FFY 2015 (October 1, 2014 to September 30, 2015).<sup>1</sup> The TOT captures teachers’ assessment of changes in their students’ behavior (5 items) and their own behaviors and practices (5 items) related to healthy food choices, trying new foods, dairy foods, fruits and vegetables, physical activity, and hand washing.<sup>2</sup> Student items use a five-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly agree” to “Strongly disagree”; while teacher questions use a four-point Likert scale with response options for “A lot more often”, “Somewhat more often”, “About the same as before”, and “Not sure/unable to respond”. The self-administered, pre/post Eat Well + Move survey assesses students’ ability to correctly identify images of kids engaged in healthy behaviors, as well as healthy food/drinks. The survey includes six questions with four images per question targeting being active, healthy snacks, vegetables, fruits, and hand washing.

## Evaluation Audience

Teacher evaluation data come from the 146 teachers who completed the retrospective TOT. In total, 3,542 students from preschool to third grade were observed across nine counties (Fresno, Kings, Placer, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Shasta, Sutter, Tehama, and Tulare). Student evaluation data come from 49 matched pre and post Eat Well + Move student surveys collected from three kindergarten to second grade classrooms in Kern County.

## Curriculum Audience

HHM is a nutrition curriculum in which students develop healthy eating and physical activity habits that will last a lifetime, based on MyPlate and understanding the health benefits of the five food groups and physical activity. It was designed for use with preschool- to first-grade-aged students in the early care and education and school settings. The HHM classroom lessons are available in English with take-home family materials available in both English and Spanish.

## Summary of Evaluation Results

TOT results indicated that the majority of teachers who delivered HHM reported agreeing or strongly agreeing that compared to the beginning of the school year more students: can identify healthy food choices (96%), are willing to try new foods offered at school (97%), bring fruit and/or veggies as a snack (74%), choose fruits/veggies in the cafeteria or at class parties (82%), and wash hands before handling food (90%). In addition, over two-thirds of teachers also perceived changes in their own behaviors and practices (i.e. offer healthy food choices, remind families to bring healthy snacks, encourage students to eat breakfast/be physically active, and make healthier personal food choices) when reflecting back to the beginning of the school year. Student survey findings provide complementary evidence. Paired t-tests comparing the mean scores for correct responses on the Eat Well + Move survey showed significant improvements ( $p < .001$ ) from pre to post in student’s ability to identify dairy foods (2.10 to 2.84) as well as significance improvements ( $p < .05$ ) in their ability to identify fruits (3.10 to 3.45), vegetables (2.82 to 3.14), kids being active (3.10 to 3.49). Although identification of health snacks did not significantly improve, the mean score began fairly high and increased from 2.94 to 3.10, similar to the results for identification of kids who need to wash their hands (2.78 to 2.86). Additional evidence for the effectiveness of HHM is available from an evaluation of the Child Wellness

Program, a partnership between First 5 San Joaquin and University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) San Joaquin County.<sup>3</sup> Results from this report were not included here, because the study evaluated two curricula, a multi-component intervention approach, and a different setting.

## References

1. Keihner, A. & Egelski, E. A Summary of the Evidence-Base for Five UC ANR Curricula Commonly Used by UC CalFresh: (1) Go, Glow, Grow, (2) Happy Healthy Me, (3) My Amazing Body, (4) Good for Me and You, and (5) It's My Choice. Available online at: <http://uccalfresh.org/curriculum/uc-calfresh-curriculum/sharon-junge-curricula-evidence-report-final-8-23.pdf>
2. Kaiser, L., Schneider, C., Neelon, M., Ganthavorn, C., Roche, B., Mendoza, C., & Matthiessen, T. (2013). Evaluation of Nutrition Outcomes in Youth: Challenges and Opportunities. In Trejos-Casillo, E. (Ed.), *Youth: Practices, Perspectives and Challenges* (pp. 3-15). New York: Nova Science Publishers.
3. Harder+Company Community Research for First 5 San Joaquin. (2013). FFY12 UC CalFresh Final Report. Available upon request from the UC CalFresh State Office.