

Plan, Shop, Save and Cook (PSSC)

(Practice-tested)

Summary of Evaluation Methods

The Plan, Shop, Save and Cook lessons were first delivered statewide by UC CalFresh Nutrition Education Program in Fiscal Year (FY) 2011. Adapted from the curriculum *Eating Smart, Being Active* Lesson 2, the four lesson PSSC series was developed by Cooperative Extension Nutrition Advisors. The PSSC classes were delivered to an average of 15 adults over 1 month periods. Participants complete a pre- and post-test at the beginning and end of the series. The pre/post evaluation tool included six resource management items and one food security question using a 5-option Likert-type response concerning planning meals, using a list, comparing prices, reading labels, thinking about healthy choices, eating varied meals and running out of food before the end of the month.

Evaluation Audience

PSSC was evaluated with a sample of over 3,700 SNAP-Ed adult participants over a two-year period. University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) programs in fifteen California counties delivered the PSSC lessons from October 2011-September 2013 and participated in the evaluation. More than half of the participants (65%) were Hispanic/Latino, 58% lived in households receiving SNAP benefits and almost three-quarters (74%) were female.

Curriculum Audience

PSSC is a curriculum intended for adult audiences (ages 18 years and older) who are SNAP-Ed eligible and at risk for food insecurity. Lessons and materials are available in English and Spanish.

Summary of Evaluation Results

When comparing pre-test to post-test results, PSSC participants reported improvements in all food resource management areas and increases in food security in both FY 2012 (n=1,373) and FY 2013 (n=2,371). More than one-third of participants reported a reduction in the frequency of running out of food before the end of the month. Participants who received SNAP food assistance and demonstrated more improvement in pre to post resource management skills reported the greatest decrease in running out of food. The evaluation concluded that both food assistance and education on nutrition and resource management are needed to reduce food insecurity in SNAP-eligible audiences.

Qualitative evaluation conducted with six focus groups of PSSC participants (N=54) in the Spring and Fall of 2013 in San Joaquin, San Mateo, and Santa Clara counties identified additional behavior changes not captured by the quantitative survey. Changes

in cooking practices and the types of food purchased emerged as two domains that are not currently captured by the 7-item pre/post PSSC evaluation tool. Some examples of the changes reported during the focus groups are provided below:

- Cooking Practices: using healthier oils in food preparation, steaming and baking rather than frying, incorporating vegetables and fruit into the daily diet, measuring ingredients and using seasoning to improve food taste without adding salt.
- Types of Food Purchased: greater variety of fruits and vegetables, including more legumes, less soda, and switching to healthier types of oils. A few reported purchasing more fish and chicken and less red meat or pork.

References

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