

South Dakota Team Nutrition: PhotoVoice & Farmers Grow MyPlate

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INTRODUCTION

PhotoVoice

A school lunchroom can be designed to lead, not force an individual to make a healthier food choice. Smarter Lunchroom schools were coached on behavior economics and how environmental changes can positively affect children to make healthier food and drink choices. Integration of Photovoice as a component of Smarter Lunchrooms was used to gain a comprehensive snap-shot of school lunchroom environments through a youth's perspective.

Farmers Grow MyPlate

Farmers Grow MyPlate uses each of the Choose MyPlate food groups as the focus to provide hands-on lessons on nutrition, physical activity, food preparation, food safety, arts/crafts and food production. Lesson implementation, food preparation activities and especially field trips to farms and markets are being supported in 2016 with sub-grants for use in summer day camps, school classrooms, after-school programs, and summer child care settings.

OBJECTIVES

Objective: To engage students in the PhotoVoice project as part of an assessment of school lunchroom environments.

Target audience: Students in grades 7-12 .

Rationale: A healthy next generation is important to the overall quality of life of citizens of the state as well as to the economy. The school environment has an influence over the type of food children choose and can impact a large number of children to learn to eat and live healthfully. Schools have challenges to meet both food service standards and to educate youth on healthy lifestyles.

Objectives Farmers Grow MyPlate: (1) Following the USDA "Choose MyPlate" concept, compile a toolkit of curriculum and an implementation guide to be used in educational settings.(2) Agencies will use the packaged curriculum in a variety of settings with support from an implementation sub-grant award. They will assess knowledge gain and changes in willingness to try new foods.

Target Audience: Kindergarten to 4th grade

Rationale: Tapping the power of a Farm to School type of program that includes an educational component related to MyPlate is an effective educational strategy. A review examining 15 research studies on Farm to School programs has shown that they result in students eating more fruits and vegetables per day in the cafeteria, classroom, and/or at home. Children also improve knowledge and attitudes about healthy eating and sustainable agriculture (Joshi, Azuma, & Feenstra, 2008).

PhotoVoice Youth Assessment of School Lunchroom (SL) Environments		
SL Strategy	BASELINE	POST
Vegetables - A variety of vegetables are offered in a visually appealing manner		
Reimbursable Meals - A reimbursable meal has been bundled into a grab and go meal available to students		
Fruit - At least one daily fruit option is available near all registers		
Creating School Synergies - Student's gave their input on what color to make the new lunchroom trays		

METHODS - PhotoVoice

The Smarter Lunchrooms (SL) Team consisting of 7-12th youth and school staff completed an online PhotoVoice training to learn photography techniques and how to implement the project. Baseline photos captured student perception of initial lunchroom environments and were utilized to develop the SL Action Plan. Post assessment photos captured the results of the implementation of SL strategies indicated in their SL Action Plan, had been implemented.

CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

Photos taken by youth prompted critical dialogue surrounding their school's lunchroom environment resulting in development of a Smarter Lunchroom's action plan. Schools were able to make evidence based decisions on future programming and efforts based off of PhotoVoice results.

PROJECT: Farmers Grow MyPlate

MyPlate was designed by USDA to be a simple tool that even elementary school children can understand and follow in practice. The Farmers Grow MyPlate camp experience utilizes MyPlate as the center for theme-based lessons:

- Goal is to combine nutrition education with education on how food is grown and processed.
- Curriculum includes 5 units, one for each segment of MyPlate. Lessons in each unit include nutrition, food preparation, production/field trip, physical activity, art & craft activity, & review/wrap up game.
- One or more field trips to farms or production facilities is required.
- Designed for K-4th grades in a classroom, summer or after-school setting.
- Combined with a toolkit for implementers that includes posters, visual aids, cooking utensils and physical activity supplies.
- Fifteen schools and agencies are using sub-grant awards of up to \$600 to implement Farmers Grow MyPlate in 2016.



METHODS – Farmers Grow MyPlate

Pre- and post-surveys using the K-2 and 3-5 EFNEP surveys with additional subject-specific questions will be analyzed for all children who participate in Farmers Grow MyPlate. Results from pilot tests in 2015 show increased knowledge. Exit summary reports will be collected and analyzed from program directors and teachers implementing in 2016.

CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

Farmers Grow MyPlate curriculum is successfully being implemented in a variety of settings including 2nd and 3rd grade classrooms, Boys & Girls Club after school programs, 4-H groups and summer feeding sites. Program directors report strong participation, high interest and staff/community support.