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Objective: Due to the trend of decreased traditional cooking skills, this study investigated the effectiveness of practical cooking classes on diet quality to reduce the prevalence of obesity in adolescent girls.

Design, Setting and Participants: Subjects were middle school girls ages 12- to 14-years (n = 22, 77% Hispanic or Latino, 14% Multiracial, and 9% White) from reduced-income communities in south San Luis Obispo County, California. Subjects self-selected to participate and data was collected using pre- and post-questionnaires.

Intervention: This study was designed to teach nutrition through the application of basic cooking skills. The social cognitive theory was used as the theoretical framework to increase the subjects' self-efficacy for cooking; increase knowledge of healthful dietary practices; and to provide a fun and safe environment conducive for interactive learning. The intervention consisted of a six-week term of two-hour classes, twice weekly. Each class included a 30-minute nutrition education component and a 90-minute cooking practicum.

Outcome, Measures and Analysis: Surveys were used to measure self-efficacy, knowledge, barriers and diet quality pre- versus post-intervention.

Results: Post-intervention measures demonstrated a significant ($P = 0.005$) increase in self-efficacy for cooking. No significant increases were seen for knowledge, barriers and diet.

Conclusions and Implications: Though the improvement of eating behavior did not occur during this brief cooking intervention, a culinary program may be a solid starting point for initiating dietary changes (Wrieden et al., 2007). This research, like that of Larson et al. (2006), illustrates that honing knowledge and skills learned in a practical setting is one of the first steps for increasing self-efficacy for dietary improvements.

O40 The Development and Pilot of a Culinary Intervention Designed Using the Social Cognitive Theory to Teach Nutrition to Adolescent Girls

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