

Public Abstract

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Title:Knowledge and behavior change in children within the University of Missouri Extension Family Nutrition Program

It is clear that nutrition education doesn't guarantee knowledge and/or behavior change in every programming effort. Therefore, research of nutrition education programming is of utmost importance to discover if knowledge and behavior change is successful within children participating in nutrition education curriculum. This research project evaluated nutrition and physical activity knowledge and behaviors from children participating in the University of Missouri Extension's Family Nutrition Program versus children not participating in the program.

A pre and post survey was used to discover knowledge, attitudes and behavior changes between a control and experimental group of fourth grade students.

Findings from the research revealed differences in the nutrition and physical activity knowledge, attitudes and behaviors within children who are participating in the University of Missouri Extension's Family Nutrition Program. Results showed change after curriculum intervention in the following areas: food group a person should eat from the most, amount of fruit needed per day, meat intake amounts, knowledge that certain foods can reduce a person's risk of cancer, and confidence they could eat healthy at a fast food restaurant. When looking at nutrition behaviors, analysis concluded that students participating in the Family Nutrition Program ate more meat at post survey, drank more milk at post, ate more fruit at post, and ate more meals per day at post survey. Changes found regarding physical activity behaviors within the students participating in the Family Nutrition Education Program revealed they had higher levels of physical activity, went to physical education or gym class more often, and had less screen time after nutrition curriculum intervention.

Through these findings the researcher concluded that the University of Missouri's Family Nutrition Education Program is making a difference in the lives of children in the areas of nutrition and physical activity.