Walk the Line: Nutrition Education at Produce and Food Distribution Sites

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How Our Nutrition Program is Funded

• USDA SNAP-Ed
• Network for a Healthy California
• Innovative Grant
How We Give Out Food

Our Food Distributions: Direct Service Sites & Partner Agencies

Family Harvest

Senior Brown Bag

Produce Mobile

Mobile Pantry
Target Audience

- CalFresh recipients (SNAP eligibles) with special emphasis on the homeless, including:
  - Direct Service Site clients
  - Partner Agencies and their clients
Grant Goals

- Encourage Direct Service Site clients to:
  - Take, prepare, and eat Food Bank foods, especially produce
  - Make healthy food choices based on MyPlate
  - Prevent obesity, diabetes, and other diseases

- Provide resources to partner agencies to provide Nutrition Education
Mobile Kitchen and NUT Center
Make It Interesting and Interactive!
Walking “The Line”
Challenges

1. Long lines, clients don’t want to leave
2. Belief that clients not interested in NE
3. Diverse languages
4. Unfamiliar produce
5. County EH regulation for samples
6. 2 nutritionists, 140+ distribution sites
How We Addressed these Challenges

- Develop 3-5 minute lessons to teach clients while waiting in line
- Simple objectives
- A little bit of nutrition information
- Include a food demonstration or food sample tasting
How We Addressed these Challenges

- Nutritionists place the lesson materials on cart
- Cart is pushed along the line of clients
- Nutrition display is interactive and engaging!
Help With Diverse Languages

Recruit and train Health Ambassadors to help teach in a bilingual/bicultural manner
How Effective is This Nutrition Education?
Evaluation Design

- 6 control & 6 intervention sites
- Sites not randomly assigned
- Received same produce
  - Controls: no education
- "Post-test" only –
  - 1 month after education
Intervention Group

June & July
- Brief Lessons
- SHFB Tip Cards
- Recipe Tastings

August
- SHFB Tip Cards
Outcomes

Clients in the intervention group were more likely to:

– Prepare more vegetables
– Buy the featured produce at the store
– Eat foods lower in fat, including fewer fast foods
– Add at least 2 food groups to their meals
– Prepare Food Bank recipes
Conclusion

- Clients are interested in nutrition education, both in line and at agency classes
- Even 5-minute sessions, paired with food, recipes and samples, can lead to positive health behavior changes
- With some training and simple lessons, non-nutritionists can provide effective nutrition education
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