



Farm-to-Preschool

Wave 1 (2009-2010) Preliminary Results

Program Objectives

The Farm-to-Preschool project represents an ongoing effort to promote healthy, fresh food access and improve preschoolers' eating habits in underserved areas. As little research has been conducted to this end in preschool settings, the Farm-to-Preschool project also seeks to establish effective education and outreach strategies for the children, parents, and child care providers in this demographic. Ultimately the project seeks to identify policies with the potential for scaling up and institutionalizing to promote wide scale wellness goals for preschoolers.

Setting:

Wave 1 of the Farm-to-Preschool intervention was targeted to predominantly Hispanic and African American, low-income communities in Los Angeles and San Diego counties. Pre- and Post-intervention data were collected at a total of 3 control sites (n = 138) as well as 4 intervention sites (n = 316). In addition, data from a total of 328 students' parents were collected.

Preliminary Findings:

Community Demographics:

- 77.6% of students came from non-English speaking households
- 43.3% of the household received food assistance from one or more
 - (33.5% food stamps, 15.0% WIC, 4.0% food bank, 0.5% soup kitchen)

Home Food Access:

- Only 4% of household reported having any of the fruits covered in the curriculum
- In addition 16.1% of households reported not having any of the vegetables covered in the curriculum

Student Outcomes:

- Knowledge of Fruit and Vegetables
 - Pre-intervention, control schools showed an advantage
 - 2.43 times as likely to identify most of the fruits
 - 1.79 times as likely to identify most of the vegetables
 - After the intervention this trend was reversed
 - 3.07 times as likely to identify fruits
 - 2.13 times as likely to identify vegetables
 - The rate of errors was equivalent between groups at pre- and post-
- Food Ratings
 - Intervention students were significantly less likely to indicate liking non-fruits/vegetables (ex: cookies) after the intervention