

A Formative Evaluation of SNAC Clubs in Columbia Public Schools

Missouri's 4-H Student Nutrition Advisory Council (SNAC) Initiative, developed in collaboration with MU Extension Family Nutrition Education Program, creates 4-H clubs that focus on teaching nutrition in combination with leadership and citizenship skills which are central to 4-H. Modeled after a similar program developed by University of California Cooperative Extension, SNAC clubs reach new youth and families through partnerships with nutrition education programs, schools and other community organizations. Clubs meet in school, afterschool or community settings. The goal is for SNAC participants to learn to advocate for increased nutrition awareness, education and initiatives to improve the health of their community.

SNAC was introduced into Boone County and implemented through the Columbia Public Schools summer school program in 2021. We are conducting an evaluation of SNAC programming using an existing survey created used by Family Nutrition Education Program (FNEP), open-ended questions, document analysis, and observations. The purpose of this formative evaluation is to identify current strengths and challenges of the SNAC program in Columbia Public Schools and explore students' perceptions about their SNAC experiences. Formative evaluation allows us to capture participant feedback during a program cycle and identify changes in programming that should be considered.

The findings presented on this poster focus on the qualitative data collected during SNAC lessons with incoming 8th grade students during the summer of 2021. We analyzed qualitative data using Glaser & Strauss' constant-comparative method. Themes that emerged were a). *Desiring Autonomy*; b). *Appreciating Active Learning*; and c). *Knowing Nutrition Matters*.

The findings from this ongoing evaluation project can be used to help 4-H and Nutrition Extension faculty and staff understand SNAC program participants' perspectives about their experiences with SNAC clubs. Ultimately, this information can be used to modify curriculum and instruction to improve program effectiveness.