Evaluation of the Hamilton Community Food Advisor Program

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Public Health Dietitian
Outline

• Program Overview and Update
• Project Overview
• Research Questions
• Study Participants
• Methods
• Key Findings
• Conclusion
Program Overview and Update

• Over 20 years
• Goals –to improve and promote safe and nutritious food selection, preparation and storage practices
• 18 active CFA volunteers
• Examples of population served: Seniors, children & youth, individuals with addictions, new immigrants, CNIB, OW clients...etc.
Project Overview

• To evaluate the impact of the Community Food Advisor Program to inform future program direction
Research Questions

- What is the impact of the CFA program on the participant’s knowledge, skills, attitude and confidence?
- What are the experiences of the stakeholders and CFAs with the CFA program?
- What are the perceptions of the stakeholders and CFAs regarding the continued need of the program?
- Is there an alternative delivery model to explore?
Study Participants

- Program Participants
- Stakeholders
- CFA Volunteers
Methods

**Mixed methods**

– Participant questionnaire
– The CFA survey
– The stakeholder survey
Data Analysis

- Descriptive analysis (frequencies)
- Qualitative thematic analysis
- Stakeholder and volunteer results - using a combination of descriptive (quantitative) and thematic (qualitative) analysis
Results: Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>124</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Participant Age

- 14-18: 31%
- 19-50: 51%
- 51-64: 14%
- 65+: 4%
- Missing: 3%

Figure 2: Session Attendance

- First time: 35%
- 2-4: 31%
- 5 or more: 4%
- Missing: 3%
## Results: Participants

**Knowledge and Skills (N=124)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>92%</td>
<td>Were more aware of how to prepare and cook food to keep themselves healthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94%</td>
<td>Gained a better understanding of healthy eating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88%</td>
<td>Felt they learned how to prepare food safely. Note, not all sessions touched on food safety</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Results: Participants

**Confidence (N=124)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94%</td>
<td>Felt more confident in choosing healthy foods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91%</td>
<td>Felt more confident in preparing and cooking healthy foods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92%</td>
<td>Felt more confident in cooking food safely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85%</td>
<td>Felt more confident shopping for healthy food on a budget. Note, not all sessions touched on budgeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results: Participants

Attitude (N=124)

91% Were more interested in healthy eating

90% Were more likely to try new foods
Results: Participants

Of the participants that attended more than one session (N=56):

- **70%** have used CFA recipes learned in class at home.
- **80%** have shared healthy eating tips learned in class with family and friends.
- **82%** choose healthier food and beverages more often.
Results: Stakeholders

- Over the 1 month recruitment period, 63 surveys were sent out to participating stakeholders with a N=40 (63% response rate).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sent</th>
<th>Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Canadian/immigrant/refugee program</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community organization</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and social service organization or program</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Hamilton</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious organization</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>63</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results: Stakeholders

Response to survey question 1, I used CFA programming because:

- It meets the needs of our population: 28
- The program provides experienced staff: 21
- It aligns with our organization’s mission/strategic plan/goals: 20
- The program adds variety to our regular programming schedule: 18
- It fits in well with another program we already offer: 16
- Its free: 16
- Participants requested CFA program or any other nutrition education program: 10
- We have had the program for years and it has become regular programming: 1
- Other: 1
Results: Stakeholder

- 67% indicated they had difficulty accessing resources
- 90% of stakeholder respondents indicated they felt the CFA program met the needs or purpose of their organization
- The 10% that felt the program did not meet the needs of their program
  - The program did not meet their current needs
  - Their organization is already active in food literacy with their community
Results: Stakeholder

97%
- Were satisfied with the quality of the CFA

97%
- Felt the information and resources provided by the CFA met the needs of the participants

82%
- Were satisfied with the current booking process

82%
- Were satisfied with the overall attendance of the sessions

95%
- Would recommend the CFA program to other agencies

95%
- Believe there is a continued need for the CFA program in the community
Results: CFA Volunteers

- Eighteen CFA volunteers took part in the study.
- Diverse backgrounds, language skills,
- Years of service: 2.5 to 22 years
Results: CFA Volunteers

Question 1, CFA overall experience working as a CFA (N=14)

- Very good: 36%
- Good: 57%
- Acceptable: 7%
Question 2, most enjoyable aspects of being a CFA (N=14)

- Opportunities to contribute to society: 13
- Networking and interacting with community agencies and participants: 13
- Teaching and sharing information and skills with others: 13
- Resources and support from Hamilton Public Health: 10
- The CFA training and ongoing learning opportunities: 12
Results: CFA Volunteers

- 83% Felt supported in their role
- 93% Felt they contributed to increased food skills among participants
Results: CFA Volunteers

The CFA program helps bring community members together and build partnerships.

Food skills need to be recognized as an essential life skill. The CFA program helps to increase food skills among our residents.

There has been a continuing interest and requests for information on healthy eating, food preparation, and food safety.

CFA program is supported by public health dietitians and offers residents reliable nutrition information and resources.

Hamilton is a diverse community and the CFAs play an important role in the promotion and celebration of cultural foods.

Many people don’t know how to cook or make healthy food choices: the CFA program helps to fill the gap in services.
Results: CFA Volunteers

- Organizing meals: 13
- Vegetarian cooking: 10
- Using your senses – texture, taste, when food is cooked: 6
- Growing your own food: 8
- How to eat locally: 7
- Other: 6
Results: CFA Volunteers

- Create and offer additional program topics based on community needs: 8
- Build relationships with community partners who have clients who would benefit from CFA programming and work with them to tailor programs to client needs: 9
- Offer more program-series rather than one-time presentations: 6
- Increase promotion of the CFA sessions so more people are aware of the event: 7

Other: 7
Results: CFA Volunteers

- Offer CFA program as a student practicum opportunity to culinary schools: 9
- Recruit volunteers from different ethnic backgrounds and volunteers and/or staff from other organizations to reach a more diverse groups: 8
- Offer healthy eating modules specific to vulnerable population groups: 8
- Offer CFA program at specific centralized locations: 8
- Other: 2
# Results: CFA Volunteers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increasing participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“It’s important to have a minimum number of participants registered for an event. There’s a lot of work and organization put into the events to be expected to do it for 3 people.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“more marketing needed so that events outside of the library programs are well attended”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increase volunteers</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“We need to somehow recruit and retain more daytime volunteers - the request for these presentations seems to far outweigh our ability to deliver.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner with other organizations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“…Approach those who work in the health &amp; wellness field to add this program as a regular program with other fitness programs. So we can partnership with gyms and fitness centers in the city to apply this to their programs under Healthy eating series”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ensuring the linkage with public health</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“…The link with public health ensures quality of materials/presentation. It is a very rewarding volunteer experience.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Findings

• Continued Need for the Program

• Increased Partnership

• CFA Training

• Additional Teaching Modules

• Alternative Delivery Model
Highlight of Some Recommendations

- Program Series
- Additional Teaching Modules
- Collaboration and Partnership