

TITLE: After School Cooking Courses that Work: Master Chefs and Fresh Grown Cooking

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STUDENT SUBMISSION: No

TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: The intended audience is policy makers and program developers and evaluators.

ABSTRACT: **BACKGROUND:** Formal nutrition education alone has limited effect on nutrition and dietary behavior of youth, whereas cooking programs can have a positive influence on children's food preferences, attitudes, and behaviors. **AIM:** The objective was to evaluate the efficacy of Master Chefs (MC), and Fresh Grown Cooking (FGC), two 6-week after school cooking courses designed for elementary and middle school aged students, respectively. Both courses combined food/nutrition knowledge, kitchen safety, and cooking/food preparation and tasting. **METHODS:** Participants and their parents completed before, at the end of, 4-weeks after, and 4-months after taking the course surveys that evaluated food and nutrition knowledge and cooking self-efficacy, attitudes, and activities. **RESULTS:** The after-school cooking courses successfully introduced elementary and middle-school aged students to elementary food and nutrition knowledge and kitchen safety skills. The courses successfully taught participants the importance of healthy nutrition and increased self-reported healthy activities. The courses helped participants make healthful, complete, and balanced meal choices. Master Chefs (MC), and Fresh Grown Cooking (FGC), two 6-week after school cooking courses, empower elementary and middle school aged students to make lasting healthy food choices. **IMPLICATIONS:** Successful, cooking courses combine food/nutrition knowledge, kitchen safety, and cooking/food preparation and tasting.

OBJECTIVE(S): Name essential components of the Master Chefs (MC), and Fresh Grown Cooking (FGC) that empowered elementary and middle school aged students to make lasting healthy food choices.
