

Los Angeles Unified School District Nutrition Network Program Outcome Evaluation Methodology

Description:

In October 2000, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) established the Nutrition Network (NutNet) through a United States Department of Agriculture grant to the California Department of Health Services. The goal of the LAUSD NutNet is to encourage healthy eating choices by increasing fruit and vegetable consumption and physical activity among its students through nutrition education. Along with standardized components, this unique program allows schools to tailor activities to meet their specific needs.

The LAUSD NutNet partnered with the UCLA School of Public Health to evaluate their program. The purpose of the evaluation is to provide the LAUSD NutNet and other stakeholders with outcome measures of the impact of the LAUSD NutNet. The hypothesis is that fruit and vegetable knowledge, attitudes, and frequency of consumption will be higher and that fruit and vegetable preferences will be broader and more varied in intervention schools than in control schools. This hypothesis is being measured primarily through student and parent questionnaires at pre-intervention and post-intervention during a school year in a sample of NutNet participating and non-participating elementary schools. The methodology and materials were developed with an advisory board of school community members.

The goals of the session are to introduce participants to the LAUSD NutNet program and evaluation. The LAUSD NutNet program, evaluation methodology, selection of school sample, development of evaluation materials with an advisory board, and application to other field-based nutrition interventions will be discussed. Participants will then work in small groups to apply the methodology to other nutrition interventions.

Program Summary:

The LAUSD Nutrition Network is a unique program that allows schools to tailor activities to meet their specific needs to encourage healthy eating and physical activity. Partnering with the UCLA School of Public Health and an advisory board of school community members, an outcome evaluation methodology was developed primarily using student and parent questionnaires.