



Measuring Impact on School Age Students

PROGRAM EVALUATORS

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INTRODUCTION

Evaluation surveys covering several subject areas are used by Pennsylvania Food Stamp Nutrition Education (FSNE) Projects to assess the impact of various nutrition education programs provided to elementary age students. These surveys were developed by the School District of Philadelphia's Office of Research and Evaluation and Drexel University in 2004-2005 and were pilot tested with over 1,000 students in the School District of Philadelphia to assess readability and the survey administration process. Expert review of the surveys was conducted to establish face and content validity. Several Extension staff participated as expert reviewers. Further testing is proceeding.

The three sets of surveys are pictorial and age-appropriate for K – 2nd grade, 3rd – 5th grade, and for 5th grade alone. The surveys assess students' knowledge, and sometimes behavior, related to nutrition, e.g. fruits, vegetables, snacks, and physical activity. There are also two questions on the 5th grade post-test survey that assess students' intentions to increase consumption of fruits and vegetables.

Below are links to the school-age evaluation surveys. These surveys have been approved by Penn State's Internal Review Board (IRB) for use in collecting and disseminating statewide PA NEP program evaluation data. They can also be used for the EFNEP program.

Use of the surveys is flexible depending on program needs and time available.

- Assess whether the survey questions measure your program's objective(s).
- You may use these surveys in their current format, or you may customize them to meet your needs by deleting items that are not relevant to your specific program. Please do not add items to the surveys.
- These surveys can be used to evaluate programming covered in the PA NEP School-age Track.
- The surveys below on a single topic area may be administered in a pre-test/post-test protocol to determine change as a result of a program. Before using these surveys in a pre-test situation, however, consider whether the younger children will recognize the concepts in the survey, e.g., fiber, to answer a pre-test question accurately. When using the surveys for a pre-test/post-test either individual change scores can be calculated and sorted, or average student score can be calculated. See tipsheet #66: [How to Use Evaluation Data to Write Different Types of Impact Statements](#).
- When concerned that younger children in the program may not recognize a concept on a pre-test for K – 2nd and 3rd – 5th grades, consider administering one of these surveys only as a post-test at the conclusion of an educational session. You can report the percentage of children who know a particular item or the average student score at the end of a program. One



disadvantage of this option however, is that extension can't claim credit since initial scores aren't known.

- The pre-test and post-test for Grade 5 is more comprehensive and focuses on many topics related to nutrition:
 - whole grains
 - calcium rich foods
 - fruits
 - vegetables
 - healthy beverages (lower sugar beverage alternatives)
 - physical activity
 - hand washing
 - food safety

Penn State IRB approval of these surveys includes the provision that parents be informed and given the option of excluding their child from participation in evaluation research. A parental notification and informed consent letter for this purpose is included as a link below. The letter can be given to teachers to send home to parents/guardians. If you plan to program to an entire school you may provide letters to all students at the beginning of the programming year. If you plan to program only in specific classrooms you can give letters to the appropriate teacher(s) a few weeks before your programming begins.

LINKS TO EDUCATIONAL SURVEYS FOR SCHOOL-AGE STUDENTS

[PA NEP Parental Opt-Out Slip](#)

[Grades K-2: Fruits](#)

[Grades 3-5: Fruits](#)

[Grades K-2: Vegetables](#)

[Grades 3-5: Vegetables](#)

[Grades K-2: Dairy](#)

[Grades 3-5: Dairy](#)

[Grades K-2: Grains](#)

[Grades 3-5: Grains](#)

[Grades K-2: Beverages](#)

[Grades 3-5: Snacks](#)

[Grades K-2: Snacks](#)

[Grades K-2: Physical Activities](#)

[Grade 5: Tell Us What You Know \(Pre-test\)](#)

[Grade 5: Show Us What You Learned \(Post-test\)](#)

CONCLUSION

These surveys have proven useful in evaluating nutrition programs in a classroom or after-school setting.

APPLICATION TO OTHER EXTENSION PROGRAMS

- All Educators conducting Nutrition Links programs are strongly encouraged to use these evaluations in some way to determine impact as research has demonstrated their effectiveness.
- Extension programs serving the elementary age audience may use these surveys, either as presented or as examples, in developing evaluation measures that meet their needs.

For further information about the evaluation, please contact Judy Gromis (icg11@psu.edu).

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