Development of the FoodCorps Healthy School Progress Report Tool to Measure School Food Programming and Environment

Why: Many schools have food-related programming. Yet, there is not a valid tool to assess quality and quantity of programming.

Design and Methods: This five phase instrument development process created the FoodCorps Healthy School Progress Report (Progress Report) so that it was based in social cognitive theory, evidence-informed, sensitive to change, and established expert, face, construct, and predictive validity.

We also conducted a process evaluation to receive feedback on the Progress Report. The tool includes many actions you can take to improve the quality and quantity of food and nutrition programming. You can also use the tool to assess if your school’s food and nutrition programming is effective or not. The Progress Report is a tool to help you assess your school’s food and nutrition programming, to make informed decisions about what to do next, and to share your story with others.

Results: The final Progress Report is evidence-informed and valid for a broad range of school programming including nutrition education, school gardens, healthy school food, & a culture of health.

Conclusion: The Progress Report is reflective of FoodCorps programming and can also be used by other organizations that conduct similar food-related programming in schools.

The development process for the Progress Report

Version 1: April 2015

Established experts.

Future research—Future research aimed at identifying barriers and facilitators to the implementation of healthy school food and nutrition programming.

Research questions:

1. Are schools interested in implementing or expanding healthy school food and nutrition programming?

2. How can schools assess and improve the quality and quantity of their programming?

3. How can schools measure the impact of their programming?

4. How can schools sustain and scale their programming?

5. What can be done to improve the quality and quantity of school food and nutrition programming?

Version 2: Early June 2015

Established goals.

Future research—Future research aimed at identifying barriers and facilitators to the implementation of healthy school food and nutrition programming.

Research questions:

1. Are schools interested in implementing or expanding healthy school food and nutrition programming?

2. How can schools assess and improve the quality and quantity of their programming?

3. How can schools measure the impact of their programming?

4. How can schools sustain and scale their programming?

5. What can be done to improve the quality and quantity of school food and nutrition programming?

Version 3: Late June 2015

Established outcomes.

Future research—Future research aimed at identifying barriers and facilitators to the implementation of healthy school food and nutrition programming.

Research questions:

1. Are schools interested in implementing or expanding healthy school food and nutrition programming?

2. How can schools assess and improve the quality and quantity of their programming?

3. How can schools measure the impact of their programming?

4. How can schools sustain and scale their programming?

5. What can be done to improve the quality and quantity of school food and nutrition programming?

Version 4: August 2015

Established validity.

Future research—Future research aimed at identifying barriers and facilitators to the implementation of healthy school food and nutrition programming.

Research questions:

1. Are schools interested in implementing or expanding healthy school food and nutrition programming?

2. How can schools assess and improve the quality and quantity of their programming?

3. How can schools measure the impact of their programming?

4. How can schools sustain and scale their programming?

5. What can be done to improve the quality and quantity of school food and nutrition programming?

Version 5: July 2016

Final version.

Future research—Future research aimed at identifying barriers and facilitators to the implementation of healthy school food and nutrition programming.

Research questions:

1. Are schools interested in implementing or expanding healthy school food and nutrition programming?

2. How can schools assess and improve the quality and quantity of their programming?

3. How can schools measure the impact of their programming?

4. How can schools sustain and scale their programming?

5. What can be done to improve the quality and quantity of school food and nutrition programming?

Discussion

The development process for the Progress Report so that it was based in social cognitive theory, evidence-informed, sensitive to change, and established expert, face, construct, and predictive validity.

The tool to assess quality and quantity of programming is informed by social cognitive theory constructs. Outcome expectations—structures in the environment that make healthy behaviors easy and acceptable. Examples in the Healthy School Meals section include setting up appealing lunch lines, displaying fruit in bowls or baskets, making fruits and vegetables available in school meals, and encouraging the consumption of fruits and vegetables. The development process for the Progress Report so that it was based in social cognitive theory constructs.

The whole process evaluation to receive feedback on the Progress Report. The tool includes many actions you can take to improve the quality and quantity of your school’s food and nutrition programming. You can also use the tool to assess if your school’s food and nutrition programming is effective or not. The Progress Report is a tool to help you assess your school’s food and nutrition programming, to make informed decisions about what to do next, and to share your story with others.

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