

## Project Timeline

Five Local Implementing Agencies (LIAs) recruited 54 former nutrition education adult participants.

Telephone interviews (n=41) were conducted and recorded for transcription.

An evaluation team analyzed and reached consensus on findings.

## Considerations for Program Planning



Participants often reported prior interest in nutrition. Recruitment strategies for participants with less pre-existing motivation could expand the population served.

Class promotion and recruitment could connect to other program sites, including PSE settings like grocery stores, pantries, and farmers markets.



Most interview participants had completed a SNAP-Ed cooking class, but some had a desire to manage chronic health conditions. In some cases, a class with more nutrition and less cooking emphasis could be helpful.

Feedback demonstrated that hands-on activities and engaging instructors were key factors to a successful class.



Future class suggestions to help people with public health crises like COVID-19 included a focus on shelf-stable pantry items, meal planning, and budgeting.

Considerations for participant barriers, like transportation to classes, should be understood. If possible, program partners and other funding sources could be used to help address barriers.



## REASONS FOR TAKING CLASS

A majority of respondents took the class to gain cooking skills and knowledge about nutrition information, and expressed an interest in learning more. Some participants learned about the class from referrals, either from the implementing agency, their family or friends, or another agency such as a school or farmers market.

“Anytime there is information to be relayed having to do with nutrition, food, how to prepare it, what to look for, anything like that that would help me to be healthy and a nice weight size, I am always—I am always interested. Gung-ho totally.”

“I decided to take the Cooking Matters class because I just wanted to kind of educate myself on eating better, and just knowing things when it comes to reading labels on the back of the food packages, and things like that, and just trying to get into a better, healthier lifestyle.”

## IMPRESSIONS

Generally, interview participants responded positively to nutrition education classes. They reported learning new information and using that knowledge to make healthy changes to their shopping, cooking, and eating habits, including recipe substitutions and label reading. Many participants described the instructors as engaging, competent, and well prepared and that they enjoyed taking the class with others.

“Well, the nutritional value labeling products was very informative. Understanding how to buy at the store. The gal was just very, very professional. And every week her presentation was very well prepared. I still have the cookbook and I use it.”

“It was interesting to see how other people were cooking and eating. And I liked that the instructor had kind of like little quizzes every day that kept you really alert and listening. And I liked that we did actually cooking. That was fun!”

## LASTING CHANGES

Many participants conveyed they were eating healthier after the class by incorporating more vegetables, reducing their sodium, and using more herbs and spices. Some participants said they did not change anything explicitly, but said they were more conscious of what they were eating or purchasing at the store.

“I started eating more vegetables because I just—she talked about eating the vegetables and the fruits and how important that was. And how it has a really impact on your body. And that really triggered me that that’s something I really need to start doing more of.”

“Well, yes, I increased my consumption of fruits and vegetables...this class really encouraged me to make sure in the future that I prepared more fruits and vegetables always and eat more fruits and vegetables along with the rest of my meal.”

## SUGGESTIONS FOR THE CLASS

Mainly, participants said the class was thorough, answered any questions they had, and was informative. The most common suggestions had to do with wanting the class to be longer, more sessions in a series, or having the class at a more convenient time. There were a few suggestions about including recipes relevant to participants of different cultural backgrounds and dietary needs.

“And now maybe say if the class time was maybe a little bit longer, that...would help because many people from the Salvation Army would have to catch buses at 3:00 or before 3:00 and we only had one hour to prepare a dish.”