

Topic Area: Determinants of Food Choice, Dietary Intake

Abstract Title: Freezer Meal Frenzy: A Workplace Wellness Initiative
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Purpose: Freezer Meal Frenzy is a workplace wellness initiative intended to promote cooking and eating healthy meals at home, expose employees to new foods, increase food preparation skills and to answer the age old question "what's for dinner?"

Process or Summary of Content: The Freezer Meal Frenzy is a night where interested employees come together to prepare meals to fill their freezer. The meals can then be cooked later in the slow cooker, oven or stove. Each session has 6-10 participants, each person going home with 10 meals that feed a family of 6, all for approximately \$140.

Systematic approach used: After determining this would be a viable option for staff, facilitators reviewed resources including books, websites and blogs. From those resources, they chose recipes, adjusted them and compiled grocery lists. On the day of the event, facilitators do the grocery shopping and prepare the space that will be used for the event. After each session, facilitators document results such as grocery bills, calculated price per meal and lessons learned to improve efficiency for future sessions. Evaluation is also done with participants, seeing which meals they liked or disliked and the benefits they experience from the program. Participation has steadily increased which has prompted changes to make the program accessible to more participants.

Recommendations/Conclusions: The program has been very successful and has continued to grow for the past 3 years. The event really helps to build skill for participants and often introduces them to new foods. Purchasing ingredients in bulk helps to keep the meals reasonably priced. An unanticipated benefit is team building for staff - many participants have appreciated getting to know their coworkers in a different capacity when they are preparing meals together. With careful planning, this program could be replicated in a variety of different workplaces, and with different client groups.