

Community Engagement to Enhance Survey Response Rates

Cooking for the Family – LC 10

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Background:

A major obstacle to healthy eating, especially for those in low-income areas, is the lack of knowledge and skills as to how to cook a healthy meal. Cooking for the Family, a non-profit group in Over the Rhine, aims to address this discrepancy by offering healthy-eating cooking classes for families throughout Cincinnati. After several years of operation, the program is faced with the question: *Is the program working?* To help answer this question and to strengthen the efficacy of the program, we created standardized follow-up surveys. In doing so, we hope to assess whether the knowledge, confidence and skills gained in the program have made a pronounced impact on the eating habits of past students.

Objective: While considering the major barriers, we hope to mitigate the issue of poor survey response rates which previous attempts at data collection have faced.



Major Barriers:

- Communication: surveys are difficult to distribute due to lack of email addresses, permanent home addresses, computer access, and stable cell phone numbers.
- Transportation to classes and potluck is difficult, with inconvenient public transport and many lacking cars.

Major Assets:

- Multiple teaching locations throughout Cincinnati.
- Chef Instructors with community attachments.
- Positive reviews and word-of-mouth communication.

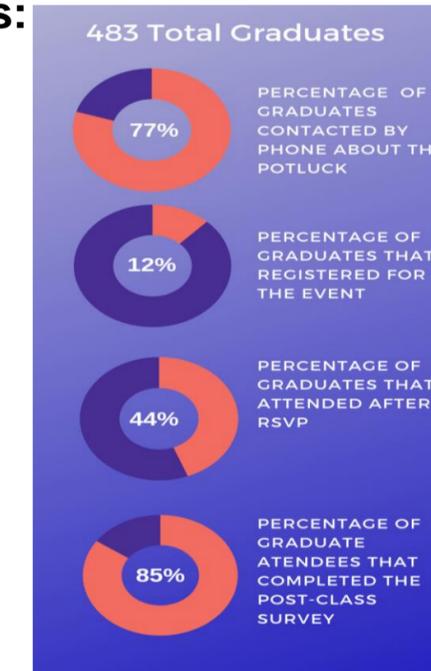
Plan:

To circumvent the barriers and best help our community partner, we planned a potluck celebration in April 2019 for past participants. At the event, the improved surveys were handed out. To maximize turnout, we used incentives such as prizes, free health screenings, and kids activities.

Methods:

1. Developed standardized survey
2. Organized event
3. Called students and promoted party
4. Volunteered at event and distributed surveys

Results:



Conclusion: While the same barriers persist, an excellent survey response rate was obtained from the students who came to the event. Overall response was still low, but having one location and incentivized survey completion allowed for improved program feedback. In the future, the potluck will be continued, and further survey analysis will be performed to aid in reaching the goal of improving food literacy in the Cincinnati area.

