

# Color Me Healthy

Research-Tested

## **Summary of Evaluation Methods**

An initial evaluation study collected indicators of preschool child knowledge about healthy eating and physical activity, willingness to try new foods, fruit and vegetable recognition, and physical activity behavior. Subsequent to positive findings from the initial evaluation study, a randomized control trial was designed, employing more direct methods to quantify preschool children's consumption of fruits and vegetables during the school day, with parent report of dietary consumption outside of school. Specifically, the consumption of fruits and vegetables consumed by children from snacks at school was quantified by weighing snack containers before and after snack time; this was done one week prior to the start of the Color Me Healthy intervention (pre-test), one week after its completion (post-test), and again three months later (follow-up). Parents were surveyed about fruit and vegetable consumption at home, but due to low parental response rate there were insufficient data to report.

## **Evaluation Audience**

The randomized control trial of Color Me Healthy included a total of 263 preschool children from the Boise, ID area; 53% were male and most were 4 or 5 years old. No information about race/ethnicity or socioeconomic status was provided. Only a subset of this sample had complete data for analysis. There were 83 children in the intervention group and 70 comparison group children with fruit snack data at all three time points; there were 70 intervention and 52 comparison group children with vegetable snack data at all time points.

## **Curriculum Audience**

Color Me Healthy is designed for preschool children ages 4 and 5 years old.

## **Summary of Evaluation Results**

Preschoolers that participated in Color Me Healthy increased both fruits and vegetables consumed after program participation compared to baseline, while their peers in the comparison group showed no such change. The percentage of fruit snacks consumed by preschoolers in Color Me Healthy increased from 58.7% at the pre-test measurement to 89.9% (post-test, and 79.5% at 3-month follow-up). The percentage of vegetable snacks consumed by preschoolers in Color Me Healthy increased from 37.9% at the pre-test measurement to 62.1% (post-test, and 71.0% at 3-month follow-up). Results were similar when broken down by the specific fruits and vegetables tested.

## **References**

Dunn C, Thomas C, Ward D, Pegram L, Webber K, Cullitan C. Design and implementation of a nutrition and physical activity curriculum for child care settings. *Prev Chronic Dis.* 2006; 3(2).

Witt K, Dunn C. Increasing fruit and vegetable consumption among preschoolers; evaluation of Color Me Healthy. *J Nutr Ed Behav.* 2012; 44(2): 107-113