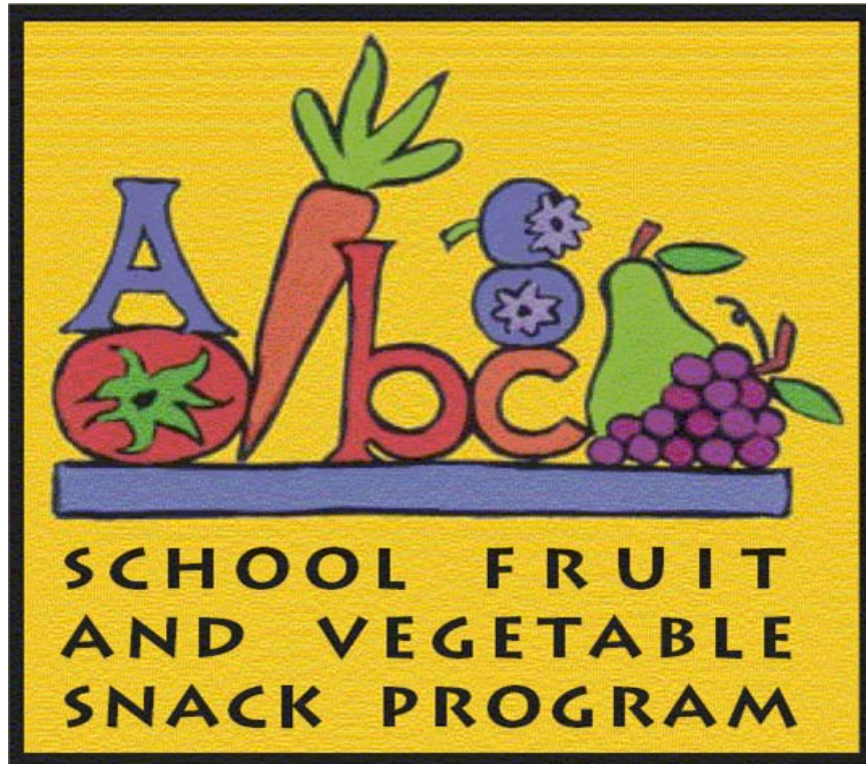




School Fruit and Vegetable Snack Newsletter





“Since I’ve tried more, I’ve eaten different kinds. My parents buy more different kinds because I tell them to” -Student

Overview

In November 2004 three government Ministries (Agriculture, Health, Education) came together with industry to create a school fruit and vegetable snack program. This program reflected the principals of ActNow BC and the commitment of each government ministry to promote the healthy growth and development of children and reduce the risk of chronic disease later in life. Increasing children’s fruit and vegetable intake was the primary objective of the program.

So what went on?

Local suppliers and distributors delivered fresh BC grown fruits and vegetables (F&V) to schools twice a week. A designated in-school coordinator (ISC) sorted fruit and vegetables into bins, delivered them to the classrooms and dealt with product quantity and delivery issues. Staff received a teacher manual that included a list of the snacks being provided and a list of informational web-sites. Posters, stickers, postcards and newsletters focusing on F&V consumption, healthy eating, and hand washing were given to the schools to distribute to students and parents. A Provincial Coordinator worked with schools to identify issues and support implementation.



The Best Things in Life are BC



“So it's nice to see there is actually funding going into trying out a program like this. It is successful, it fills the gap for some kids that just don't have these kind of things in their lunches.” -In-school Coordinator

Congratulations and thank you to the schools, students, teachers and families that participated in the program and evaluation. Your support and enthusiasm helped create the positive outcomes.

Special thanks to the schools and families that participated in the evaluation only!

Participating Schools:

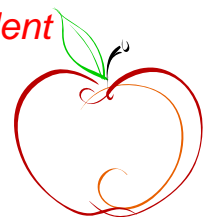
Brentwood Elementary: Saanich, BC
Britannia Community Elementary: Vancouver, BC
Champlain Heights Elementary: Vancouver, BC
CM Finch Elementary: Fort St. John, BC
Erickson Elementary: Kootenay Lake
Eric Langton Elementary: Maple Ridge, BC
Golden Ears Elementary: Maple Ridge, BC
Sidney Elementary: Saanich, BC
W.E. Graham Community: Kootenay Lake, BC
Westview Elementary: Prince Rupert, BC
Braefoot Elementary: Victoria, BC (eval only)
Bayside Middle Schools: Victoria, BC (eval only)
Cloverdale Elementary: Victoria, BC (eval only)
Selkirk Montessori: Victoria, BC (eval only)



The cucumbers in the bag, the kids loved them, they were gone, the kids were like, “Oh cucumbers, that rocks, they’re my favourite”.

- Administrator

“ I’ve started to think about what I eat and I try not to eat junk food” - Student





“I fully support this program and believe in the benefits it can bring to a variety of children – especially those with limited home exposure to healthy choices!” -Parent

Implementation Results

Satisfaction with the program

100% of the teachers, administrators, and in-school coordinators interviewed favored continuing the program.

“Yes, we would continue the program provided there was funding and support.”

-Administrator

63% of children’s favorite part of SFVSP was related to the provision of the snacks (liked the snacks, liked a specific fruit or vegetable, liked trying new fruits).

“ I loved the kiwis the best.” - Student



Support

100% of the teachers and administrators comments indicated that the support they received such as the ISC enabled ease of implementing the program.

“The coordinator is what makes the program work.” - Administrator

Observable Benefits

Suppliers and distributors of the F&Vs believed that the program would have benefits for both the health and agriculture sector and for their business.

“It is a wonderful program, the idea behind it is great, nothing but good from both the health and agriculture perspective.” - Supplier

“For me it was the prune plums, because I grew up with prune plums. I was absolutely amazed and shocked that they had never tasted one....That’s the one that sticks in my mind, because it was such a shock to me I didn’t know that kids didn’t know about these things and ...this transcends culture”- Teacher

58% of the parents said it influenced family members. 25% reported that it influenced their buying habits (increased amount, variety, purchasing BC produce)

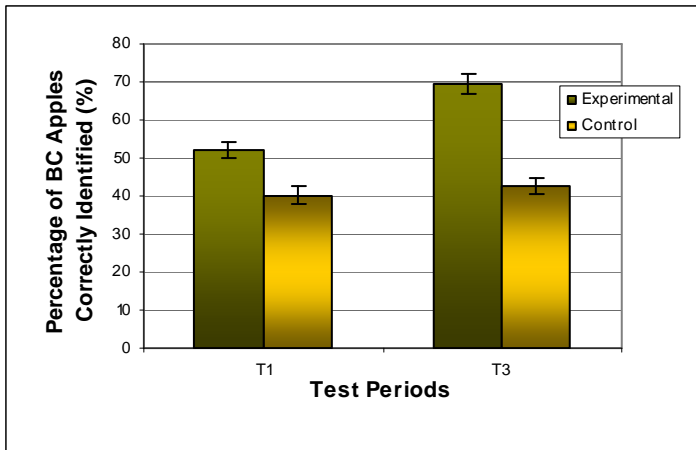


“They started to choose healthier snacks on the days that we weren’t having the snack provided. I started to see more fruit coming out during snack time on non-fruit and vegetable days.” -Teacher

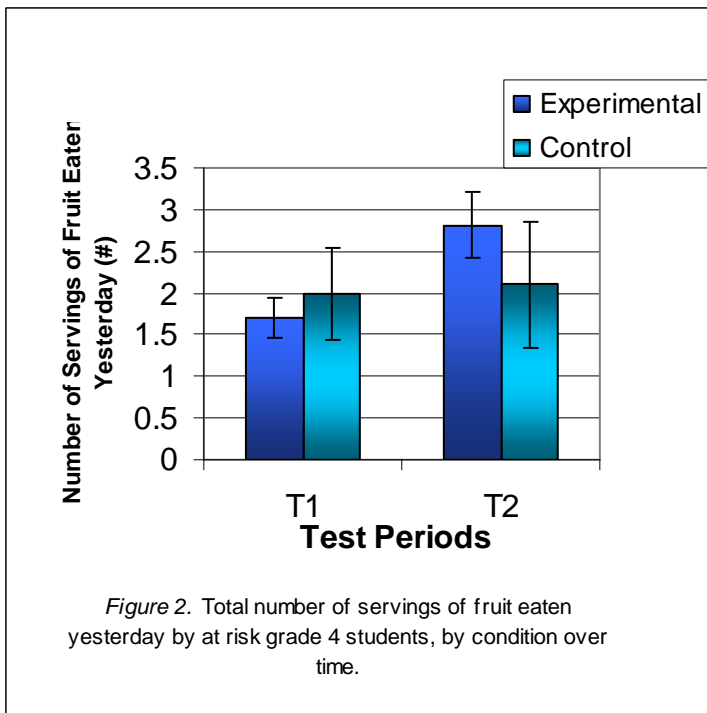
Outcomes

Awareness of BC apples increased significantly in SFVSP children when compared to children who didn’t participate in the program (both Grades 4 and 6’s).

Figure 1. Percentage of BC Apple varieties correctly identified



SFVSP children ate at least 5 F&V servings per day; meeting the guidelines in Canada’s Guide to Healthy Eating.



Grade 4 students who ate less than 5 fruit and vegetables at baseline went from 2.93 servings/day to 5.12 servings / day (2.19 servings compared to controls who ate 1.17 between baseline and follow-up)



Grade 6 students who ate less than 5 fruit and vegetables at baseline increased by 2.29 servings compared to 1.95 servings in the controls



“It is one of the best things I have seen my government do, because it is targeted at kids, and it is good use of my tax dollars.”- Teacher

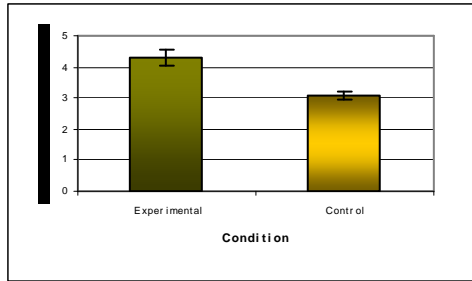


Figure 3. Comparison of usual frequency of fruit and vegetable consumption - June 2004

Snack pilot children frequency of eating fruit and vegetables was on average 1.3 occasions higher-per day compared to those in other schools

65% of children reported changes: eating more F&Vs, feeling healthier, trying new F&V's, washing their hands more, and knowing more about F&Vs.

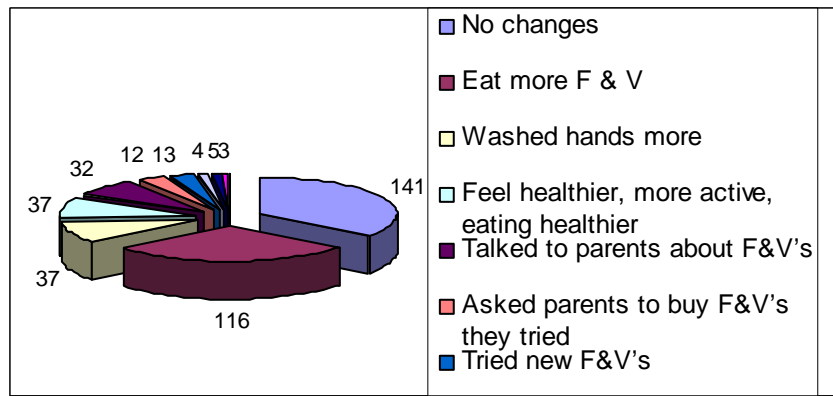
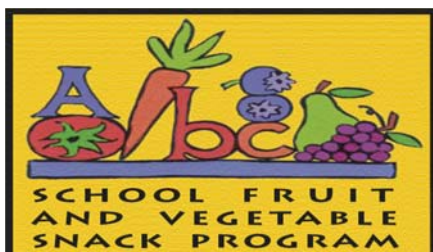


Figure 4: Children's self-reported changes as a result of the program

Program Expansion

50 schools will participate in the SFVSP in 2007. The group will include nine of the original schools, and 41 new schools. Expansion to other schools in 2008 will depend on funding!

“The fruit and vegetables are right there, they are being seen and when [they] are there they get eaten” - Teacher



Thank you again for your time and participation, your involvement helped promote this great expansion.

Don't forget to eat 5 to 10 servings of fruits and vegetables a day!!!