‘Blokes in the Kitchen’ 2013

Introduction

Blokes in the Kitchen (BIK) is a health promotion initiative developed under the ‘Promoting Healthy Eating’ priority area. BIK was supported and partly funded by Bass Coast Shire Healthy Communities Initiative and developed and implemented by Health Promotion staff at Bass Coast Health (formerly Bass Coast Community Health) in San Remo.

Target population: Men living in Bass Coast, especially those who may be socially isolated due to older age, living alone and/or under/unemployed and/or experience a disability (physical and/or mental).

Rationale: Men currently experience higher rates of avoidable mortality from major illnesses including cancer, cardiovascular disease and respiratory disease. Ischaemic heart disease is the leading cause of death among Victorian men who are three times more likely to die from the disease than women. Key risk factors are lifestyle related and gender bias towards men, these include high cholesterol, obesity, insufficient fruit and vegetable intake and low health service usage. Men with the lowest life expectancy are Indigenous men, men of low socioeconomic status and men in rural areas. (Men’s Health and Wellbeing Strategy Background Paper, 2010. Victorian Department of Health)

Method

A local male chef was employed to deliver the cooking sessions and develop a menu plan in consultation with BCH dietitians, who also provided nutritional information on key menu food items and attended three BIK sessions as guest speakers.

‘The Shack’ Men’s Shed facilitator, assisted with promotion, program delivery, recording the sessions (photo and video), engaging and supporting the men to attend.

The BCH health promotion worker was responsible for project coordination, data collection and evaluation.

The BCH community development worker, provided hands on assistance at some sessions. The BIK course was promoted as part of The Shack Men’s Shed program via a poster, email, advertisement in local paper and media release.

Methods used to collect data

- Registration and attendance records
- Interviews with the chef, The Shack Men’s shed facilitator and BCH dietitians
- Participant registration and demographics form
- Pre and post participant survey conducted at first and last cooking session
- Filmed interviews and photographs of participants and staff (DVD production)
- Follow up survey three months after BIK course in late February 2014

Acknowledgments

BCH would like to acknowledge and thank the following contributors to the BIK course:

- Kristen Yates-Mathews from the Bass Coast Shire HCI for support & funding.
- Paul Johnson ‘The Chef’ for his professionalism and flair.
- Dietitians Faye Hudson and Anne Somerville for embracing the challenge.
- Terry Melvin for fabulous photography and DVD production.
- All the blokes for their enthusiasm and great sense of humor.

Aim

To conduct a six week healthy eating and cooking skills course for up to 15 men.

Setting: Bass Coast Community Health (BCCH) 1 Back Beach Rd, San Remo.
Six sessions: 11:30am – 2:30pm

Impact Indicators:
Participants in the Blokes in the Kitchen course will self-report an:
- Increase in skills and confidence in preparing and cooking healthy meals using fruit and vegetables.
- Increase in knowledge of daily serves of fruit and vegetables.
- Increase in daily consumption of fruit and vegetables.

Results

100% of the 15 BIK participants completed the pre and post program surveys with the following results:

Increase in skills and confidence in preparing and cooking healthy meals using fruit and vegetables: 86.6 % of participants reported an increase in their skills and confidence with 53% increasing by two places on the scale; 26% increasing by one place, 6% increasing by four places. 13% reported no change.

Summary Table: knowledge & consumption of fruit and vegetables pre and post.

Twelve participants (80%) completed a three month follow up survey and all reported no change in any of the impact indicators since completing the post program survey. Six men registered to be part of an on going Blokes Community Kitchen program.

Conclusion

- Promoting the BIK course as part of ‘The Shack’ Men’s Shed program was a key to engaging men’s interest, it appealed to men of different ages and backgrounds.
- BIK was very successful in increasing participant’s skills and confidence in preparing and cooking healthy meals.
- The high number of participants who reported adequate knowledge of daily serves of fruit and fruit consumption indicates that this area of healthy eating is not a major concern amongst these men.
- The low number of participants who reported adequate knowledge of daily serves of vegetables and vegetable consumption indicates that this area of healthy eating is a concern for most of these men. This finding suggests that more emphasis is needed on educating and skilling up participants to achieve healthy levels of vegetable consumption.
- The social and group context of the class was very important and enjoyable for the participants.
- BIK lead to the establishment of the Blokes Community Kitchen program in 2014.

Helen Page
Bass Coast Health

‘I felt privileged to be a part of a professional, well run program and I hope there will be many more programs like this in the future’ Paul Johnson - the chef.

‘I have noticed that I am more aware of eating healthy food especially fruit and vegetables.’ Peter

Summary Table: knowledge & consumption of fruit and vegetables pre and post.

Twelve participants (80%) completed a three month follow up survey and all reported no change in any of the impact indicators since completing the post program survey. Six men registered to be part of an on going Blokes Community Kitchen program.

Acknowledgments

BCH would like to acknowledge and thank the following contributors to the BIK course:

- Kristen Yates-Mathews from the Bass Coast Shire HCI for support & funding.
- Paul Johnson ‘The Chef’ for his professionalism and flair.
- Dietitians Faye Hudson and Anne Somerville for embracing the challenge.
- Terry Melvin for fabulous photography and DVD production.
- All the blokes for their enthusiasm and great sense of humor.