Background

Feeding practices are the attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and decisions adults make with regard to what, when, and how to feed children. Feeding practices influence a child's food preferences, eating habits, weight and growth. Positive feeding practices are outlined by Ellyn Satter’s evidence-based, best practice feeding model the Division of Responsibility in Feeding. The Division of Responsibility in Feeding specified in the Satter Feeding Dynamic Model has demonstrated clinically as an effective approach to reduce child feeding problems, including obesity (Lohse, B. et al., 2014).

United Way’s Feeding, Eating and Succeeding Together (FEAST) is a nutrition education initiative directed at parents, caregivers, teachers and out-of-school time providers who interact with children around food and eating. FEAST focuses on how to feed children by examining the complex set of interactions that take place between children and adults during mealtime. It is complementary to other nutrition education curricula that focus on core nutrition principles such as dietary patterns and nutritional quality of foods.

FEAST is grounded in the Feeding Dynamics Model, an evidence-based feeding model created by family therapist and registered dietitian Ellyn Satter. This model has developmentally appropriate applications in birth through adolescents and is recognized as best practice by the American Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, the American Academy of Pediatrics, The United States Department of Agriculture, and the Women, Infants and Children program.

FEAST reaches parents and caregivers through a series of four small group dialogue learning experiences. The series is evaluated using the validated Feeding Your Child questionnaire developed by Barbara Lohse and Ellyn Satter. Teachers, early childhood professionals and out-of-school time providers are offered a one-time training session that covers the eating environment and age-appropriate nutrition messages.

FEAST utilizes a Train the Trainer model which trains potential instructors on the best ways to deliver training materials to others.

Evaluation of FEAST

United Way for Southeastern Michigan requests proposals from qualified researchers/evaluators to complete an outcome evaluation of the FEAST curriculum and to complete an evaluation of additional research questions about feeding practices of parents/caregivers in southeastern Michigan.
Purpose: The proposed study has two components. The first is to gather data on the effectiveness of the FEAST curriculum and the second component is to evaluate the fidelity of the train the trainer model. We will be using a validated tool to gather data (Feeding Your Child Questionnaire) for the first component of the study. Satter and colleague, Barbara Lohse, developed a validated survey tool, the Feeding Your Child Questionnaire, to assess feeding practices and determine if adults adhere to the Division of Responsibility in Feeding. This questionnaire will be used to gather data for evaluation of the FEAST nutrition education curriculum to determine if it is successful in improving feeding practices for parents and caregivers of young children.

Key evaluation questions:

- Is the FEAST curriculum effective at improving the feeding practices for parents/caregivers of young children?
- Do parents/caregivers better adhere to the Division of Responsibility in Feeding model after participating in the FEAST curriculum?
- Is the train the trainer model maintaining the fidelity of the FEAST curriculum?

Our hypotheses: 1) Parents/caregivers that participate in a four-week nutrition education series dedicated to improving feeding practices will adopt practices that adhere to the evidence-based, best practice feeding model the Division of Responsibility in Feeding. 2) Educators who participate in the FEAST train the train model will implement the training with fidelity in their settings.

Collection Activities: Participants will take the Feeding Your Child Questionnaire in the first class (week 1) and in the final class (week 4) to assess behavior change. The Feeding Your Child Questionnaire takes approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. Additional questions may be included to serve the evaluation. FEAST curriculum participants will include males or females caring for children between the ages of 2 and 6 years old. We expect the number of participants for this study to be 50.

The train the trainer model involves potential educators attending a full FEAST series and participating in a half-day training with United Way staff. Trainees will be provided feedback and support throughout their implementation of the FEAST program. In order to evaluate the fidelity of the train the trainer model, we anticipate evaluators using video recordings of the classes to collect data. The evaluator can specify the frequency and volume of class recordings required to adequately evaluate the fidelity of the model. We expect the number educators trained through this model to be 3.

Deliverables:

- Development of an evaluation plan for the FEAST curriculum
- Development of an evaluation plan for the train the trainer model
- Assistance with writing and submitting an IRB application
- Review and finalize evaluation tools and methodology, to include additional tools to answer key evaluation questions.
- Set up and implement data collection
- Data entry, cleaning and analysis
- Write a final report of evaluation and research findings and propose recommendations to United Way for Southeastern Michigan for review and comment.
Terms and funding:

The FEAST curriculum evaluation is expected to last for the period of one year. The term of the evaluation contract, fees for services, and total contract amount will be negotiated between UWSEM and the chosen applicant but will not exceed $50,000.

Submission Criteria

Proposals should be submitted via email as attachments, in Word or PDF format. The proposals should include the following components:

- Cover letter and resume
- Statement of researcher/evaluator’s qualification: A statement of qualifications that includes experience planning and conducting comprehensive evaluation services and experience in quantitative and qualitative research methodologies.
- Project plan overview, including the following:
  - Framework for the evaluation design and methodology, including what information, data, and support the respondent would require to implement the design.
  - Framework for the data analysis and research questions to be addressed.
  - Proposed detailed timeline for completion of the project, including specific benchmarks and reporting dates.
- Project budget and budget narrative:
  - Proposed total budget for the project, including functional line items.
  - Brief budget narrative outlining details of what is included in the budget.
- Examples of previous work
- References

Evaluation of Responses and Selection Process

UWSEM will review applications and select the highest qualified applicant(s) with strong proposed work plans for an interview by phone or in person. Based on applicants’ experience, statements of qualification, proposed project plans, and any subsequent interviews, UWSEM will select the most qualified applicant with the strongest proposals to conduct the evaluative study described in this RFP.

Evaluation criteria:

- Applicant’s level of experience and expertise in the subject matter
- Strength of applicant’s proposed project plan
- Past performance on similar evaluation projects and positive references
- Experience evaluating a train the trainer model is preferred
- Competitive project budget and alignment of budget to proposed project scope

Timeline

- RFP will be posted publicly February 6, 2019
- Question period will be from February 6, 2019 to February 20, 2019
  - Respondents are invited to submit questions to FEAST.FAQ@LiveUnitedSEM.org
- Responses to questions will be sent to all respondents by February 27, 2019
- RFPs due by email by 5:00 pm EST on March 4, 2019 to Lily.Doher@LiveUnitedSEM.org
- United Way for Southeastern Michigan notifies respondents by March 27, 2019
Appendix:
- Feeding Your Child Questionnaire
- Curriculum materials (additional materials available upon request)

Citations: