

Guidelines & Considerations for Virtual Session Pilot Program

Food Skills for Families

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In 2020 the BC Center for Disease Control (BCCDC) Food Skills for Families (FSF) program in partnership with Robert Lee YMCA began pilot testing an online version of the program. The intent was not to replace the three-hour food skills curriculum, but rather provide a sixty-minute mini session of the program with the following goals:

1. Provide participants with a place to gather (virtually) and develop new food skills.
2. Create interest among participants to join an in-person Food Skills for Families program.

We are now extending the offer of piloting this program to all current partners. Please read below to learn more about the program including how to qualify and what support is available from the BCCDC.

Support Provided by the BCCDC Food Skills Program

- Reimbursement of Program Expenses
 - Mileage to/from grocery store
 - Grocery items needed for cooking demonstration
- Participant Kit (1 per participant/household)
 - Participant Handbook
 - \$25 grocery store gift certificate*
 - Shopping list of items needed for the session

*Facilitators will have the option of ordering gift cards from the BCCDC Food Skills team or purchasing gift cards from their local store and submitting cost as an expense.

Facilitators unable to deliver the pilot as part of their regular job may be eligible to receive:

- Contract from the BCCDC for up to **seven hours (\$25/hour)** including
 - .5 hour - grocery shopping
 - 1 hour - "Participant kit" preparation
 - 1.5 hours - Communication + Admin (with BCCDC and Host)
 - 1 hour - Zoom Prep
 - 3 hours - Set-up and facilitation

How to Qualify & Apply

- Qualifying organizations must be an approved Food Skills host; pilots must be led by a certified Food Skills Facilitator. Host organizations and facilitators must have all the necessary equipment as outlined in the [Virtual Session Requirements List](#).
- Contact the Food Skills Team (foodskillsBC@bccdc.ca) and to request a program. Approved programs will be issued a program ID number and provided a **Program Request Form**.
- Program Request Forms must be submitted at least three weeks prior to session start date.

Group Size, Repeat Participants

- **Group Size**
 - The program operates best with 8-16 participants.
 - A maximum of 16 participants/households is suggested.
 - A minimum of 8 registrations is recommended.
- **Repeat Participants**
 - Participants can attend more than one virtual session if sessions are being run in combination as a **Virtual Session Series** (see below for details). Otherwise participants are limited to attending one virtual session each.
 - Virtual participants are encouraged to also sign up for the in-person, six session program.

Virtual Session Series

Organizations have the option of running one-off virtual session or running a series of two or three, known as a **Virtual Session Series**. Running a series of sessions may be particularly attractive to organizations that are not currently in the position to run in-person programs.

Guidelines for setting up a Virtual Session Series:

- A maximum of three virtual sessions may be bundled with the same participant group.
- Each session requires a unique agenda.
- Agendas must be developed using the same curriculum for each session.
- Sessions must run in the same order as they appear in the curriculum.
- Sessions must be offered weekly.

Program Materials

Agendas

Each virtual session must follow a pre-approved agenda. All content is pulled from the Food Skills Facilitator Manual and is modified to fit a 45-60 minute session. Agendas include notes on when to ask questions, conduct polls and what pages in the facilitator guide speaking notes can be found. Example agendas (listed below) are at the end of this document.

- Oatmeal Cookies
- Banana Oat Muffins
- Smoothies

To develop a new agenda, choose a curriculum and session, then select one recipe. Use the example agendas as a guide. Write out parts one, two and three of the agenda, and a grocery shopping list making sure to reference the speaking notes in the corresponding facilitator guide. A minimum of two questions to help encourage participant engagement. Send the proposed agenda to the BCCDC Food Skills team for approval.

Participant Kits

Facilitators will prep kits for participants to pick-up from the host organization so that participants can virtually cook along with them. Kits include:

- Participant Handbook (1 per participant)
- \$25 grocery store gift certificate for each participant/household*
- Shopping list of items needed for the session

*Facilitators will have the option of ordering gift cards from the BCCDC Food Skills team or purchasing gift cards from their local store and submitting cost as an expense.

Tech Equipment

- Lap top or computer
- Webcam and microphone (can be built into lap top)
- Extension cords(s)
- Paid Zoom account
 - Zoom is an easy and low barrier platform to host sessions. A **paid** account is required in order to host meetings over 40 minutes.
 - Zoom features include:
 - Presenter is able to mute participants if there is background noise.
 - Participants can turn on video if they are comfortable.
 - Participants can ask questions aloud or in the chat.
 - Only the presenter needs to have a Zoom account, participants do not.

Considerations for Running a Successful Program

Groceries

- **Facilitator's** will purchase groceries needed for the demo portion of the session.
- **Participants** will purchase their own groceries based off the shopping list they are provided.
 - Participants are welcome to take their own food choices into consideration when shopping. For example, depending on the recipe, soy vs dairy or gluten free vs wheat.
 - Depending on the recipe, this list may also include a "Make it Your Own" section. For example, if baking cookies, participants will be asked to buy the base ingredients (flour, oats, sugar, etc.), then given suggestions on ingredients they might choose to purchase to add into the cookies. For example, dried fruit, chocolate chips, nuts.

Participant Kits

- Submit the **Program Request Form** at least three weeks prior to session.
- BCCDC will send participant handbooks and gift cards (if requested).
- If the Facilitator is purchasing gift cards, the allowance is \$25 per participant/household.
- Build kits and coordinate with host organization when participants can pick up kits. Ensure they are available **at least five days prior to session** to allow participants enough time to do their grocery shopping.
- Ensure pick up details are communicated with participants.

Kitchen Helper

- To have a successful Zoom presentation a kitchen helper or co-facilitator is required. This person will help with passing the facilitator items off camera or collecting items from the fridge or stove. They can also act as IT support and moderate the chat box and queue up any questions.
- The kitchen helper is not required to be a trained FSF facilitator and is not eligible to receive wages/expense reimbursement from BCCDC.

Build the Zoom Presentation

A few days prior to the session schedule the Zoom meeting and send participants invitations. Facilitators will also need to build a few polls into the Zoom meeting. Polls will differ depending on the agenda being used.

- **Polls:** Each agenda includes a few polls, the facilitator will need to build these in Zoom prior to the session starting. Two tutorials are below.
 - **Polling for Meetings** (*Official Zoom Instructions*): <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/213756303-Polling-for-meetings>
 - **Polls Video Tutorial** (*Part 1: Conducting a poll as a host, Part 2: Building the Poll*): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qN57sZ5qy6k>
- **Questions** are built into the agenda to involve participants but do not need to be built into Zoom, they can be asked verbally. Participants can write answers into the chat or say them aloud.

Timeline Considerations

- **Starting on Time:** Individuals may login late; in some pilot session it took 15 min after the scheduled start time for everyone to log-on.
- Recommendation: Designate a “login window”
 - Log in window: 9:45-9:59 am
 - Program Start: 10:00 am
- Sessions are scheduled to be a maximum of 60 minutes.

Room Prep & Layout

- Allow at least 60 minutes to prepare your space.
- Kitchen will be the presentation space.
- Set-up camera/computer. Ensure that there is enough light so that participants can clearly see your face, and your cooking space.
- Prevent interruptions. If other people might come into the room, put up a sign to say you are doing a live program.
- Test out your mic to make sure it works.
- Collect all the kitchen equipment you will need ahead of time.
- Pre-measure ingredients when possible.
- Pre-heat oven (if needed).

During the Demonstration

Helper to provide assistance by;

- Help with food demo.
- Mute/unmute participants as needed.
- Moderate the chat.
- Control functions like polling.
- Hand facilitator items when needed.

Cooking Demonstration

- Invite participants to cook along with you, or to try making the recipe on their own after the session.
- Note: During the early pilots, about 50% of youth participants cooked along, this was higher in the adult groups.

Program End

Sessions end with a ‘Dining and Discussion’ portion where participants are asked to talk about a recipe they make at home. It might be related to what was cook that day (for example how they topped their pizza) or it could be on theme with the session, for example during a holiday baking themed session the oatmeal cookies could be made and participants could be asked to share a holiday dessert from their culture.

Evaluations

- **Participant Evaluation:** An online participant evaluation form has been created. The link will be shared with facilitators prior to sessions. Facilitators are asked to share this link at the end of the Zoom presentation by pasting it in the chat.
- **Facilitator Feedback:** A short evaluation will be emailed to facilitators after each virtual session.

Additional Considerations

Utensils & Equipment

Participants not having specific kitchen utensils and/or equipment may be an issue. In the pilot it was noted that not all participants had a can opener, blender or cheese grater.

Menti Application (for advanced user groups)

An option for participant groups and facilitators that are very comfortable using technology is an additional application called **Menti**. The YMCA pilot had success using Menti which asks participants a question and then displays answers anonymously as a word cloud on the screen. Polling is also an option on this platform.

- Works best when participants log onto Zoom on their computer and Menti on their phone.
- If used, a few minutes during the welcome should be taken to go over how Menti will be used and allow a bit of time for participants to pull it up on their phone/computer. Can be done at start of presentation with housekeeping items for Zoom.

Zoom Training

- There are a multitude of pre-recorded guides on the ZOOM website.
- Zoom tutorials can be browsed online:
 - <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206618765-Zoom-Video-Tutorials>

Example Agendas

Facilitators can follow one of the pre-approved agendas shown on the following pages, or work with the Food Skills team to develop something new.

- Oatmeal Cookies
- Banana Oat Muffins
- Smoothies
- Apple Cabbage Slaw