Family and Consumer Sciences National Standards Supported by Parenting: It’s a Life Curriculum

Introduction

Parenting: It’s a Life (PIAL) is an outreach program that provides a life skills curriculum to teachers for their 7th-12th grade students. To date, PIAL has been utilized most often by Family and Consumer Science (FCS) teachers in the high school classroom. From previous research, students have reported increased understanding following participation in PIAL’s curriculum covering a variety of topics, such as healthy relationships, peer pressure, co-parenting and financial awareness.

PIAL aims to increase outreach and inclusion of the PIAL curriculum in classrooms throughout Iowa by providing an in-depth report on the number of FCS standards that align with PIAL. A plan of action was developed to identify how the PIAL curriculum aligns with many of the FCS teaching standards, benchmarks, and competencies. The FCS teaching standards are statements that describe the framework for teacher instruction in middle school and high school classrooms across the U.S.

Research Question

How does the PIAL curriculum align with the Family and Consumer Science standards that are taught in FCS classrooms across Iowa?

Methods

The process to determine the alignment was to compare the 10 modules within the PIAL curriculum to the 16 FCS teaching standards, by answering the following questions:

- Do PIAL module objectives fulfill specific FCS teaching standards?
- Do PIAL module activities fulfill specific FCS teaching standards?

First a table was created to demonstrate the relationship between PIAL modules and FCS teaching standards. To be included in the final representation of alignment, a component of the standard had to be applied within the module. Next a spreadsheet was created as a visual aid to illustrate when the PIAL module aligned with one or more of the FCS teaching standards.

Findings

All 10 PIAL modules aligned with 3 or more of the 16 FCS teaching standards (mean = 5). The FCS teaching standards that aligned with the PIAL curriculum included: multiple life roles and responsibilities in a variety of settings, respectful relationships, factors that influence human growth and development, management of human and economic resources, skills required for future careers, evaluation of the importance of families, and parenting responsibilities (see Figure 1. An example of how a PIAL module aligns with specific FCS teaching standards is shown in Figure 2.

Conclusion and Future Direction

This study found that 8 of the 16 FCS teaching standards align with the PIAL curriculum. These findings were used to develop a booklet to distribute across Iowa to FCS middle school and high school teachers. The purpose of this booklet is to inform more teachers about the resources provided by the PIAL curriculum. A future direction would be to bring this resource to the attention of future FCS teachers through collaboration with university faculty.