

# Discovery Research Plan - Food Group

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## Summary of Key Findings & Insights:

Based on our secondary research, we found that...

- 2/3 of Americans are now either overweight or obese [1]
- If trends continue at the current rate, 100% of Americans will be overweight or obese by 2048 [2]
- Americans are now spending over \$190 billion on fast food every year [2]
- 75% of healthcare spending goes to treating preventable chronic diseases, most of which are diet-related [2]
- People are 57% more likely to be obese if their friends are obese [3]
- If one parent is obese, it doubles a child's risk for adult obesity [4]
- "The eating behaviors children practice early in life affect their health and nutrition--significant factors in childhood...obesity--and may continue to shape food attitudes and eating patterns through adulthood." [5]
- "Repeated exposure to new reduces a child's fear of the food and helps increase acceptance." [5]
- 1/4 of vegetable intake of American children is from french fries and potato chips [6]
- "Family provides and important for children's food choices as family provides the first and immediate social environment in which children learn and practice dietary patterns." [7]
- In the last thirty years, childhood obesity has doubled, in adolescents it has tripled." [8]
- "...To get your child to eat healthier foods -- and actually enjoy them -- is to have them help with meal preparation" [9]

We also found that the most common stated barriers for healthy eating are developing a taste for healthy foods, the temptation of unhealthy foods, social influence, knowledge deficit, time, cost, and availability. The two barriers we want to address with our design are managing taste preferences and the knowledge deficit associated with preparing and cooking unfamiliar foods.

## Research Question:

Our initial design question was, "How can we reduce the barriers that parents with school-aged children face when preparing and cooking healthy meals?" The concept we propose is a monthly kit containing one new produce item, a series of kid-friendly recipes, a chef's hat, and badges to engage and motivate kids as they learn to cook and incorporate new healthy ingredients into their diet.

The goal of our research is to find out if our kits have a sustainable impact on children's eating behavior. Our central assumption is that sending kits to kids and their families will have a positive effect on family food purchasing behavior as well as gradually change taste preferences. We plan to test this assumption and refine our product through the research questions and methods outlined below.

Further research questions:

Business:

- How do we keep the cost of our kits down while maintaining the quality of the produce?
- How do we create a viable business model while trying to get users to make healthy food choices on their own?

User:

- Do kids find the kits fun and do they enjoy eating what they prepare?
- Do parents feel that the kits are a good way to introduce new vegetable to their kids?
- Would parents recommend this to others?

- After using the kits, do parents purchase more of the vegetables received in the kits than before?

#### Technology:

- What content will we have on our site?
- Will both kids and parents interact with the site?
- Would a social media aspect be beneficial?
- What technology is currently being used to find nutritional information?

## Approach and Methods:

### To address business questions:

- Interview fresh food delivery/logistics experts
- Examine cost structure of other box delivery services and other successful services designed for positive behavior change.

### To address user questions:

- Conduct expert interviews with toy designers, game designers, and elementary school teachers to ensure that our kits are fun and educational.
- Participatory design with children to ensure that the kit and recipes are engaging and age-appropriate.
- Observe parents and children ordering, receiving, and cooking with a prototype of the kit.
- Behavior sampling over time to see what recipients of the box are cooking around dinner time
- Artifact analysis of a family's kitchen to see what they have in stock and what additional items need to be included in the kits
- Track produce purchases of families over time

### To address technology questions:

- Interview parents to find out what technologies they are using to find healthy food
- Survey parents to determine if social media would be useful to share information about our service and healthy eating.
- Survey parents to determine what content should be on mobile versus desktop versions of the site/application.
- Survey parents to determine if they currently use complementary technology while cooking in the kitchen.

## Participants:

Our research will focus on observing and interviewing elementary school children and their parents. Other participants will include toy and game experts, teachers, experts in grocery supply chain management, nutritionists, and chefs.

## Planned Analysis Activities:

- Affinity maps to extract behavior insights from interviews and observations of parents and children
- Think, Say, Do, Feel analysis based on interview quotes and observations of parents
- Flow diagrams to analyze the data from our participatory design sessions to see how families cook in the kitchen, and what is the best way for kids to be involved in the process
- Elito Method to organize our observations and draw out ways to improve our kit design
- AEIOU to organize our observations

## Work Cited

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