Problem:
Most nurses acquire basic research knowledge in their nursing programs, however, fear of "research" can interfere with their participation in research or evidence based practice (EBP) projects.

Evidence:
The Great American Cookie Experiment (GACE) teaching strategy provides an effective, enjoyable approach for learning about the research process.

Strategy:
Based on the GACE strategy, a research program was developed and implemented for a county hospital district. During monthly classes, nurses were provided opportunities to gain hands-on experience with all steps of the EBP and research processes.

Practice change:
After constructing a problem intervention comparison outcome (PICO) question, research articles were reviewed, critiqued, and an evidence summary table was created. Next, the class participants developed a protocol to replicate the GACE study in three hospitals and 10 clinics (all district facilities). Nurses were given the opportunity to practice and perform skills that included gathering data after obtaining participants' informed consent.

Evaluation:
Participation in the GACE Research Program© provided opportunities for novice nurse researchers to gain EBP and research competency and experience by applying knowledge in a non-threatening environment.

Results:
Forty nurses who attended the research class conducted the research study and 449 nursing staff volunteered as participants. Nurses are currently submitting abstracts to disseminate the study findings.

Recommendations
A research program based on the GACE strategy can provide EBP knowledge and experience for roles of nurse researcher and study participant. The GACE Research Program© should continue annually to provide additional opportunities for nurses to gain EBP knowledge through research.

Lessons Learned:
By applying steps of EBP, nurses can identify published studies that can be replicated in the practice setting to improve patient care and outcomes. Nurses enjoy learning about research in non-threatening environment as evidenced by a 40% increase in enrollment in the second GACE class.
**Bibliography**

Hudson-Barr, D., Weeks SK., WA C. (2002). Introducing the staff nurse to nursing research through the Great American Cookie Experiment. Journal of Nursing Administration, 32(9), 440-443.


