



## Colorado Science and Engineering Fair

## 2025 Individual Project Abstract Form

**Please print 2 copies of the completed form. Sign both copies, keep 1 for your notebook and submit 1 copy to your Regional Fair Director with your other paperwork.**

Title of Project: The Effects of Cartoons on Developing Healthy Eating Habits in Children

Finalist's Name: Jerry Lou

School and City: Stargate Charter School, Thornton

Sponsor's Name: Sandy Xin

Category: Behavioral & Social Sciences

Division: Senior (grades 9 - 12)

Abstract (250 words or less):

The global childhood obesity epidemic is a rising health concern, especially over the past two decades. Obesity is associated with numerous serious health conditions. Developing healthy eating habits early in life is a way to help prevent diet-related diseases. Health campaigns worldwide have depended on various methods to reduce this crisis, including physical activity, medicine, and surgery. However, these methods can be costly and may not address the threat of unhealthy diets, which is one of the core components of this issue. Recent studies have found an additional promising way to promote healthy eating among children: cartoons. Children mainly learn through observation and behavioral mimicry. Cartoons can affect cognitive development and encourage positive behaviors in children as characters may act as role models that they replicate. This study examines how prolonged exposure to cartoon images can promote a healthy diet by influencing children's food choices. 2nd graders were surveyed for four continuous weeks to rate a series of healthy foods (fruits and vegetables) on their willingness to consume them. They were given cards displaying cartoon characters promoting the same healthy food items every week and interacted with the cards throughout the week. The results of the study found a statistically significant increase in the rating of healthy foods after all four weeks. Although using cartoon images is a promising way to reduce the prominence of childhood obesity, the combination of healthy eating cartoons with other traditional healthy eating techniques should also be considered to address the prevalence of childhood obesity.

*I hereby certify that the above statements are correct and the information provided in the Abstract is the result of one year's research. I also attest that the above properly reflects my own work.*

Finalist's Signature:

Date:

In addition, all students must complete the ISEF Student Checklist (1A), Research Plan, Approval Form (1B), and Checklist for Adult Sponsor (1), and any other ISEF forms required for this type of project. See the International Rules and Guidelines for form requirements. Return COPIES of all of these forms to your Regional Fair Director with you Finalist Verification/Permission Form. **A signed copy of this form must be included in your notebook.**