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Contra to popular belief, home economics never completely disappeared, but was instead spread out across other subjects, rebranded as "family studies", and focused more on theoretical knowledge and less on practical application. As we continue to witness higher rates of childhood obesity, diabetes, heart disease and other food-related health problems, more emphasis is being placed on food literacy research, which up until now has been extremely limited. MacDonald was among a team of researchers, representing eight health units from across Ontario, who took part in a research study in 2012 funded by Public Health Ontario, to address the issue of food literacy by looking at how people prepare food in their everyday lives, how they learned to prepare food, and find out what they think constitutes food literacy. "One of the things we were a little surprised by was that most of the groups said that recipes really weren't the best way to learn," said McDonald.

based on Carver's high school experience, home economics was never a mandatory course, and as schools began to offer a wider range of alternative studies, women saw the class as limiting their career options. "It was once more popular when there were fewer optional choices for credit," said Carver. "Women enjoyed being offered other choices such as computer skills, and may have thought food courses were only for home-makers." "I think food literacy has gone from the 'nice to know' to a 'need to know' issue," said Carver. "I rarely see anyone who disagrees with the need for food literacy." It used to be that the basics of cooking and baking were something you learned in home economics class. This changed, however, around the 1970s, when women – as the class was predominantly female – began moving out of their traditional role in the household and out into the workforce. "I think food literacy has gone from the 'nice to know' to a 'need to know' issue," said Carver. "I rarely see anyone who disagrees with the need for food literacy." It used to be that the basics of cooking and baking were something you learned in home economics class. This changed, however, around the 1970s, when women – as the class was predominantly female – began moving out of their traditional role in the household and out into the workforce.



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