



Family and Consumer Sciences Extension

Expanded Foods & Nutrition Education Program 2005

Learning for Life

The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension

The Problem

- Poverty puts families at higher risk for malnutrition, hunger, and disease. Hunger affects learning.
- More than one million people in Georgia live at or below the poverty level.
- According to Census 2000, the percentage of persons living in poverty in Georgia is higher than the percentage nationally (14.79% vs.13.3%).
- Georgia has one of the highest teen pregnancy rates in the U.S. The younger the mother, the less likely she will have a healthy baby and the more likely the baby will require intensive medical care.
- Traditional Extension programs often do not reach people living in poverty.

Research-based Solutions

- Community-based, culturally-appropriate nutrition education is an effective means of educating limited resource clients.
- Improving nutritional intake can decrease the risk of chronic disease.
- Food safety education can decrease the risk of food-borne illness, which is especially important in populations that are at greater risk for disease.
- Targeting preschool and elementary-age children is an effective means of reaching families with nutrition information.
- Improving the pregnancy outcomes of teens can be achieved by assuring adequate weight gain during pregnancy and increasing teens' knowledge of healthy food and nutrition practices.

Extension's Role

- The Expanded Foods and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) is a federally funded nutrition education program conducted through the Cooperative Extension Service in every state and U.S. territory.
- Train paraprofessionals in low-income communities to teach nutrition to hard-to-reach audiences using culturally-appropriate methods and materials.
- Educate families on planning low cost nutritious meals in order to maximize the nutritional value of their diets and decrease the number of families who run out of food before the end of the month.
- Teach limited resource clients how to modify their diets to improve their health.
- Provide food safety education for limited resource clients.
- Reach families through their preschool and elementary-age children with nutrition information.
- Provide nutrition education to teenage mothers in order to increase maternal weight gain and intake of crucial nutrients.

Extension's Contribution to Solving the Problem

- Recent studies have found that for every \$1.00 spent on EFNEP, \$10.64 will be saved on future health costs.
- In FY 2005, through the adult program, EFNEP reached a total of 3310 families. The demographic breakdown of those reached was 67% Black, 18% White, 13% Hispanic, and 1% Asian. Of the

participants, 97% were female.

- In FY 05, 8% of EFNEP clients were pregnant at the time they were enrolled in the program. Seven percent were under the age of 20 and pregnant and/or nursing, for a total of 217 women.
- A total of 9559 youth were reached through EFNEP. Of these, 80% were black, 16% white, 3% Hispanic and 1% Asian.

Impact on Georgians

- A total of 2,129 people graduated from the EFNEP program in FY 2005.
- 81% of the clients were enrolled in one or more food assistance programs when they entered EFNEP. 54% of the clients reported receiving Food Stamps at entry.
- As a result of EFNEP, 14% of participating families enrolled in the Food Stamp program. In addition, 9% enrolled in WIC and 5% began participating in the child nutrition program (free and reduced price school lunch).
- After completing the EFNEP program:
 - 91% of EFNEP graduates had a positive change in the nutritional value of their diets;
 - Georgians who graduated from EFNEP saved an average of \$36.66 per family per month on food;
 - 63% of graduates (n=1998) showed improvement in one or more food safety practices, such as thawing and storing foods properly;
 - 77% improved one or more food resource management practices, including planning meals, using grocery lists, comparing prices, and not running out of food before the end of the month;
 - 83% improved nutrition practices such as making healthy food choices, preparing foods without adding salt, reading nutrition labels, and eating breakfast;
 - Among youth participants, 58% of 233 youth reported that they eat a variety of foods as a result of participating in EFNEP. In addition, 90% of 125 youth reported improved practices in food preparation and safety and 63% of 229 youth increased their knowledge of nutrition.

Contact

Gail M. Hanula, EdS, RD, LD, EFNEP Coordinator, ghanula@uga.edu
Kelly Bryant, MS, RD, LD, EFNEP Nutrition Specialist, kcordray@uga.edu
College of Family and Consumer Sciences, UGA
or your local Cooperative Extension office.

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