



Family and Consumer Sciences Extension

Expanded Foods & Nutrition Education Program 2007

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.

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.
- 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 pregnant teens in order to increase maternal weight gain and intake of crucial nutrients.

Extension's Contribution to Solving the Problem

- In FY 2007, through the adult program, EFNEP reached a total of 3,102 families, representing 11,924 individuals. Of those reached, 66% were Black, 23% White, 13% Hispanic, and 1% Asian; 93% were female.
- In FY 07, 8% of EFNEP clients were pregnant and under the age of 20 at the time they were enrolled in the program. Nutrition education during this phase of the life cycle is extremely important to the health of these young mothers and their babies.
- A total of 5,196 youth were reached through the EFNEP youth program, 58% of which were in Grades K-12. The remainder was preschoolers, enrolled primarily in Head Start and PreK programs.

Impact on Georgians

- Recent studies have found that for every \$1.00 spent on EFNEP, \$10.64 will be saved on future health costs.
- A total of 1,864 adults completed a series of six or more EFNEP sessions in FY 2007 and received certificates.
- 81% of EFNEP participants were enrolled in one or more food assistance programs when they entered EFNEP, indicating that the target audience for the program, families with limited resources, is being reached. Families with limited resources face great challenges in providing a healthful diet for their families. Program evaluation data indicates that 96% of EFNEP graduates made positive changes in their diets following completion of the program, while at the same time reducing the amount of money spent on food. A summary of the impact data follows:
 - 96% of EFNEP graduates reported a positive change in the nutritional value of their diets;
 - Georgians who graduated from EFNEP saved an average of \$11 per family per month on food;
 - 64% of graduates reported improvement in one or more food safety practices, such as thawing and storing foods properly;
 - 80% reported improvement on 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;
 - 87% improved nutrition practices such as making healthy food choices, preparing foods without adding salt, reading nutrition labels, and eating breakfast;
 - Among youth participants, 97% of 494 youth reported that they eat a variety of foods as a result of participating in EFNEP. In addition, 97% reported improved practices in food preparation and safety and 97% increased their knowledge of nutrition.

Contact

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