

IMPACT

University of Idaho
Extension

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Nutrition and Physical Activity Behaviors ENP Participants Plan to Implement

The Situation

The Extension Nutrition Program (ENP) is Idaho's Food Stamp Nutrition Education (FSNE) program. ENP targets adult food stamp participants to teach them how to make healthy food and lifestyle choices.

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), the oversight agency, encourages FSNE programs to focus their efforts on the following behavioral outcomes: (1) eat fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and nonfat or low-fat milk or milk products every day; and (2) be physically active every day as part of a healthy lifestyle.

Our Response

ENP promotes these behavioral outcomes in their 11 nutrition and one physical activity lessons. There are two categories of nutrition lessons that participants can take.

The first category, called General Nutrition, promotes fruit, vegetable, whole grain, and low-fat/nonfat dairy products. The six classes in this category are: MyPyramid, Understanding Food Labels, Breakfast, Choosing Healthy Snacks, Eating Right and Light, and Eating Right for Two.

The second category, called Food Groups, focuses on how participants can incorporate these foods into their daily meals and snacks. The five nutrition lessons in this category are: Fruit, Vegetable, Grain, Meat & Beans, and Milk/Dairy.

The physical activity lesson, called Fitting in Physical Activity focuses on how participants can become more physically active.

In FY2007, ENP collected data on the nutrition and physical activity behaviors participants planned to implement after attending each of the ENP lessons. Adult participants completed an in-class survey at the end of these lessons that asked, "Which behavior will you do first as a result of this class?" For the six general nutrition classes the question on the survey asked them if they planned to: eat more fruits and vegetables, whole grains, or low-fat milk/dairy. For the five food group lessons, they were asked how they would include more of these foods in their diet. For the physical activity class, they were asked how many minutes/day they planned to be physically active.

Program Outcomes

During FY2007, adult ENP participants completed 1,449 general nutrition, 1,359 food group and 57 physical activity surveys.

Results from the surveys collected indicated that participants were most likely to make changes in their fruit and vegetable consumption, followed by whole grain and low-fat dairy consumption (Table 1).

Table 1. General Nutrition Planned Behaviors.

Planned Behavior	%
Consume more fruits and vegetables	46
Consume more low-fat/nonfat dairy products	13
Consume more whole grain products	23
No planned changes in nutrition behaviors	8
Other planned changes in nutrition behaviors	9
Multiple planned changes in nutrition behaviors	1
Total	100

Specific food group changes selected by the greatest number of participants included: eating at least 2 cups of fruit/day, eating vegetables as a snack, making half the grains they consumed whole grains, and eating 3 cups of low-fat dairy foods daily (Table 2).



Table 2. Food Group Planned Behaviors selected by participants.

Food Group	Planned Behavior	%
Fruit	Eat 2 cups fruit/day	37
Vegetable	Eat vegetables as a snack	44
Grain	Make half of grains consumed whole grains	49
Milk/Dairy	Eat 3 cups low-fat dairy/day	43

The physical activity behavior that participants planned on implementing was to be active for 30 minutes a day (Table 3).

Table 3. Physical Activity Planned Behavior.

Physical Planned Activity Behavior	%
Be active for 15 min/day	21
Be active for 30 min/day	49
Be active for 45 min/day	14
Be active for > 60 min/day	9
Total	100

Research has shown that individuals who follow a healthy diet and are physically active are less likely

to develop heart disease, type 2 diabetes and certain cancers. It has been estimated following a healthy lifestyle could reduce health care costs by over one trillion dollars a year.

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Marty Denham and Nickie Bell who helped with data entry. Rhea Lanting Cammie Jayo, Audrey Liddil, Karen Barron, Bridget Aman, Shelly Johnson, and Kali Gardiner who participated in data collection for FY2007.

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