EFNEP/II Recruits Clients from New Groups

The Situation
The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program teaches basic nutrition and meal preparation to limited resource families with children. The twenty-six lesson Idaho curriculum includes meal planning, food buying, food safety and sanitation, gardening, infant and child nutrition. Federal funding for the EFNEP has remained static for the past several years. In order to stretch program dollars EFNEP units are encouraged to teach their clients in groups. Forming groups among Idaho's poverty families is difficult because they are scattered throughout the state.

Our Response
EFNEP/II paraprofessionals recruited clients from four newly organized groups. In Ada County nutrition lessons were taught at GEMHAVEN and New Beginnings, affiliated drug and alcohol abuse treatment centers. In Canyon County EFNEP lessons were taught at The Turning Point, a homeless shelter for singles and families, and to Mercy Housing residents, a low income housing project for families.

Achievements:
In the last fiscal year EFNEP clients participating in group lessons increased from 36% to 48%. Of those clients who completed the program, "graduated," 27% were from the new groups.

In addition to working through the standard curriculum some clients participated in "hands on" experiences, where they learned for the first time to: make bread, salads, pasta and noodles; cook bean and legume dishes; start vegetable gardens and use the fresh herbs that they grew. Field trips to local grocery stores reinforced the lessons on trimming the food bill by being an informed shopper.

The Future
EFNEP/II will continue working with other organized groups that target limited income clients. Paraprofessionals will be encouraged to seek out others, such as the Community Work Center (a program within the Idaho Department of Corrections) and Compassion House, a home for unwed mothers (administered by Calvary Baptist church).

Participating Counties
Ada and Canyon

Cooperators and Co-Sponsors
Booth Memorial Home, Boise
Central District Health Department, Boise
Child Care Connections, Boise
El-Ada Community Action Program, Ada County
Food Stamp Offices, Ada and Canyon Counties
Head Start, Ada and Canyon Counties
Health and Welfare, Ada and Canyon Counties
Homeward Bound, Boise
JOBS, Boise
Mercy Medical Center, Nampa
Saint Vincent’s Food Bank, Caldwell
Scism School, Nampa
Southwest District Health Department
Terry Reilly Health Services, Nampa
Western Idaho Community Action
  Program, Canyon County
WIC, in Ada and Canyon Counties
YWCA, Boise

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