Panhandle Family Nutrition Program

The Situation
Low income young families in the Idaho Panhandle struggle to make ends meet. They work with many handicaps including inexperience in money management, food preparation and parenting. Many are unprepared for the responsibilities of adulthood.

Our Response
University of Idaho Cooperative Extension has partnered with Health & Welfare and WIC (Women, Infant and Children) programs to provide food preparation, shopping, money management and parenting information to young families. In the Panhandle the programs are titled: NANA (Nutrition and Nurturing Advisor). The NANA is a considerate, non-judgmental supporter and role model. She uses USDA and Cooperative Extension educational materials when working one-on-one with the young adults in their homes and with groups.

Program accomplishments:
There were 228 participants enrolled in the Panhandle Family Nutrition Program in 1995-1996. The NANAs impacted the 542 family members and worked with a total of 770 individuals. A total of 1686 individuals were contacted by Discovery Demonstrations in agencies and other group settings.

The average age of participants = 30. Median family income = $472. Average amount of money spent on food = $241.

52% were on WIC, 87% were on food stamps, 52% were on AFDC.

Change in practices:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Entry</th>
<th>Exit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shop with a list</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan meals ahead</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read food labels</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use Food Guide pyramid</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never or seldom have few food choices</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never or seldom had to cut the size of meals</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have 2 servings of milk product daily</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fat breakfast</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer 5 fruits &amp; veg. servings per day</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk as a family about major purchases</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The response of participants:
A NANA met a young pregnant mother who appeared to be anorexic. She weighed only 80 pounds. After taking the initial food recall it was revealed that she was eating only grapefruit. Her doctor recommended she gain at least 30 pounds. The NANA convinced her she needed to eat for the baby. Two weeks later when the NANA went to visit, the young woman had gained 17 pounds.
A young couple in St. Maries stopped every day at the Quick Stop to buy lunch foods for the working husband. After working with the NANA the wife started making sandwiches using elk meat. They saved at least $30 the first month.

A mentally delayed couple have two girls, age 2 and 4. The youngest was potty trained, but not the 4 year old. After many visits and much encouragement the 4 year old is now potty trained. A public health nurse who has also worked with the family sees a marked improvement in the health of the family since the NANA began working with them.

A young mother complained that she could never make her food stamps last to the end of the month. The NANA took her on a shopping trip and they bought enough groceries for two weeks and she still had food stamps left. She is now looking forward to going shopping on her own to try her new skills.

The Future
Our goals for the future:
Continue this project in the 5 northern counties.
Establish part-time office space in the Coeur d'Alene Health & Welfare office to provide clients easier access to our program. This will be piloted in Coeur d'Alene with the hope of establishing office hours in each of the counties in 1997.

For More Information
Katherine Wallenhaupt
Extension Educator-Nutrition
University of Idaho
Kootenai County Cooperative Extension System
106 Dalton Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814
Voice Phone: 208-667-6426
Fax: 208-664-4470
E-mail: kwallenhaupt@uidaho.edu

c:\impact\impact96\nd96ko02 11/96