



# UI Extension Education Trends 2002-03:

## Family and Community

### PAT: Changing family dynamic underscores need for Parents As Teachers

We're not living in the same world that Sally, Dick and Jane grew up in. Approximately 64% of Idaho's moms are now in the work force, the same percentage as the national average. With both parents working, families have far less time and energy to form support networks with friends, relatives, and neighbors. The result, too often, is frustration and isolation.

Families at risk are especially disadvantaged by this trend, particularly those families below poverty level income (18% of Idaho families), single parent families (19% of Idaho families with children), and those headed by teen parents (13% of Idaho births were to teen mothers).

These numbers mean that many Idahoans find family issues of the new millennium to be quite different from those of the families they grew up in. Today's parents are scrambling to meet the modern family's needs. Parents As Teachers (PAT) is one of the few programs available in Idaho designed to help parents of children 0 to 5 years of age.

PAT, now in its fifth year of operation in Idaho, provides a framework for healthy early childhood development, and a network for addressing modern family issues. It is available to parents of young children in 57 Idaho communities in 14 counties. The program involves personal family visits, group meetings for participating families (and those on the waiting list), regular vision, hearing and developmental screening, and referrals to community resources.

The Idaho program currently serves 300 families, or about

UI Extension educators and staff presented more than 150 group meetings and workshops, and made more than 2700 personal visits to PAT families in 2002.

450 children. (One bilingual educator serves Spanish-speaking families.) PAT Extension educators and other child development professionals bring age-appropriate learning materials, such as books and hands-on projects, to families who voluntarily enroll, and provide instruction on how best to use the materials to promote healthy development and literacy, and to strengthen parenting skills.

Harriet Shaklee, Extension family development specialist,

*continued*

Parents As Teachers participant Bill Crump with 8-month-old son Joshua and First Lady Pat Kempthorne.



PAM BENHAM

## Parents as Teachers, *continued*

was instrumental in establishing the PAT program in Idaho. "One of our biggest contributions to the national program was the evaluation tool we designed and use to conduct parent surveys," said Shaklee. "With this tool we found four major changes in parents participating in the program. First, parents gained knowledge of child development and brain development. Second, parents felt increased confidence in how well they parent and were therefore more confident that they could help their children learn. Third, parents responded that they had increased their ability to meet their children's daily needs. And finally, they felt they had developed the ability to anticipate their children's needs, enabling them to head off some of the crises of the day."

While change in parental attitudes is a good barometer of the program's effectiveness, Shaklee points out that parents' behavioral changes offer even more concrete evidence of the program's success. "PAT participants report that they read more to their children and participate in more activities with their children," Shaklee said. "Those outcomes are key to the program."

Shaklee and others recently completed a survey aimed at clarifying the range of programs available in Idaho to parents of 0-to 5-year olds. "The answer was not a lot," said Shaklee. "In the last 20 years, research has shown us that age 0 to 5 years old is very important in brain development. Local libraries may have something to offer children 3 to 5 years old, but often what's there is not accessible."

The PAT program has a wide fan base among participants. After 18 months of program delivery, 89% of original families remain with the program. PAT serves families at all levels of income and education, single parents and two-parent families, one-child and large families, teen parents and grandparents-as-parents. After one year of participation, 95% of parents report high satisfaction with the personal visits that are the heart of the program.

All children in the PAT program are screened for health, vision, hearing and developmental progress. When a concern is identified, parents are given a referral to an appropriate professional. Health screenings provided in 2001 showed more than 91% of children 19-35 months of age were fully immunized, well above the state average of 74.6% for children of comparable age.

Gains reported by participating parents are impressive in both quantity and scope. In addition to helping kids stay on track developmentally, strengthening ties within the family, and increasing parental confidence, many participants also report that PAT has helped them build an informal network with other families.

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## Other Extension Education Parenting Classes and Resources

- The **Parenting Apart** program helps teach divorced parents the special skills and sensitivity they need to establish and nurture healthy family relationships in a changing family structure. In the Twin Falls area, judges require divorcing parents to complete the course before granting divorce. Over 800 parents in this judicial district had completed the course by mid-summer 2002.
- **Basic Parenting** is a program delivered to help parents of children from 2-12 years of age gain confidence in their ability to respond to their children's needs, increase their understanding of normal child development, and decrease parental use of coercive punishment.
- **Navigating Work and Family** is a series of 10 handouts designed to ease the stresses of working parents. The series is currently only available in English, but a Spanish version is in progress. The handouts are useful in child care, school, home, and work settings.

- **Grandparents as Parents** is a publication series developed in Illinois for grandparents raising their grandchildren. The original series has been modified for use in Idaho. Half of the series is available in Spanish, while the remaining installments are in the translation process. This series is designed to address key issues and concerns of grandparents raising grandchildren.



- **Parenting News**, a monthly one-page newsletter written by Extension educator Carol Hampton provides Idaho families with parenting information and parent/child activities.
- **Married and Loving It!** addresses the issues that most often underlie marital problems: communication, finances, sources of anger, conflict resolution, and daily decision making. The five-class program has won several awards, including Educational Technology and Marketing Package awards by National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences. The program curriculum developed and published by the University of Idaho has been distributed in 28 states. Program evaluation showed 90% of participants reported an increased awareness of the importance of communication in marriage and improvement in the conflict resolution practices they used at home.

# Of table manners and job opportunities

TV took Americans off the front porch and away from the neighbors. Other modern demands have effectively removed the American family from the dining room, and away from each other. The loss of these simple but essential interactions reverberates throughout modern life. One of the most basic and strongly felt losses is the disappearance of good manners, the oil that once lubricated all social interaction.

"This particular class teaches social skills that were once taught around the dinner table," said Barbara Petty, the Bonneville County

Extension educator who developed and teaches **Manner Mishaps**, based on Alex J. Packer's 1997 etiquette book, *How Rude!*

"Because families are having fewer and fewer dinners together, kids are not learning the etiquette that could be very important in their employment opportunities," Petty notes. "These opportunities may include interview luncheons, entertaining clients over a meal, or even meeting the family of their future spouse."

Manner Mishaps, which has been adopted by Bonneville County's Hillcrest and Skyline high schools and by Lincoln Alternative School, focuses on table manners at home, and on restaurant etiquette. It covers topics such as: what to do with your napkin, how much tip to leave the server, the difference between a home and a restaurant when you spill food on the floor, and how to graciously decline food and beverage.

Manner Mishaps has not only been taught in food preparation and service classes in traditional high schools and alternative schools, but also to students before their senior prom, to Boys Scouts preparing to serve their moms dinner on Mother's Day, and to 4-Hers as they prepared to dine with Idaho legislators.

Class graduates go into work and social settings armed not only with the proper etiquette skills, but with the confidence that comes with mastery. That combination can only help their chances of success in the workplace and in social settings. As Petty points out, "Many business deals, career opportunities, and marriage proposals conducted over dinner are successful because of the easing of tensions when proper table manners are used."



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Shelly Johnson, back center, an Extension educator in Kootenai County, discusses food safety with Master Food Preservers during a weekend workshop, summer of 2001.

## First time job applicants glimpse the big picture

**There are few** modern rites of passage as intimidating as a job interview, particularly that very first one. Extension Educator Marsha Hawkins's class, **Succeeding in the Working World**, aims at giving first-time applicants the skills they need to snag a job and keep it.

"This class is basically designed for entry level workers, high school students," said Hawkins. "It covers the work ethic, what employers are looking for, and how to interview for a job. I wrote the curriculum based on 15 years experience working as a high school teacher."

Hawkins's experience working with high schoolers revealed that many young adults entering the work force are unaware of what is required to succeed there. "I found that many young adults have only a vague idea of what a work ethic is, and what employers expect of them," she said.

Unemployment is high in many areas of Idaho, but the skills honed through participation in Succeeding in the Working World give its graduates a leg up on the considerable competition. "This class better prepares people to enter the work force," Hawkins said. "It creates a more qualified job applicant."



## EDEN: Extension Disaster Education Network

The attacks of 9/11, and the threat of terrorist activity they made real, highlight the need for an accessible, national source of disaster information. The Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) provides this valuable resource.

"It's proven itself in several disasters in other parts of the country," said Tom Karsky, who disperses and collects EDEN data at the UI. "It's been accessed in times of hurricanes, floods, and earthquakes. There's also information in it on homeland security. It's an extensive network and a valuable database."

Information gathered by extension systems across the US is shared and collectively stored by EDEN. The collaborative effort makes information accessible by all EDEN member state extension systems during, after, or before a regional disaster or a national crisis, including weather-induced emergency, wildfire, and terrorism.

For EDEN information, go to [www.uidaho.edu/disaster](http://www.uidaho.edu/disaster)

# Wellness IN the Rockies (WIN): Fighting the battle of the bulge out west

The immediate impact of our daily food choices seems like small potatoes to most of us, yet the overall cost of these choices on the nation's health is phenomenally high.

In 1999, the Food and Nutrition Information Center (FNIC) conducted a survey showing that a healthy diet would save the nation \$71 billion in medical costs, lost productivity, and premature death associated with nutrition related conditions. Most, if not all, of these life-threatening diseases can be linked to being overweight or obese.

Unfortunately, the latest data show us that Americans are fat and getting fatter. More than 64% of us are overweight or obese. About 59% of Idaho's adult population is overweight. These data reflect a 30% increase in the state in the past decade.

A four-year, multi-state Extension and Research program developed in Wyoming and implemented in Wyoming, Idaho and Montana, **Wellness IN the Rockies (WIN)**, focuses on nutrition, physical activity, and body image in an attempt to halt the rise of obesity in our corner of the American West. Partnering with Montana and Wyoming, where being overweight or obese is also on the rise, Idaho extension has implemented nine programs directed at educating and ultimately slimming down its citizens.

Adult education programs include a 10-class curriculum called, **A New You: Health for Every**

**Body**; a poster & billboard campaign to heighten awareness; interactive discussion style presentation called **Excuses, Excuses; Breaking Size Prejudice**, a 23 minute video; and **Working With Medical Professionals**, a slide presentation outlining methods for collaborating with local medical professionals in rural communities to address public health promotions.

For kids out west, Extension offers **Wellness IN Kids (WIN Kids)**, a 10-class series for 5th & 6th graders focusing on nutrition and physical activity. The WIN Kids program includes the WIN Jeopardy Game, which reinforces the fitness and nutrition concepts taught in WIN Kids;

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WINNING Conversation Cards, with topics of conversation designed to be used around the dinner table, reinforcing the social aspect of the dining experience; and the body image program, Full of Ourselves.

In addition, WIN initiated and supports a walking program in the town of Preston, Idaho, called Preston On the Move, with the aim of getting the town's least-active citizens up and kicking.

"Obesity and severe overweight contribute directly to life-threatening diseases, including diabetes, stroke, and heart attack," said UI Extension Nutrition Education Specialist Martha Raidl. "The WIN program emphasizes health, and not dieting and weight, and focuses on daily, enjoyable, physical activity and positive body image based on a healthy lifestyle, and not on attainment of a specific weight or unrealistic shape."

In its first two years of implementation, WIN has been embraced and promoted not only by UI Extension, but also by Idaho schools, hospitals, medical clinics, grocery stores, newspapers, live radio, health departments, health fairs, and a Rodeo Days parade. It is estimated to have reached about 17,000 individuals.

# Teaching Idaho to buy its veggies and eat them too: Extension offers four courses of new curriculum

The most recent Healthy Eating Index (HEI) indicates that approximately 70% of Americans have diets defined as “needing improvement” and only 12% have diets that could be classified as “good.” The vast majority of Americans are not eating the recommended number of servings from the five major food groups in the Food Guide Pyramid.

America is a self-proclaimed health-conscious nation. Why do we continue to make bad nutritional choices?

To address this question, Idaho Extension created a curriculum aimed at teaching consumers how to combine the convenience of fast food with the nutrition of home-cooked meals. The **Planning Menus and Meals** curriculum includes classes covering the basics of meal planning, the essentials of shopping for food, creating healthy menus, and organizing the kitchen to make meal preparation faster and more efficient.

Bingham County Extension Educator Marnie Spencer designed and teaches **Basic Meal Planning**, the first course in a four-part curriculum. The need for quick, nutritious recipes and menus was

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identified in all four of Idaho’s districts as the State’s most immediate need in nutrition education. Spencer offers course participants instruction on how to prepare meals that save the cook time and money, while providing their families balanced nutrition.

“Participants have been amazed at how much time and frustration a little planning can save,” said Spencer. “Planning menus for a week or a month at a time eliminates the question, ‘What should I fix for dinner?’”

The second course, **Shopping Essentials**, is a series developed and taught by Franklin County Extension Educator Laura Sant. These classes help consumers learn to make choices in the supermarket that offer the biggest nutritional bang for their buck.

While the course is open to anyone interested in planning nutritious meals on a budget, it is especially vital to Idaho’s low-income families. Over 58,000 people in Idaho receive food stamps. Nutrition education is especially critical for limited income families who have poor diets. Under-nutrition can have serious health affects, most notably in children.

The third new course offered in this curriculum is **A Healthy Guide to What’s For Dinner**, created and taught by Twin Falls County Extension Educator Rhea Lanting.



Extension educator Rhea Lanting shows third graders in Twin Falls how a simple slice of cheese can turn a hamburger into a great source of calcium.

The final course, **Fast Food at Home: Tips for Streamlining Your Kitchen**, was designed and is taught by Idaho County Extension Educator Julia Welch.

“My focus is to help the family organize their kitchen so that they can get healthy meals on the table quickly, and to help them use their time, energy and money efficiently to give them more time with their families,” says Welch.

“This curriculum is designed for any family, but particularly those with both parents working,” said Welch. “You go home at the end of the work day and you want to fix a good meal for your family. With careful shopping, a little planning ahead, a variety of menu options, and an accommodating kitchen, that’s much easier to accomplish.”

Class participants also learn how to use small appliances like the crockpot, microwave, table top grill, pressure sauce pan (small pressure cooker), and wok to cook fast meals and pre-planned menu items.

The cost to families who don’t cook at home can be measured in poor nutrition and higher spending. “We want to encourage families to cook at home instead of relying on fast food and convenience foods,” Welch said. “When you buy fast food or convenience foods you’re paying for someone else’s labor. We hope to shorten the time and the effort cooks put into a meal at home and help them save money too.”

# The ABCs of nutrition outreach, 2002

**Aim for Fitness:** 533 participants learned how to get and stay motivated, the health benefits of physical activity, and how to make physical activity a lifestyle goal.

**Build a Healthy Base:** 1170 participants covered topics including the Food Guide Pyramid, and specific food groups such as: fruits, vegetables, grain, dairy, meat and meat substitutes (i.e. soy).

**Choose Sensibly:** 1388 participants learned about sugar and sugar substitutes, healthy fats, and healthy holiday eating.

Collaborators on these programs include: Wellness Support Group, Senior Centers and the TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) organization. These programs were presented in Bingham, Franklin, Caribou, Bear Lake, Madison, Idaho, Canyon, Minidoka, Bannock, and Gooding counties.



*In fiscal year 2002, the Extension Nutrition Program had 65,181 contacts: 29,615 adult and 35,562 youth. Results indicate that ENP is effective in improving nutrition, food safety, resource management, and physical activity habits. ENP currently reaches 23 of Idaho's 44 counties.*

## The Need for Extension Nutrition Programs

- Welfare reform put many people back to work in Idaho, but their low wages are often not enough to pay rent and utility bills, and still put food on the table. The Brandeis University Report (2002) names Idaho as one of ten states with the highest level of food insecurity.
- Approximately 11% of adult Idahoans 18 years and older have an income below poverty level. Twenty one percent of Idaho children live in poverty, compared to a national rate of 19% (Idaho Kids Count Data 2000) and 12.7% of Idahoans live in poverty based on a 3 year average (1999-2001) compared to 11.6% nationally.
- An average of 58,726 persons (4.6% of the population of Idaho) per month received food stamp benefits during State Fiscal year 2001 (Idaho Department of Health & Welfare, Facts, Figures and Trends 2000-2001). And in the month of September 2002, a total of 72,455 persons in Idaho received help from the Food Stamp Program, at a cost of \$5,321,651 with an average benefit per case of \$187.57.
- The Idaho Extension Nutrition Program (ENP) is a community-based education program that provides instruction to low income adults on nutrition, food safety, and management of food and resources, leading them to improved health and well-being. Lessons cover a variety of topics in nutrition, food buying, food safety and sanitation, basic living skills, family budgeting, and decision-making. ENP also reaches youth with basic nutrition messages.
- In fiscal year 2002, ENP had 65,181 contacts: 29,615 adult and 35,562 youth contacts. Results indicate that this program is effective in improving nutrition, food safety, resource management, and physical activity habits. ENP currently reaches 23 of Idaho's 44 counties.
- State personnel time contributed to ENP is a little under 11 full-time workers. This State-in-Kind Match includes Extension Educators, District Directors, Extension Specialists, and District Office staff. ENP is administered by 27 Nutrition Advisors in 23 counties. Funding and program partners are the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Food Stamp Program, and USDA Food and Nutrition Service. County extension educators along with the state specialist in nutrition guide the program. The number of collaborators that contribute to the program is approximately 235. The FY2002 budget was \$1,514,945 (\$755,969 federal and \$758,976 state). Federal funds support the hiring of part-time Nutrition Advisors and Project Coordinators (one per approximately a five-county area).
- Bilingual assistants are located at program sites with a high proportion of participants whose native language is not English. One Spanish-speaking nutrition advisor in Power County has taught 20 lessons on the Food Guide Pyramid to Spanish speaking pre-school and Kindergarten classes, and 40 Hispanic adult ENP clients. She made 766 contacts in the county throughout the year.

# Diabetes education as preventative medicine

**In Idaho** as in the rest of the nation, diabetes is the seventh leading killer.

Approximately 50,000 adult Idahoans have been diagnosed with diabetes, with a probable 25,000 undiagnosed.

Diabetics who do not follow a prescribed treatment are more likely to suffer from heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, blindness, kidney disease, nervous system damage, amputations, and dental disease. Aside from the horrendous human cost of this disease, the annual price tag of diabetes in Idaho, including direct medical expenses and indirect costs, such as disability, work loss and premature death, is estimated at \$338 million.

Idaho's adults with diabetes are more likely to be overweight, sedentary, and less likely to eat fruits and vegetables.

Research indicates that effective diabetes education not only reduces the number of complications from diabetes, but also decreases the overall cost of the disease. In 2002, approximately 709 individuals in Idaho received diabetes education through UI Extension by attending a series of four classes, through participation in a one-class overview of diabetes, or through a diabetes support group. These outreach programs were presented in Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai, Shoshone, Idaho, Canyon, Franklin, Bingham, Twin Falls, Minidoka, and Jerome counties.

The vast majority of participants (approximately 510 individuals) took one of two diabetes education curricula developed by UI Extension: **Healthy Eating with Diabetes**, and **Dining Healthy with Diabetes**. Both teach the importance of controlling diabetes, planning meals, incorporating recipes, making decisions when dining out, and direct participants to additional resources.

These diabetes education courses have proven successful in increasing knowledge of diabetes and in changing diabetics' eating behaviors. Both curricula received national attention at the conference for the Society for Nutrition Education, National Priester Extension Conference, and National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Annual Conference.



## Dem bones: Extension addresses osteoporosis in an aging nation

**Osteoporosis** and low bone mass are currently estimated to be a major public health threat for almost 44 million US women and men aged 50 and older. By the year 2010, that number is estimated to reach 52 million. If current trends continue, the figure will climb to over 61 million by 2020.

In 2002, approximately 226 Idahoans took UI Extension classes on osteoporosis. The majority of these attended a series of classes in the **Bone Up on Osteoporosis** curriculum, developed and piloted by UI Extension.

Results from pilot testing of the curriculum indicated participants significantly increased their knowledge of the causes of osteoporosis and its risk factors, bone health, and how to use food labels to plan meals and snacks high in calcium. Participants increased calcium consumption and improved their level of physical activity, most often by increasing the amount of time they spent walking and/or gardening.

The Bone Up on Osteoporosis program reached Twin Falls, Canyon, Bingham, Franklin, and Idaho counties.

# Customer Service Training: Repeat business education

**Particularly** in difficult economic times, businesses look for new ways to bring in and retain customers. The Extension education course, **Customer Service Training**, offered in Valley and Boundary Counties, and planned for Adams County, provides entrepreneurs some insights on how to attract and nurture clientele, and foster repeat business.

*The course helps answer one of the big questions Burke and other small business people ask. "You can always get them in here once, but can you get them to come back?"*

Extension Educator, Steve Hines, to the fridge at work.

"One thing he told us was that you have four seconds to greet somebody and start making an impression on them before they start forming an impression for themselves," said Burke. "Just the statistics about how many customers you can lose is educational. I think it said 64% of the customers you lose don't return because of a negative experience they've had that you may not even know about. Of those who have a negative experience, 54-75% will come back if you resolve the problem, and 90% will return if you resolve it right away."

That kind of information can be motivational.

"I think the class is a great learning tool for everybody," said Burke. "Your employees learn how to greet customers, and it's a great refresher for people who've been in business for a while."

The course helps answer one of the big questions Burke and other small business people ask. "You can always get them in here once, but can you get them to come back?"

Aside from addressing the how-tos of making a good first impression, like appropriate dress, courtesy, and professional demeanor, the Customer Service Training course clarifies how attention to these details can impact a business's bottom line.

Barbi Burke, course participant and owner/operator of Indulgences, a day spa in McCall that employs eight people, found the presentation so useful she taped the statistics handed out by Valley County



Barbie Vanerboegh and her husband, Don, take turns with the monthly finances. Barbie enrolled in Canyon County Extension's Money 2000 program to "become enlightened" about money matters.

## Idaho families at risk learn financial management skills in "All My Money" program

**All My Money**, a comprehensive financial management curriculum developed by University of Illinois Extension to address the needs of low income families, has proven effective in Idaho as well.

UI Extension educators liked the program's factual content, experiential "hands-on" activities, and handouts, but recognized the need for visuals to reinforce core concepts. With permission from Illinois Extension, UI adapted their content to produce a highly effective four-pronged series, including visuals, focusing on **Planning Your Spending Budget, Budgeting, Making Spending Choices, and Using Credit Wisely**.

All My Money reached 500 participants in 2002, including Extension Nutrition Program participants, adult probation clientele, Head Start and Even Start families, Community Action Program participants and church groups. The vast majority of participants (about 83%) felt better able to handle their money after going through the program.

"If [I'm] behind on my bills, I won't ignore the problem," said one class participant. "Instead I'll communicate with my creditors."

Knowledge is power.



For more information on Extension programs, call 208.885.5883 or access our website at [www.uidaho.edu/extension](http://www.uidaho.edu/extension)