

University of California Cooperative Extension
Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)
Annual Report, September 2008

EFNEP is an educational program on nutrition, food safety and food budgeting assisting low-income families and youth to acquire knowledge, skills, and changed behavior necessary to develop nutritionally sound diets and physical activity habits that improve the total family diet and well-being. Funded by the United States Department of Agriculture since 1969, EFNEP is an integral part of the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE). Working through the UCCE statewide infrastructure established at the county and community level EFNEP responds to the needs of the target communities through research-based knowledge and program delivery.

EFNEP has programs for adults in seventeen of California's poorest counties. In ten of these counties low-income youth are served by the EFNEP youth program. The counties with both adult and youth programs are Alameda, Sacramento, Fresno, Kern, San Bernardino, Riverside, Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego and Santa Clara. The counties with adult program only are Butte, Contra Costa, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Tulare and San Francisco/San Mateo.

EFNEP's unique approach to nutrition education involves delivery by nutrition educators, hired not for their knowledge of subject matter but for their life experiences, cultural, social, and economic backgrounds, and their ability to relate to clients. The UCCE Family and Consumer Science Advisors train the educators in subject matter and provide ongoing training and supervision.

EFNEP educators use research-based curriculum and delivery methods to assist participants in understanding the relationships of food, nutrition and physical activity to health and fitness, to get the most for their food dollars, Food Stamps and WIC foods, to prepare nutritious meals and snacks that their families will like, and to handle and store food safely. EFNEP adult classes are conducted in small groups where new knowledge and skills are presented in a culturally sensitive manner to meet the needs of the diverse population. Participants also learn skills that build their self-sufficiency and self-esteem that in turn contributes to overall community development. Teachers, trained by EFNEP educators, use curriculum that meets education standards in classes. EFNEP educators also work with youth in after school, community and special summer programs.

Among the on-going activities involving campus and county-based personnel is one to extend outreach through partnership with California Head Start Home Based. In this partnership EFNEP educators provide initial and ongoing support in using an adapted version of the EFNEP curriculum, *Eating Smart · Being Active*, to California Head Start Home Based staff that then work with their family clients.

Another on-going activity focuses on meeting the needs of unique cultural groups by adapting the curriculum, *Eating Smart · Being Active*, to be delivered in a culturally appropriate manner. Adaptation of the curriculum for the Hmong community is in the final stages of development and evaluation. The methodology used for community needs assessment of the Hmong will be the model for other cultural groups.

Two new curricula for school children are being developed to enhance physical activity at school and home.

Serving on the EFNEP Advisory Committee are Connie Schneider, Chair (NFCS Advisor Fresno), Darlene Liesch (County Director Kern), Anna Martin (NFCS Advisor San Joaquin), Marisa Neelon (NFCS Advisor Contra Costa), Jennifer Gabet (Program Manager San Francisco), Susan Donohue, ex-officio (County Director Butte, Chair SNAP Education Steering Committee), and Barbara Sutherland, ex-officio (Director EFNEP).

EFNEP's partners encompass many humanitarian organizations including, but not limited to, the California Department of Education, Physical Education Department, the Headstart Program, School Parent Groups, Schools for Teenage Mothers, GED Programs, the English as a Second Language Program, California State University Fresno, Health Net Insurance, the 21st Century ASP, the Food Pantry Program, the California WIC Program, the Food Stamp Program, the Center for Poverty Solutions, State Department of Parks and Recreation, Fresno Fair Grounds (Farm & Nutrition Day), Boys and Girls Clubs, County Health and Recreation Centers, Public Housing, Family Support Centers, Rehabilitation Centers, Transitional Housing Groups, the Salvation Army, Save Mart Grocery Stores, California Nutrition Network, many other community agencies.

In 2007-2008 EFNEP was funded by USDA-CSREES in the amount of \$3,839,417.

In 2007-2008 EFNEP Nutrition Educators delivered the adult nutrition program to about 8,000 participants ultimately reaching 34,000 people in families. EFNEP adult and youth participants made several important changes involving nutrition, food safety and resource management: 85% of adults showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices, 90% showed improvement in one or more nutrition practices and 72% showed improvement in one or more of the food safety practices. As a result of participating in EFNEP 88% of youth now eat a variety of foods, 79% increased knowledge of the essentials of human nutrition, 75% increased their ability to select low-cost, nutritious foods and 65% improved practices in food preparation and safety.

Publications

Eating Smart · Being Active, curriculum developed in collaboration with Colorado EFNEP (Colorado State University) for EFNEP adult participants. The eight lesson curriculum includes participant materials designed to reinforce the messages of the lessons for low-income people with limited reading skills. The materials are in English and Spanish.

Development of curriculum assessment tool to ensure theory compliance. Natker E, Auld G, Sutherland B, Baker SS. 2007 JNEB 39(4):S100-101.

A culturally relevant nutrition education program targeting Hmong immigrants. Wakimoto P, Donohue S, Fujii ML, Peterson L, Martin A, Sutherland B. 2006 FASEB 22(1):678.18.

Eatfit impacts academic performance in mathematics and English: a pilot study. Shilts M, Lamp C, Horowitz M, Townsend MS. J Nutrition Educ Behavior. In press.

A standards-driven evaluation of academic performance: an 8-step process for nutrition educators. Horowitz M, Shilts M, Lamp C, Townsend MS. J Nutrition Educ Behavior. In press.

Evidence to support the use of the retrospective pretest method to measure dietary behavior and self-efficacy in adolescents. Shilts M, Smith D, Ontai-Grzebik L, Townsend MS. J Youth Development. In press.