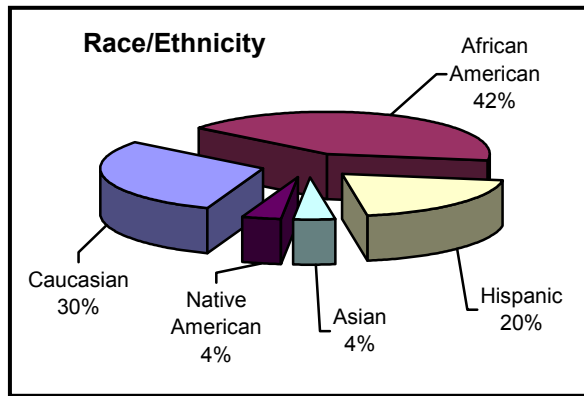


## Milwaukee County



The Milwaukee County WNEP was established in 1990 via a grant written by the UW-Extension Family Living Program in collaboration with the Milwaukee County Department of Health and Social Services. The goal of WNEP is to teach diverse, low-income families, individuals, elderly and youth about nutrition. The program effects change through the dissemination of research-based materials. Clients are taught to choose foods and prepare meals and snacks that are nutritious, safe and affordable; to manage financial resources to improve food security, and to balance food intake with physical activity, in accordance with USDA guidelines.

The population of Milwaukee County is largely urban, the unemployment rate is higher than the state average, and nearly 46% of the state's food stamp program participants reside in the county. The poverty rate in Milwaukee County is 15.3%--nearly two times the rate of Wisconsin (8.7%); the child poverty rate in Milwaukee County is even more alarming at 23.3% (compared to a statewide rate of 10.8%).

Milwaukee County WNEP educators made 26,669 educational contacts during 2001-2. WNEP education was offered either as group sessions or learn-while-you-wait education. Sixty-eight percent of program participants were school age children; 18% were families with young children; 10% were older adults; and 2% were adults without children. Persons of many diverse cultural groups were reached by Milwaukee County WNEP educators: 42% of participants were African American, 30% white, 20% Hispanic, 4% Asian, and 4% Native American

### Selected Program Results

**Food Security:** Milwaukee County has several very active emergency food pantries and commodity distribution sites that serve the residents of the county. WNEP educators provided nutrition and food safety education programs to participants at four of the larger free emergency food provider sites. Over 4200 participants were reached by WNEP educators who offered 116 short interactive lessons to persons who came to the sites to obtain food for their families. Topics that were taught included: choosing a healthful diet, planning meals and shopping for food, and handling food safely.

**Diet Quality:** WNEP educators taught limited-income senior residents of Milwaukee County at 12 senior meal sites throughout the county. Over 2800 seniors were reached by WNEP educators who taught 113 lessons at the sites. Two-hundred and eighteen older adults participated in a series of lessons on choosing healthful food. At the end of the lessons, 85% of the participants said that they could think of one specific thing they were doing differently as a result of the lessons. Some of the things they said they were doing differently included: reading labels more often, eating more fruits and vegetables and eating something nutritious for breakfast every day. One learner said he had lowered his blood cholesterol by changing how he was eating after learning about nutrition in the WNEP classes.

**Dietary Quality:** Milwaukee Public School teachers welcome WNEP educators into classrooms, into after school programs, and to summer school programs. Over 300 lessons on healthy eating and food safety were taught to elementary school children for a total of over 18,000 educational contacts. The children especially enjoyed the lessons on fruits and vegetables that included opportunities to taste some new foods; the teachers especially appreciated the lessons on hand washing and handling food safely.