

Core Competencies for WNEP Nutrition Educators

Function as part of a team

- Know mission of UW-Extension and WNEP
- Communicate regularly with Coordinator
- Contribute to program planning and evaluation
- Communicate with Family Living Agent as determined
- Communicate with District Director, State WNEP Coordinator as needed
- Give and receive co-worker support
- Participate in committees within time constraints of own position
- Help train others within time constraints of own position

Build rapport with agencies

- Work with Coordinator to identify community agencies with mutual interests
- Meet with staff from agencies to get acquainted and to promote potential educational opportunities
- Network with agencies: joint education efforts, advisory groups, other appropriate committees
- Maintain visibility in community: use identifiable materials, wear name tag, health fairs, newsletters
- Present an appropriate image and attitude
- Explain UW-Extension mission and WNEP role in that mission

Build rapport with participants

- Establish contact with participant
- Show genuine interest in participant: be a good listener, demonstrate a caring attitude, welcome questions, be on time, respect diversity
- Share and learn from each other-self disclosure as appropriate
- Know where personal/professional boundaries are
- Maintain confidentiality

Plan teaching events for participants at learn-while-you-wait, in groups, at home visits

- Respect participant diversity
- Assess the needs and abilities of the participant(s)
- Schedule time for lesson preparation and teaching
- Prepare a lesson plan -- set objectives appropriate to participant(s), select teaching methods and materials, be aware of current issues in the community and media, arrange for child care, plan options for changing situations
- Utilize techniques to empower participants to continue desired practice/behavior

Teach subject content at walk-bys for youth and adults

- Respect participant diversity
- Respect needs and priorities of host site
- Place display in strategic location at peak traffic time
- Get participant's attention
- Share information using displays, fact sheets, videos, food samples, games, questions
- Engage participant in conversation about subject content
- Provide follow-up: additional information, other opportunities
- Tabulate information for required reports

Teach subject content in groups of youth and adults

- Respect participant diversity
- Utilize team teaching method and volunteers when appropriate
- Use basic group dynamic skills
- Establish boundaries, stay on track

- Give an overview of the lesson
- Share information using videos, activities, food preparation, games, discussion, handouts, etc.
- Help participants set a goal
- Give positive reinforcement-incentives, verbal encouragement
- Adapt teaching to changing situations
- Tabulate information for required reports

Teach subject content at home visits with adults

- Respect participant diversity
- Review content and expectations
- Complete required forms
- Assess participant needs and interests (on-going)
- Share information using videos, activities, discussion, food preparation
- Share information about other programs and community resources
- Manage teaching with children and/or significant other present -- handle distractions
- Help participant set realistic goal -- give positive reinforcement
- Use good judgment in time spent teaching -- know when to leave
- Bring closure and set next appointment
- Tabulate information for required reports

Evaluate the teaching event

- Use range of evaluation tools such as surveys, interviews, letters, as determined by your unit team
- Evaluate what was taught
- Evaluate how it was taught
- Determine the impact
- Interpret evaluation results to strengthen teaching process

Manage time and paperwork

- Use office procedures
- File and keep records
- Prepare accurate and timely reports
- Maintain reasonable amount of flexibility with own schedule

Take care of oneself

- Assess a potentially unsafe location or situation
- Have a plan for getting out of potentially unsafe situations
- Know what to do in an emergency -- 911 or other emergency procedures, report to your advisor
- Practice preventive measures for personal health and safety -- lifting, carrying, infection control, stress management

Continue to learn skills and subject content

- Keep current on relevant issues -- read newsletters, talk with colleagues
- Use range of educational opportunities to update and renew skills (communication, organizational, teaching, computer) and knowledge of subject content