

## **FY05 WNEP Plan for Milwaukee County**

### **Brief description of the Milwaukee County Nutrition Education Program:**

The Milwaukee County WNEP was established in 1990 through a grant written by the University of Wisconsin Extension Family Living Program in collaboration with the Milwaukee County Department of Health and Social Services. The mission of WNEP is to develop and implement community-based nutrition education programs within a university research-based context. WNEP provides nutrition education to diverse, limited-income families, individuals, older adults, and youth using the research-based materials. Participants/learners are taught to choose foods and prepare meals and eat snacks, all of which 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.

### **Characteristics (demographics) of the low income residents of Milwaukee County:**

The demographic information which follows is based upon statistics from the 2000 census of the US Census Bureau. According to the census, the population of Milwaukee County is 940,164. The county includes a large urban area, the city of Milwaukee, with a very diverse population representing a variety of groups. The following groups and their percentage of the population represent that diversity: African-American 24.6; Asian 2.6; Hispanic 8.8; and White 65.6. Children under the age of 18 represent 36.8% of the population; older adults (over 60) comprise 16.4% of the population. In addition 21,687 individuals ages 5-20 are disabled, while 102,628 individuals ages 21-64 have a disability. In the 65 and older population 45,624 have an identified disability. Of the 940,164 county residents, 450,574 are male and 489,590 are female. While the state of Wisconsin is among ten states with the lowest teenage pregnancy rates, the city of Milwaukee ranks at number two, second only to Baltimore in that category.

The employment status of 718,569 individuals 16 and older consists of 436,878 employed and 32,379 unemployed individuals with 248,881 persons not in the labor force.

The diverse population of Milwaukee County includes a total of 377,729 households with 31.6% having an income of under \$24,999 while 31.7% have an income between \$25,000-\$49,999. 10.6% or 40,098 households have income less than \$10,000. In terms of poverty status 11.7% or 26,454 families and 15% or 139,747 individuals live below the poverty level. Families with a female householder and no husband present comprise 30.7% or 18,405 families.

### **Nutrition and nutrition education needs of the low income residents of Milwaukee County:**

Economic indicators for Milwaukee County and staff from the Milwaukee County Department on Aging and the City of Milwaukee Health Department strongly suggest that the number of limited-income individuals in the county has been steadily growing for a variety of reasons. These include, but are not limited to: rising unemployment with a sometimes devastating impact on household budgets; increasing number of single parent households with fewer economic resources for children in these households; an inefficient food stamp program due to a more complicated delivery structure in the state of Wisconsin; and increasing number of older adults with fixed incomes.

Regardless of the reasons, they all suggest that limited-income individuals and households must be able to creatively and nutritiously stretch their food dollars. Therefore, nutrition education efforts must continue to emphasize dietary quality within the framework of a limited budget. In addition, limited-income individuals and families must be educated on available resources and how to effectively access them. Lastly, a growing, ethnically diverse population requires that nutrition education be taught in the context of customary ethnic food preparation practices.

Specific areas of focus in Milwaukee County in 2005 will include, but not be limited to, an Hispanic population, which continues to significantly grow. US Census Bureau statistics indicate that the Hispanic population in Milwaukee County was 41,893 in 1990 and had risen to 82,406 in 2000.

Pregnant teenagers will be targeted for nutrition education as early childbearing limits school and employment opportunities thus causing many of these teens and their infants to live in poverty. While the state of Wisconsin is among 10 states with the lowest teenage pregnancy rates, the city of Milwaukee ranks second only to Baltimore in the number of teen pregnancies.

Nutrition education will continue to be provided for older adults (65 and over) at senior sites, as they now comprise 13% (121,685) of the total population many of whom are living on incomes below the poverty level (9,783 or 8.5%).

WNEP in Milwaukee County has presented nutrition education programs at the House of Correction (HOC) to females with children, who are typically people of color living in poverty, and to a mixed audience of males and females at the Day Reporting Center (DR). The average daily census between the HOC and the DRC is a minimum of 3,500. The success of this programming has been affirmed by the site coordinator of the HOC and DRC, who indicates that inmates have been receptive and motivated to receive information which prepares them for reintegration/reentry into their families and local communities upon release. The site coordinator also states that the majority of inmates have not graduated from high school and have never been exposed to nutrition education information. The information is especially useful because the average length of stay at the HOC is approximately 20 days and the mean is 3-4 months, which means the inmates can utilize the information shortly after they receive it upon release.

Families with children and children will continue to be a focus of nutrition education in the county particularly in light of statistics, which identify obesity and its related health concerns as an issue for all age groups. Milwaukee County statistics indicate that 36% of all adults (338,459) are obese and 13% of youth (27,400) are overweight.

### **Program Plans related to Food Security Programming Efforts**

#### **Plans to increase awareness of hunger/food insecurity**

To increase awareness of hunger and food insecurity, Milwaukee County WNEP will continue partnerships with organizations such as the Department on Aging, Milwaukee Public Schools, Second Harvest, the Hunger Task Force to sponsor events in the community such as health fairs and walk-bys, which can educate audiences on these issues. These events can utilize informational flyers and interactive displays to promote awareness of food insecurity and hunger in the community.

#### **Educational Projects**

Milwaukee County will be participating in the following statewide projects during FY05:

- Educational programming for school age youth (5 to 11 years, 12 to 17 years) in school classrooms, during school day
- Educational programming for school age youth (5 to 11 years) at after school or summer programs
- Educational programming for adults at TANF, W-2, Job Centers, Food Stamp offices or similar locations
- Educational programming for pregnant women or mothers of young children at WIC clinics
- Educational programming for preschool children and their families (parents and caregivers) at Head Start or similar locations
- Educational programming for adults and families at immunization clinics and similar public health locations
- Educational programming for families at Family Resource Centers or similar facilities
- Educational programming for older adults at senior dining sites or congregate meal sites
- Educational programming for low income adults who are residing in temporary/transitional facilities after being released from jail
- Educational programming for persons at emergency food pantries and free meal sites
- Educational programming for adults who are residing in temporary shelters or transitional housing
- Educational programming for adults participating in AODA or similar recovery/treatment programs

- Educational programming for disabled or chronically mentally ill adults at day treatment centers or group homes