

Plan for Food Stamp Nutrition Education in Sawyer County and Lac Courte Oreilles during fiscal year 2008

Overview of the Sawyer County and Lac Courte Oreilles Nutrition Education Program

In 1997, the Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program (WNEP) began in Sawyer County. At that time, the Sawyer County Family Living agent along with several local agencies identified a number of nutritional needs of the limited income population in the county. In 1999, WNEP was also brought to the Lac Courte Oreilles Reservation. In the beginning, the nutrition program began with the learn-while-you-wait approach with participants in the senior meal sites and WIC programs. Since that time, the program has built a solid reputation and developed lasting relationships with local agencies, thereby increasing programming efforts to reach more people each year. Programming methods have expanded to include workshops, home visitation, and classroom lessons. WNEP staff work effectively to deliver relevant messages to our audiences in order to assist them in applying nutrition knowledge to improve eating behaviors, food preparation and food safety practices. We consult with key agency partners regularly in order to continue to be responsive to the changing needs of our audiences. WNEP staff report monthly to the Sawyer County Extension Committee and the Lac Courte Oreilles Extension Advisory Board. Program outcomes and their progress are shared with our partners and committees through monthly written reports and an agency update sent to all partners at the end of each year.

Characteristics of the low income residents in Sawyer County

Demographics of the County

The total population of Sawyer County is 16,713 with 16.1 % or over 2600, Native American and the majority of the remaining population being white. The unemployment rate is 5.6%. The US census of 2000 indicates that 12.7% overall in Sawyer County are in poverty, but also that a high range of residents of the Lac Courte Oreilles Reservation are in poverty with the range in reservation settlements ranging from 16% to as high as 43%. Of Sawyer county households who rent, 19% are paying at least 35% of their income for rent; 4.5% have no vehicle.

Food Insecurity in the County

1917 people (up from 1569 in 2000) participate in the food stamp program and 991 are enrolled in WIC, with 55% food insecure. Of the two public school systems and one tribal school 52.07% of children are enrolled in free and reduced lunch. All schools in the county participate in the breakfast program with 100% of enrolled children participating. Food pantries reported this year, according to the Sawyer County Healthy Lifestyles Coalition, that use of food pantries has been on the rise steadily in the past two years. During this past year in Sawyer County, another food pantry was created to address the growing need; bring the total of food pantries in the county to 7. In 2006, Farmer's Market vouchers will be available to limited income seniors, but are currently not being given to the WIC program.

Nutrition and nutrition education needs of Food Stamp Program recipients and other low-income residents of Sawyer County

Of those residents in poverty in Sawyer County, 67.6% receive food stamps. WIC participants in the County were surveyed and 25% reported experiencing hunger. Food pantry workers indicate many rising numbers reporting hunger on a regular basis. Deaths in Sawyer County in 2002

totaled 207 with 59 attributed to Heart Disease and Diabetes. 3.7% of children ages 2-4 enrolled in WIC are overweight. The Sawyer County Public Health Director has indicated that the percentages of overweight are much higher and rising in youth ages 5-17.

Through the Sawyer County Healthy Lifestyles Coalition, agencies working with the low-income population of Sawyer County and Lac Courte Oreilles have been working to address education in the following areas:

- Decrease the rate of childhood obesity and at the same time increase community awareness of childhood obesity and enlist community wide support in related efforts.
- Increase food security by increasing healthier food choices by working closely with food pantries to provide education to participants and by increasing educational efforts to improve resource management.
- Encourage a balance between healthy eating and healthy activity in developing a healthy lifestyle plan and providing education to do so.

Education in these areas has been productive for the past several years. The goal of the Coalition and of Sawyer County WNEP is to have a positive affect in helping families make appropriate behavioral changes in order to become healthier.

Educational Projects planned for FY08

In School: Programming will occur in Hayward Community Schools, Winter Schools and on the Lac Courte Oreilles reservation with classrooms receiving two visits each during the school year. Education with students will focus on making healthy choices with nutrition and physical activity. A newsletter, Healthy Choices will be distributed monthly through the school year targeting families and; families in the primary and intermediate levels of Hayward School will participate in two WNEP nutrition workshops. Hayward teaching staff will participate in an 8 part series designed to assist them in extending the WNEP teaching the youth are receiving.

After school: After school programming will occur in the Hayward and Winter School Districts. Visits will occur twice each month of the school year. Stepping Up curriculum will be used to focus the youth on balancing healthy food choices and healthy activity.

Parents: A newsletter, Healthy Choices will be distributed monthly through the school year targeting families in all schools, childcare centers and 4-H and; families in the primary and intermediate levels of Hayward School will participate in two WNEP nutrition workshops. WNEP staff will make 3 presentations at each of the Head Start programs located in Hayward, Winter and Lac Courte Oreilles using the Stepping Up Curriculum. This curriculum will also be used at the Family Resource Center in Hayward during an 8 session series.

WIC: WIC sites in Hayward, Winter, Exeland and Lac Courte Oreilles will receive three walk by visits each month. The WIC director has asked that WNEP focus on programming to increase fruits and vegetable consumption and to give positive messages about increasing physical activity. The primary curriculum will be Stepping Up to a Healthy Lifestyle.

Gardens: Education in a series entitled, *Ready, Set, Grow*, will be used in two eight session series presented in collaboration with the Family Resource Center and at the Boys and Girls Clubs. Assistance will be provided by Master Gardeners.

Health Clinics: WNEP educators do one-on-one education at the Lac Courte Oreilles diabetic clinic weekly. Educational messages are focused on MyPyramid, making healthy food choices, portioning and choosing to be active.

Senior Dining: The WNEP educator will provide educational walk bys twice each month at 7 senior meal sites. Messages will be taken from Stepping Up curriculum and Nutrition for the Young at Heart.

Food Pantries: Monthly walk bys will be set up at each of 6 pantries in Sawyer County. Focus is on resource management.

Home visits: Home visits will occur with families located on the Lac Courte Oreilles reservation in collaboration with Honoring Our Children and Mino Majjesewin. Topics will be in the area of food safety and resource management.