

## **Plan for Food Stamp Nutrition Education in Door and Kewaunee Counties during fiscal year 2008**

### **Overview of the Door and Kewaunee Counties Nutrition Education Program**

The UW Extension Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program (WNEP) began in 1992 in Door and Kewaunee counties to provide dietary quality and food resource management education to food stamp-eligible recipients.

Door and Kewaunee WNEP has strong relationships with the local food pantries, WIC, Head Start, Hispanic Resource Center, and Community Programs. The program continues to evolve as needs are identified and opportunities arise. Newsletters for Head Start parents and caregivers are provided monthly with educational sessions occurring throughout the year. Other notable changes include expansion of nutritional programming with the Boys and Girls Club and the Team Leadership Center in Door County thereby adding a population group not formerly targeted. The development of “Walk-Bys” into educational mini-sessions at both WIC and food pantries sites are popular with the food-stamp eligible population.

Because inactivity as well as poor eating patterns is contributing factors to obesity, the importance of physical activity is incorporated more frequently into the educational programming. Classes emphasizing the new food guidance system along with the importance of resource management spark increase interest in our educational programming. The two elementary schools in Sturgeon Bay participated in the food security survey adding to the increased awareness for WNEP.

### **Characteristics of the low income residents in Door and Kewaunee Counties**

#### Demographics of the Counties

Door County has a population of 27,961 according to the document “Hunger Close To Home” by Kadi Row. Kewaunee County’s population is 20,187. Few minorities other than the Hispanic population live in the two counties. According to the Hispanic Resource Center for Door and Kewaunee Counties, Hispanic population is estimated to be currently at 550 (2% of the total population) in Door County and 325 (1.6% of the total population) in Kewaunee County. The percentage of Hispanic learners in 2005 was 16% (559). The percentage of Hispanic learners over the last few years was 7% (464, includes Manitowoc County) in 2001; 14% (541) in 2002; 16% (648) in 2003; and in 2004, 18% (706). Additionally in 2005, 79% (2786) of the learners were white with 4% (127) American Indian.

#### Food Insecurity in the Counties

Door County’s overall poverty rate is 6.4% and Kewaunee County’s is 5.8%. The percent of population with income below 185% of poverty in Door County is 21.3% with 6.1% (1,696) people receiving FoodShare in 2005. While in Kewaunee County, the percentage of population with income below 185% of poverty is 17.8% with 5.4% (1093) people receiving FoodShare. It is estimated that 99% of the Hispanic population’s income is 185% below poverty. Child FoodShare participation rate is 13.4% in Door County and 9.6 % in Kewaunee County. Wisconsin Healthy People 2010, February, 2005 edition reports 8.8% of children ages 0 to 17 years of age are below the poverty level in Door and 5.7% in Kewaunee. The median income in Door is \$38,813 and in Kewaunee is \$43,824.

Additional data obtained from the “Hunger Close To Home,” February, 2006 shows state-wide approximately 540,000 people live in households that are food insecure - they do not have access at all times to enough food for an active healthy life. Almost one out of every eleven Door and Kewaunee County households is food insecure. In 2004, 44% of Wisconsin WIC families surveyed were identified as food insecure and 19% of the families were food insecure with hunger. Thirty percent said that in the last 12 months, they or another family member had cut the size of their meals or skipped meals because there wasn't enough money to buy food. Forty-two percent said they could not afford to eat balanced meals. Forty-five percent noted that the food they bought just didn't last and they didn't have money to buy more. The Wisconsin Food Security Profile for 2004 showed the number of monthly WIC participants in Door County to be 438. In Kewaunee County the number is 315. According to the state census information in 2002, 32% of WIC participants in Door County were food insecure with 9% experiencing hunger. In Kewaunee County 33% of the WIC participants were food insecure with 13% food experiencing hunger. Data obtained from the Wisconsin Food Security Profile also showed that Door County WIC served 752 individuals and 538 individuals in Kewaunee County during 2004.

In Door County the average daily participation in the school lunch program are 2,527 students with average daily participation at 24.7% (626 students) in the free or reduced price lunch program. In Kewaunee County the average daily participation in the school lunch program are 2,828 students with average daily participation at 16% (452 students) in the free or reduced price lunch program. Households with children experience food insecurity at more than double the rate of households without children. Percentage of children approved for free or reduced price lunch in participating schools was 19.75 % in Door County and 15.09% in Kewaunee County in 2004.

### **Nutrition and nutrition education needs of Food Stamp Program recipients and other low-income residents of Door and Kewaunee Counties**

The USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, 2002 Report Card on the Quality of Americans Diets report 74% of Americans' diets need improvement. In 2004 only 23% of people age 18 and over consumed 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day. Additionally, only 30% meet the dietary recommendation for milk and dairy products. The Consumer Expenditure Survey indicates in 2003 about 42% of the per capita expenditure for food was spent on food away from home resulting in Americans eating more than 1/3 of their food away from home. This is a concern because food obtained away from home tends to be higher in fat, saturated fat, sodium, and sugar and lower in calcium and fiber than food prepared at home according to the USDA. Data obtained from the Wisconsin Healthy People 2010 February 2005 edition revealed 62% of the population in the DHFS Northeastern region (includes Door and Kewaunee counties) are considered overweight with 23% obese. Contributing to the problem, food pantry staff and agency personnel indicate their clients want convenience foods because they don't know how to prepare food at home or don't want to cook.

The federal target for an overall adult obesity rate for 2010 is 15% according to the Wisconsin Healthy People 2010, February 2005 edition. The same report showed only 14% of the population in NE Wisconsin over the age of 18 exercise 20 minutes or more at 50% aerobic capacity. The target for Wisconsin is 30% by year 2010. Fifty-four percent of the population is

sedentary contributing to the high rate of obesity. Wisconsin's 2002 Behavior Risk Survey demonstrated inactivity rates are higher for individuals in poverty.

To further assess the needs of low-income families in Door and Kewaunee counties, key witnesses from partner agencies continue to report their low-income target population groups lack knowledge regarding recommended amounts of food from each food group for maximum health. Meal planning is another strategy families need to implement in order to improve nutrition and maximize food resources. In Wisconsin 54% of WNEP participants entering nutritional programs stated they never, seldom or sometimes use a grocery list and 54% say they never, seldom or sometimes plan meals ahead of time.

A national study of low-income households found that 76% of the households had a plan for spending, but only 34% reported that their plan was a written one. In Wisconsin, persons entering WNEP were asked if they used a spending plan. Of those asked, 32% stated that they never used a spending plan; 34% seldom or sometimes used a spending plan and 27% uses a spending plan most of the time or almost always. From a study conducted by WNEP in 2000, 64% of 5,404 food stamp recipients said that they would like to learn more about stretching their food dollars. From a list provided, the top three topics respondents said they would like to learn more about were: 1.) Getting more food for my money 2.) Planning low-cost meals and 3.) Choosing food for good health. Forty percent said newsletters are their preferred ways to learn about food and nutrition topics.

Another area of concern is the large percentage of illnesses resulting from improper food handling in the home. A 1999 survey of 1,000 U.S. households found 44% consistently forgot to wash their hands before preparing meals. Research also shows 82% of sink faucet handles are contaminated during food preparation, 60% of people do not wash the cutting board after cutting raw meat or poultry and before cutting fresh vegetables for salads.

As a result of the above needs assessments, the nutrition educational needs of low-income Door and Kewaunee County residents are clearly in the areas of dietary quality, food resource management, food safety, and balancing food intake with physical activity.

### **Educational Projects planned for FY08**

**In School:** New programming opportunities with at-risk high school students at the local alternative high school will be developed during FY08.

**After School/Summer School:** In conjunction with Door County Social Services and the Team Leadership Center, nutrition and physical activity education occurs during their summer camp program. Emphasis is on healthy eating and the importance of physical activity. Additionally, programming occurs at the Boys & Girls Club 3 to 4 times per year. Summer programming also includes teaching Hispanic elementary school-age children. Topics include healthy snacking with actual food preparation, food safety, and the promotion of eating fruits and vegetables.

**Preschoolers:** Teaching is held at Head Start for preschool children using multi-sessions in group settings. At the beginning of the school year focus is on the importance of correct hand washing with subsequent sessions focusing on MyPyramid. Two sessions are devoted to the

importance of eating breakfast. Parent newsletters are sent home with the child. Included in the letter is an activity the parent and child can work on together at home to help reinforce the lesson and to increase awareness to parents on the importance of healthy eating.

**Parents:** Parents at Head Start and Healthy Families receive multi-session classes as well as stand-alone educational opportunities. Emphasis is on food resource management with meal planning, the importance of balancing food intake with physical activity, and “Sharing the Food Task” curriculum. Monthly multi-sessions are planned with young Hispanic mothers served by the Door & Kewaunee Hispanic Resource Center. Curriculum includes “Healthy Kitchen” and MyPyramid. Food safety is taught throughout the program year.

**WIC:** Educational programs for pregnant women or mothers of young children at WIC clinics using one-on-one session are held at 8 times each month. Topics include MyPyramid, food resource management with meal planning, the importance of balancing food intake with physical activity and how to use the food guide pyramid to make healthy choices when eating out with food demonstration products. Food safety is taught throughout the program year.

**Disabled:** Educational programming for disabled and/or chronically mentally ill adults in community settings using the multi-session format will occur. Topics to include are actual food preparation while learning about the importance of nutritious meals and snacks, the importance of physical activity, and food safety.

**Food Pantries:** Educational programming for persons at food pantries using learn-while-you-wait and one-on-one methods. Adults with or without children and senior adults are the target at these locations which includes 9 sites each month. The learn-while-you-wait method often become little mini-sessions in groups of 3-7 people or even one-on-one. Balancing food intake with physical activity with the selection of fewer energy-dense nutrient-poor foods is the major emphasis due to the high rate of obesity. Food safety is taught throughout the program year. Nutritious, easy to fix recipes are demonstrated each time, often times utilizing the commodities offered at the pantry to encourage selecting the items and help teach participants how to fix it.