

Plan for Food Stamp Nutrition Education in Fond du Lac and Green Lake Counties during fiscal year 2008

Overview of the Fond du Lac and Green Lake Counties Nutrition Education Program

The Fond du Lac/Green Lake unit began in Fond du Lac County in 1991 in response to agency requests for help with clients who had limited skills in food shopping and food preparation. In 1997, Green Lake County, an adjacent county, was added to the unit. This permits educational contacts with Green Lake's smaller population without added administrative costs.

Characteristics of the low income residents in Fond du Lac and Green Lake Counties

Demographics of the Counties

Fond du Lac County has a population of 97,296. The urban center and hub of services is the city of Fond du Lac with a population of 42,000. The population is 96% white. According to the 2000 Census, 5.8% of the population is considered "poor," earning less than the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), which was \$20,000 for a family of four in 2006. In addition, 16.5% of the population is "low income" earning less than 185% of the FPL. The percent of the entire population in the county receiving Food Share in 2005 was 7.1%. In Fond du Lac County, 6,886 people received Food Share in 2005. In Fond du Lac County, 13.8% of the child population received FoodShare in 2005.

Green Lake County has a population of 19,105. The county is rural with four main population centers; Berlin is the largest city within the county as there is no urban hub within the county. The population of Green Lake County is 97.8% white. According to the 2000 Census, 7% of the county population is considered "poor", earning less than the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), which was \$20,000 for a family of four in 2006. In addition, 21.2% of the population is "low income," earning less than 185% of the FPL. The percent of the population in the county receiving Food Share program is 5.9%. In Green Lake County, 1,353 people received Food Share in 2005. In Green Lake County, 13.7% of the child population received FoodShare in 2005.

Documentation from both Fond du Lac and Green Lake County Department of Health and Social Services show increased use of public assistance programs. In Fond du Lac County, in the last year, the number of individual caseload recipients using Food Share on January of each respective year was 4,212 in 2006 and 4393 in 2007, an increase of 181 users. (Source: <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/em/rsdata/agsbycy/fs-assistance>)

In Green Lake County, in the last year, the number of individual caseload recipients using Food Share on January of each respective year was 747 in 2006 and 1584 in 2007, an increase of 837 users. In addition to the growing use of FoodShare, the use of Medical assistance has increased at a significant rate as well. FoodShare users in both counties include households with children. Households with children experience food insecurity at more than double the rate of households without children. (Row, February 2005).

Food Insecurity in the Counties

From the 2000 Census, 40% of the WIC households in Fond du Lac County reported being food insecure, with an additional 18% of households reporting food insecurity with hunger. Fond du Lac County has 7 food pantries. There are seven school districts in the county; 26.7% of the children in these schools are approved for free or reduced price lunches. This is an increase from 24% last year. From the 2000 WIC survey, 44% of the WIC households in Green Lake County reported being food insecure, with an additional 13% households reporting food insecurity with hunger. There are four school districts in the county; 25.6% of the children in these schools are approved for free or reduced price lunches. Green Lake County has 4 food pantries. In 2004, 3,393 individuals used the Green Lake County pantry, with 209 families being new in participation in the food pantry. From June to December of 2004, 395 families (consisting of 4 or more members) used the pantry.

Nutrition and nutrition education needs of Food Share Program recipients and other low-income residents of Fond du Lac and Green Lake Counties

The Fond du Lac County Community Health Survey, completed in the fall of 2005, contains specific information related to nutrition and health concerns. In this random household survey, it was found that in households reporting an annual income below \$30,000, 31% reported their health was fair or poor. Additional findings from this economic group included engaging in physical activity less often, less likely to eat 2 or more servings of fruits and 3 or more servings of vegetables each day compared to households reporting incomes higher than \$30,000. In 2005, the three most often selected health issues facing their community were: obesity, lack of exercise or poor nutrition (61%), alcohol abuse (57%) or smoking (48%). Responses to a 2001 survey question on the number of times the respondents ate fast-food meals indicates 37% of the overall population eats a fast food meal a few times each week.

Agency staff in both counties report concerns about poor management of money for food, families are finding that Food Share is not able to meet their food needs and food pantries are being used to a larger extent. Food insecurity is growing. In addition, the observations of eating high fat, low nutrition snacks and regular consumption of soda are concerns that continue. Agency staff noted the need to have more education for families in the areas of managing resources so they have money for food as well as eating a healthful diet. The number of families who are receiving Food Share has increased in both counties, which includes children in the families. Reaching out to the families where they may be, to increase their knowledge of eating healthfully for their children, is a need.

An additional challenge in reducing poverty and food insecurity in both counties is the rising immigrant population. In both counties the numbers of individuals who are non-English speaking have been reported to increase by food pantry workers as well as have been active in our WNEP programming. The language and cultural barriers challenge the families who are trying to meet their nutritional needs.

Educational Projects planned for FY08

After School: Either single session or a series will be targeted to youth ages 5 – 17 years of age at the following sites: Boys and Girls Club, Food Group (graduates from the Head Start, Independent Living, STAR program and Kids in Kitchen series), and Junior Master Gardner.

Topics to address, but not limited to will include: eating fruits and vegetables, hand washing, food safety, food label reading, measuring skills, eating a balanced diet, MyPyramid.

Parents: Learn While You Wait sessions for monthly Parents as Teachers events will be targeted at Family Resource Center, Head Start and Boys and Girls Club families. Multiple sessions will be targeted at young adults (ages 18 – 24) involved with the ADVOCAP Fresh Start program. Multiple session programming for Family Resource Center participants, WIC participants and Social Services clients will be provided using the Sisters in Health Curriculum, targeting Hispanic and English speaking families. Either by single session or a series of sessions and educational outreach methods, using parent meetings and newsletters, pre-school children and their families (parents and caregivers) will be targeted at Head Start programming locations. Topics planned but not limited to include: hand washing, food safety, MyPyramid and parent/child food preparations, food resource management, eating a balanced diet, increased vegetable consumption and increased diet quality through food preparation sessions.

Job Centers: Single sessions will be targeted at adults receiving Food Share certification or recertification training at the Job Center and Food Share office. Topics planned but not limited to will include: Money for Food Curriculum, Shopping Strategies skill development, meal planning and MyPyramid.

WIC: Learn-While-You-Wait education and WIC-issued newsletters to pregnant women or mothers of young children at WIC clinics. Topics planned but not limited to will include: My Pyramid, Food Safety, Farmer's Market, Grocery Shopping Tips, and Eating More Vegetables.

Gardens: Educational programming in collaboration with Master Gardeners, Salvation Army and Boys and Girls Club will be done through a series of lessons targeted at youth ages 8 – 17 years of age and their families as well as newsletter inserts into summer meal programs with the Salvation Army. Topics planned but not limited to will include: Food Safety, Hand washing, label reading, eating more vegetables, MyPyramid, and Diet Quality through limited food preparation sessions.

Disabled: Single session educational programming will be targeted at disabled or chronically mentally ill adults at day treatment centers: Fox River Industries, and Friendship Center. Topics planned but not limited to will address: food safety, Food Resource Management and Diet Quality through limited food preparation sessions and cooking with commodities.

Food Pantries: Educational programming for individuals working with emergency food pantries and free meal sites addressing food insecurity. Diet quality programming through food preparation sessions for food pantry and commodity users. Learn-While-You Wait, single session groups and educational outreach will be utilized. Topics planned, but not limited to will include: Food safety, eating a balanced diet, diet quality of food pantry foods and MyPyramid.

Other Adult Groups: Educational programming will be targeted to individuals involved with ARC Transitional program, individuals who are residing at temporary housing: Bethany House and Independent living, and individuals participating in AODA or similar recovery/treatment programs: Berry House. Single sessions will be used. Topics planned but not limited to will

include: food safety, food resource management, eating a balanced diet, Diet Quality based upon MyPyramid

Home Visits: Educational programming for families or individuals in their homes. One-on-One teaching for a series of lessons. Topics planned but not limited to will address food resource management skills and increased diet quality through food preparation sessions and federal food safety programming.

Food Security Programming Efforts Planned

Methods planned to raise awareness of hunger/food insecurity

WNEP in Fond du Lac participates in the county Food Provider Network. The mission of this collaboration is to coordinate resources through communication. A Food Provider Network established in Green Lake County to better coordinate resources through communication there will continue to be nurtured as it builds relationships and establishment. These two hunger consortiums will collaborate with the state consortium as possible.

The localized publication, “Hunger Close to Home” and “Customized Food Security Profile” will be shared and discussed with the partner agencies in the two counties as well as the local government stakeholders.

Educators will provide knowledge and skills needed to help families and individuals better manage their food resources. Educational programs that teach family members grocery shopping skills in the areas of list making, meal planning and grocery store marketing of products will help families apply these skills to help make a difference in the diets of the participating families.

Methods planned to compile and assess status of food security

Investigate the possibility of implementing the Wisconsin Food Pantry Users Survey in the two counties as well as work with the county food pantries to assess the level of food insecurity being expressed by pantry users. Results will be shared with the Food Provider networks in the counties as well as the WNEP stakeholders.