



Nutrition for Family Living

Susan Nitzke, Nutrition Specialist; susan.nitzke@ces.uwex.edu
Sherry Tanumihardjo, Nutrition Specialist; sherry.tan@ces.uwex.edu
Amy Rettammel, Outreach Specialist; arettamm@facstaff.wisc.edu
Gayle Coleman, Nutrition Specialist; gayle.coleman@ces.uwex.edu
Heather Harvey, Nutrition Specialist; heather.harvey@ces.uwex.edu

January, 2006 Topics

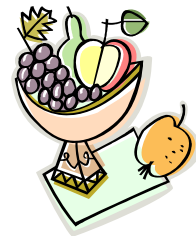
USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Comes to Wisconsin!

The Power of Others to Shape Our Identity: Body Image, Physical Abilities, and Body Weight

USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Comes to Wisconsin!

By Heather Harvey and Sherry Tanumihardjo

Background: The USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) was piloted in 2002. During that year, four states and the Zuni Indian Tribal Organization offered free fresh fruits and vegetables to students in 107 schools. In the 2004/05 school year, the USDA expanded the program to include four more states and three more tribal organizations. This November, the USDA again expanded the program to include six more states, including Wisconsin.



Each school is awarded an amount of money per student to offer free fruits and vegetables for the remainder of the school year. The goals of the FFVP are to create healthier school environments, increase the variety of fruits and vegetables children experience, and increase consumption of fruits and vegetables. Schools who participate in the program must offer free fresh (or dried) fruits and vegetables to students throughout the school day. All students are eligible to participate regardless of income.

The schools decide when, where, how, and what fruits and vegetables are offered. Thus, schools can offer the fruit and vegetables in a variety of ways, including: inside classrooms, in hallways, in the cafeteria, on the bus, in free vending machines, in kiosks, and at school events. Most schools use a combination of delivery methods that depend on the age of the students, what is being served, and the particular school. Schools are encouraged to include nutrition education with the delivery of the fruits and vegetables. Nutrition education suggested includes sampling and tasting different fruits and vegetables as well as opportunities to prepare foods featuring fruits and vegetables such as smoothies, salsas, veggie pizza or slaw.

An evaluation of the pilot in 2003 indicated that students purchased fewer unhealthy snack items at school and that students were more willing to select and try fruits and vegetables as part of the School Lunch Program. Parents even reported that their kids were asking for more fruits and vegetables at home.

The Wisconsin program: The Department of Public Instruction will be administering the program in Wisconsin, with support from Wisconsin 5 A Day. The 25 chosen schools are located across Wisconsin and represent a mixture of rural, urban, and suburban schools as well as a mixture of elementary, middle, and high schools. The majority of schools have over 50% of their students qualifying for free or reduced-price meals. A total of 12,436 students will have access to fresh fruits and vegetables because of this program.

The difference this can make: The Dietary Guidelines for children in 2005 recommend 2 ½ cups of vegetables and 1 ½ cups of fruit everyday. The school breakfast program requires ½ cup and the enhanced school lunch program requires ¾ cup of fruits and vegetables each day. Through



Nutrition for Family Living January, 2006

those programs, students are only assured 1 ¼ cups of the total 4 cup recommendation. The added fresh fruits or vegetables with the USDA FFVP program may allow children to get almost one-half of their fruits and vegetables within the school day. Encouraging healthy eating habits when children are young could positively impact their health in the future because studies indicate that increased fruit and vegetable intake may help protect against many chronic diseases, including heart disease, cancer, and osteoporosis.

Implications for educators: USDA encourages schools to collaborate with outside organizations to help deliver the program. Suggested partners include county health departments, farm to cafeteria projects, local grocers and Extension agents. The Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program is perfectly positioned in many cases to help deliver nutrition education as part of the FFVP, as 18 of the 25 schools have >50% of students with free and reduced-priced lunches. This is a great opportunity to strengthen existing partnerships and to link education with behavior change in students.

Resources:

Produce for Better Health Foundation: “Promoting Fruits and Vegetables in Schools: Wellness Policy Opportunities.” <http://www.pbhfoundation.org/pulse/policy/programs/>.

USDA: “Food-Based Menu Planning: Traditional and Enhanced.”
<http://schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov/Recipes/menuplan/02CHAP2.pdf>



This article is part of a 4-year project supported by the National Research Initiative of the USDA Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service, grant number 2003-35200-05377 to Tanumihardjo entitled “Promotion of high vegetable consumption as a weight-loss strategy and general well-being.”



The Power of Others to Shape Our Identity: Body Image, Physical Abilities, and Body Weight

By Gayle Coleman

Other people can strongly influence how individuals feel about their own body and physical abilities. These influences can shape individuals' identity, their lifestyle attitudes and behaviors, and even their body weight, according to a qualitative study conducted by Wellness IN (WIN) the Rockies

Wellness IN (WIN) the Rockies, a research, intervention and outreach project in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming, emphasizes the development of positive lifestyle behaviors and attitudes, and promotes a health-based rather than weight-based approach to well-being. Team members from this project interviewed 103 adults (57 women and 46 men) who shared comments about their life experiences related to eating and food, physical activity and body image. Interviews were conducted either individually or as part of focus groups. The adults interviewed represented a range in terms of age, body size, and occupation/work status.

A major theme that emerged from this study was the power of others in relation to how individuals feel about their bodies and their physical abilities. Almost half of the study participants shared experiences that reflected how other people can exert considerable influence over one's sense of personal identity, specifically in terms of body image and/or physical abilities. Comments or actions from people, who were considered important or powerful in a person's life such as parents, spouses, family members, coaches, teachers, and physicians, appeared to have more influence than more casual acquaintances. Hurtful comments or actions from youth also appeared to have a significant influence.

Effects of comments and behaviors were not always negative. Some people felt strengthened (praised, supported) by interpersonal relationships. For example, one woman said she gained a "sense of accomplishment" and "a lot of self-confidence" because of the patience and support of a coach. On the other hand, many participants reported negative influences such as teasing or criticism. One man told how he used to get "sick to his stomach to go to school" because he was teased about being short. The majority of the stories about teasing based on body size and shape related to people being heavy or large. Six people in the study shared stories that reflected resistance to the negative influences of others.

Implications for Extension Educators: Interpersonal relationships and support from family members, friends, and/or close colleagues are important influences on self-image. Although Extension educators do not usually conduct weight-loss interventions, it is important to present all nutrition lessons, especially those related to balancing calories with physical activity, in ways that support and are sensitive to participants' feelings of self-worth.

Resources:

Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal, Vol. 34, No. 1, September 2005.

Related articles from *Nutrition for Family Living*: ABCs of Behavior Modification for Obesity (<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/wnep/specialist/nfl/mmpdfs/0507.pdf#page=5>) and The Role of Families and Communities in Obesity Prevention (<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/wnep/specialist/nfl/mmpdfs/0512.pdf>).