



Nutrition for Family Living

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April, 2006 Topics

Governor's School Health Awards, Round 2
The New Dietary Guidelines: How are Americans doing?
Evaluation of a USDA Nutrition Education Program for Low-income Youth

Governor's School Health Awards, Round 2

From Susan Nitzke

If you are working with a school that is making a sincere effort to promote student health, please make sure they know about the Governor's School Health Awards. Pre-registrations for this second round of awards is due on April 14, 2006 and full applications are due on May 5. Awards will be presented in June.

The school health award application has five sections, each having multiple criteria for awards at the bronze, silver and gold levels:

- Section 1: School Health Policies and Management
- Section 2: Physical Education/Physical Activity
- Section 3: Healthy Eating/Nutrition Education
- Section 4: Alcohol-, Tobacco-, and Drug-Free Lifestyles
- Section 5: Parent and School Partnerships

More information is available at this website: <http://www.schoolhealthaward.wi.gov/>



The New Dietary Guidelines: How are Americans doing?

By Heather Harvey

Recently, the Economic Research Service of the USDA released a report on per capita food consumption, or more specifically, how much food was available for consumption in the US in 2004. Factors such as spoilage, waste, non-edible portions of the food (e.g. the peel or pit), and other losses in the home and marketing system were included to estimate how much food remained per person. This is a crude indicator of intake, but it is useful for general comparisons across the population. The data represent the situation just before the Dietary Guidelines for Americans were released and do not address the change in food consumption since the release of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. However, the results are presented in a way that we are able to compare them to the recommendations outlined in the Dietary Guidelines and in MyPyramid.

Overall, Americans tended to fall short of the current guidelines for milk, vegetables, and fruit and exceeding the recommendations for grains, and meat & beans. Below is the average consumption per capita in 2004, followed by the recommendation for a 2,000 calorie diet in bold and parentheses.

- Grains: 6.8 ounces (**6.0 ounces**)
- Milk: 1.7 cups (**3.0 cups**)
- Vegetables: 2.0 cups (**2.5 cups**)
- Fruit: 0.9 cups (**2.0 cups**)
- Meat & Beans: 6.1 ounces (**5.5 ounces**)
- Solid fats*: 41 grams
- Salad and Cooking Oils: 32 grams
- Added sugar: 30 teaspoons

*Solid fats include butter, lard, margarine, edible beef tallow, shortening, and some dairy fats (creams, cream cheese, eggnog). It does not include fat from meat, poultry, fish or cheese.

Over the last 34 years, there have been small increases in consumption of meat, beans and nuts, fruit, vegetables, and added sugars, while dairy consumption remained relatively constant. Even larger increases in consumption of grains and added fats have been noted.

Within the milk group, fluid milk made up about 40% of the consumed milk products, with cheese contributing an equal percentage. Frozen dairy products, processed cheese (including cottage and cream cheese) and cream products shared the remaining 20%. While skim milk consumption increased over the last 34 years, the majority of fluid milk consumed was 2% or whole milk.

Fresh vegetables made up about half of Americans' total vegetable intake. Canned and frozen vegetables made up about half a cup on average, per person, per day. Potatoes and lettuce were the most commonly consumed vegetables. On average, Americans were consuming almost a cup of dark green, leafy vegetables, falling short of the recommended 3 cups per week. Americans were not doing much better with the recommendation to get 2 cups of orange vegetables a week. In this group, the average consumption per person was only 0.6 cups a week. When it comes to dried peas and beans, Americans were getting just over a third of the recommended 3 cups a week. Americans were exceeding their recommended intake of potatoes and other starchy vegetables by about a cup each week.



Nutrition for Family Living April, 2006

About half the amount of fruit eaten by Americans was fresh fruit, while juice made up approximately a $\frac{1}{4}$ cup per person each day. The remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ cup was made up of canned, frozen and dried fruit.

On average, about 3 ounces of red meat and 2 ounces of poultry were consumed per American each day. Fish only accounted for 0.3 ounces of daily meat consumption. Nuts and eggs made up the remaining intake, with beans playing a negligible role in the meat and bean group.

Implication for Educators:

Even though we do not yet know the impact of the Dietary Guidelines on Americans on consumption from this study, the data do point to areas where the largest changes in consumption need to be made in order to be in line with the guidelines. In general, education should focus on increasing intake of low fat milk, dark green and orange vegetables, dried beans and peas, fruit, and fish while reducing the total amount of meat and refined grains. These will be difficult changes for many learners. As educators we need to strive not only to convey what the recommendations are, but practical ways to incorporate these recommendations into their lives.

Resources:

ERS Food Consumption Data

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/FoodConsumption/>

MyPyramid

<http://www.mypyramid.gov>



Evaluation of a USDA Nutrition Education Program for Low-income Youth

By Gayle Coleman

The January/February 2006 issue of the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* includes a summary of the first large, randomized control study to examine the effectiveness of the Youth Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). The study also looked at the validity of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) impact indicators for program outcomes.

The study was done with California Youth EFNEP between October 1998 and October 1999. It included 229 groups with 5,111 youth ranging in age from 9 to 12 years. Youth groups served as the unit of intervention and analysis with approximately a 2:1 ratio between groups in intervention and groups in delayed intervention – the groups that served as the control. The intervention groups received a 7-lesson series. Each lesson was about one hour in length and taught by trained leaders. Groups were located in schools, at summer and inter-session day camps, and as part of after-school programs. Lessons included instruction on content as well as food preparation and tasting.

Evaluation was done using pre and post tests. Results of the study indicate that the treatment participants made significant gains on the posttest compared to controls for 3 of 4 USDA indicators – Nutrition knowledge, Food selection, and Food preparation skills and safety practices. There was no statistical significant difference for the indicator, Eat a variety of food. However, treatment participants did have improved scores for this indicator. These positive changes in knowledge and short-term behaviors are similar to other studies that were set in a real-world context. The investigators collected additional data from parent letters and leader questionnaire. However, the self-report nature of the leader questionnaire was problematic and therefore the investigators believe this information is unreliable.

The investigators conclude that their Youth EFNEP intervention is effective. In addition, their analysis provides evidence for the validity of the four USDA impact indicators.

Implications for WNEP: The results of this study are very applicable to our work because there are many similarities between California's Youth EFNEP and Youth WNEP, both EFNEP and FSNE. This study focuses on a series of lessons with 6 to 8 hours of direct contact, it would be interesting to see how variations in the number of direct contact hours affect results since the amount of time spent with youth audiences in WNEP varies. Bev has requested copies of the evaluation tools that were used to see if they might be useful for us.

Source: Townsend MS, Johns M, Shilts MK, and Farfan-Ramirez L. *Evaluation of a USDA Nutrition Education Program for Low-income Youth*. *JNEB*. 2006;38(1):30-41.