

NUTRI-NET NEWS

OCTOBER, 2001

This newsletter is a service of the Nutrition Education Network of Wisconsin. The Network is designed to enhance coordination and communication among agencies and organizations that educate Wisconsin's low income individuals and families about nutrition and food.

Nutri-Net News shares brief information about programs and materials that support healthful and enjoyable eating.

Visit our Web site at: <http://www.nutrisci.wisc.edu/nutrinet/>

Working Together to Prevent Childhood Overweight

*Gladys Kubitz, MA, RD, CD
Nutrition Consultant, WI Division of Public Health*

In the United States at least one child in five is overweight and the number of overweight children has increased by more than 50% in the last two decades. The number of extremely overweight children has nearly doubled.

Very overweight children and adolescents are at immediate risk for sleep apnea, orthopedic complications, type 2 diabetes, and elevated levels of cholesterol, blood pressure, triglycerides, and fasting insulin. In addition, overweight adolescents have up to a 2-fold increased risk for being overweight as adults. As a result, they also are at increased risk for chronic medical conditions such as coronary heart disease, colon cancer, diabetes, arthritis, and asthma.

In March 2000, the Wisconsin Division of Public Health's Nutrition Section brought together staff from several statewide nutrition programs to review this problem in Wisconsin and explore possible approaches. The group agreed that collaboration among programs, both at the state and local levels, was key to success

in addressing the ever increasing numbers of overweight children in our communities. Consistent messages, policies, and best practices among state programs are the overall goals of WINPAW.

Three strategies from New York State's Eat Well Play Hard initiative were chosen. They are: 1) increase consumption of fruits and vegetables, 2) increase physical activity and decrease sedentary activity, and 3) increase consumption of low-fat and fat-free milk.

Recently WINPAW identified the following mission: ***to provide state leadership for nutrition and physical activity programming to prevent overweight in children and adolescents.*** The group is
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Contact:

Kate Pederson
WI Nutrition Education
Network Coordinator
Nutritional Sciences
1415 Linden Drive
Madison, WI 53706-1571

Phone: (608) 265-2108

e-mail: pederson@nutrisci.wisc.edu

FAX: (608) 262-5860

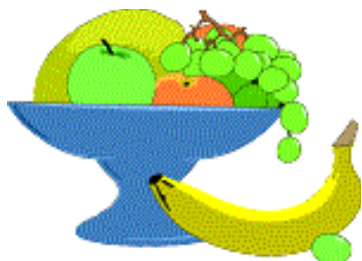
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also expanding to include more members, particularly people with expertise in the area of physical activity. Finally, the need for health status data on school-age children has led to new collaborations.

By working with Milwaukee Public Schools' Healthy Hearts project, height, weight and other nutrition and health information on children in elementary and middle school will be collected. Collaboration with the University of Wisconsin Department of Family Medicine will result in the collection of similar data on American Indian children. This data will be very useful in planning and implementing nutrition and physical activity programs and helpful when seeking funding for these programs.

WINPAW is establishing the infrastructure for a comprehensive nutrition and physical activity program. With this infrastructure in place and more complete data on the extent of overweight among children and adolescents in Wisconsin, state and local funding prospects will be enhanced.



Focus Groups to Freshen the 5 A Day for Better Health Program Message

Betsy Kelley, MS RD

Outreach Specialist, UW-Extension

A study conducted by the National Cancer Institute and the National Institutes of Health was conducted to get insight into trends and barriers in fruit and vegetable consumption.

Twelve focus groups were conducted with 110 members of the 5 A Day target audience to get insight into new concepts for future 5 A Day materials. Four groups were conducted with three racial/ethnic groups (Caucasian, African American, and Latino), two with males and two with females for each group. The study's objectives were to 1) identify topics to "freshen" the 5 A Day message; 2) update information about attitudes, barriers and knowledge about nutrition and chronic disease; 3) explore new concepts and how to incorporate them.

Participants were 25-50 years old, low-middle income, and 50% of each group had children at home in the 8th grade or younger. Participants were primary or equal food shoppers, not vegetarian or health professionals, and did not eat a prescribed diet or have diet related diseases in their households.

Summary of common themes across all groups:

- The majority reported making healthy changes to their diets during the last 5-10 years. Reasons for healthy changes included influence of family and friends, changes in lifestyle, and weight control. The most common less healthy change was eating more fast food.
- Participants viewed "better overall health" as an important benefit of eating fruits and vegetables.
- Common barriers included: preparation time for vegetables, lack of availability during certain seasons, and lack of appeal for both fruits and vegetables.
- There was little awareness of serving size or recommended number of servings for fruits or vegetables.
- People strongly preferred fresh fruits and vegetables over canned, frozen or dried.
- There was little awareness of antioxidants and the link between color and nutritional value, but there was interest in learning about these concepts.

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- Females spoke about their children when discussing benefits, barriers and ways to overcome barriers.
- Men were more likely to mention weight control as a benefit.

Key findings from Caucasian groups:

- Caucasian participants expressed greater awareness of the link between eating habits and good health, and saw disease prevention and a longer life as greater motivators.
- Males took more action for their own health, were more concerned with weight control, and took a more active role in food preparation than in 1992.

Future 5 A Day messages for Caucasians should incorporate the following concepts:

- Emphasize health benefits, especially long term benefits.
- Focus on physical attractiveness and good taste of fruits and vegetables.
- Provide tips and recipes for new preparation methods.
- Include ideas for getting the whole family involved.
- Capitalize on opportunities in grocery stores.

Key findings from African American focus groups:

- African American participants viewed preparation time, cost, and taste as major barriers to eating more fruits and vegetables.
- Family, friends and doctors motivated this group to eat more healthfully.
- These participants placed a greater emphasis on preparing foods in healthy ways and have made changes in this area.

Future 5 A Day messages for African Americans should incorporate the following concepts:

- Emphasize looking and feeling good, living a longer life, sources of fiber, and taste.
- Provide quick and easy tips and resources for preparing meals
- Promote health benefits of fruits and vegetables
- Include ideas for getting the whole family involved
- Capitalize on opportunities in grocery stores

Key findings from Latino focus groups:

- These groups were eager for health information. Considerable potential exists for reaching Latinos with the 5 A Day message.

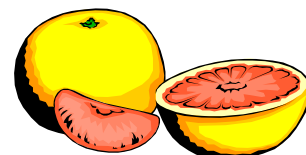
Future 5 A Day messages for Latinos should incorporate the following concepts:

- Provide culturally sensitive messages. Consider providing material in both Spanish and English.
- Include suggestions for overcoming barriers, including preparation tips that consider family members' preferences.
- Identify specific health benefits of particular fruits and vegetables.

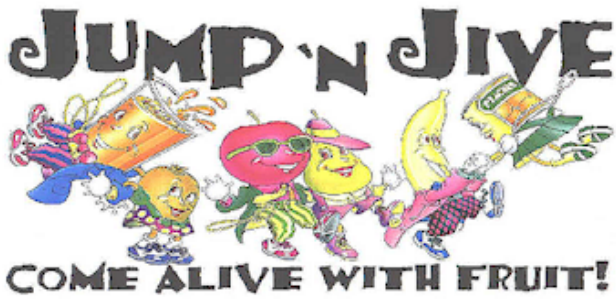
Implications for Nutrition Educators:

Knowing your audience is the first step toward making your messages effective. These suggestions may give you some ideas for presenting messages in ways that make the information important to your learners.

The Executive Summary of this report is available on the 5 A Day website, www.5aday.com.



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By the time you read this newsletter, *Jump 'N Jive...Come Alive With Fruit!* will be in full swing in 34 Wisconsin counties. To refresh your memory, this multi-agency social marketing and nutrition education campaign promotes fruit/juice at breakfast among food stamp eligible parents and caregivers. The message will be actively promoted during the months of October and November 2001.

Nutrition educators from WNEP, WIC, Elderly Nutrition, schools and Head Start from the participating counties are enthusiastically promoting *Jump 'N Jive* through interactive displays, fruit demonstrations, classroom activities and other nutrition activities. Tip sheets, posters, colorful stickers, mylar fruit balloons, press releases, newsletter articles, and school lunch menu backs will also help spread the *Jump 'N Jive* message.

New to *Jump 'N Jive* this fall are additional Spanish translated materials. The cranberry tip sheet was translated and joined the original set of six tip sheets (apples, pears, bananas, peaches, kiwifruit, and oranges/orange juice.) The tip sheets include the following topics: How to Buy, How to Store, Quick & Easy Tips, and a breakfast recipe. In addition, all three interactive displays and parent handouts/menu backs were translated and then reviewed by Spanish nutrition educators and will expand the audience reached during the campaign.

Outcome data collection from the campaign activities/materials and surveys submitted from agency coordinators and their partners will provide the basis for evaluation of the *Jump 'N Jive* campaign. This evaluation will help answer the following questions:

Network Update

1. How well do activities that combine principles of social marketing and community-based education achieve increased awareness of the campaign's message and intention to change behavior?
2. How does the campaign affect partnering among agencies that provide nutrition education to limited-income audiences at the local level?
3. How does the partnering aspect of the campaign affect the impact of agency nutrition education?

Outcome data from campaign partners are due to Kate Pederson by December 15, 2001. A verbal evaluation summary will be given to Network members at their January meeting with a final report to campaign coordinators by the end of February.

Along with Wisconsin Extension's Nutrition Education Program (WNEP), the Network's plan to USDA Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) was approved for the upcoming fiscal year (October 1, 2001 – September 30, 2002.) **This means the Network will begin planning for a new campaign with a physical activity/ nutrition message based on the needs of the limited income population for implementation in the spring of 2003.**

OUR MISSION:

The Nutrition Education Network of Wisconsin facilitates collaborative planning of nutrition education programs at the state and local levels. We promote healthful and enjoyable eating so that Wisconsin's low income individuals and families receive consistent, positive, relevant, accurate, and effective nutrition messages.

Nutri-Net News is one way that the Network shares information and resources to accomplish this mission.