

ALASKA



FOOD COALITION

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“Just imagine, how much easier our lives would be if we were born with a ‘user guide or owner’s manual’ which could tell us what to eat and how to live.” *Erika M. Szabo, Author, Alternative Medicine Practitioner*

Teaching Nutrition and Budgeting Skills*

Time is a precious commodity for most U.S. families. According to the Center for American Progress, only 20% of U.S. mothers worked in 1960. 50 years later, 70% of American children lived in households where all adults were employed. In 2010, the Bureau of Labor Statistics American Time Use Survey found U.S. adults spend per day:

- 1 hour preparing food
- 1.3 hours eating and drinking
- 1.7 hours purchasing goods and services

Offering your clients resources to manage the time they spend preparing, purchasing and budgeting for food will ultimately help decrease their dependence on emergency food by helping them stretch their food dollars. University of Alaska Cooperative Extension Service (CES) Nutrition Educators, through the Alaska Nutrition Education Program (ANEP) and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) can teach your clients cooking and shopping skills to help make healthy eating affordable. Educators talk with clients about how good nutrition affects chronic disease, basic growth development and health. Woven into lessons on healthy eating is the value of incorporating exercise into daily activities.

Alaska Nutrition Education Program

The Alaska Nutrition Education Program (ANEP) is a federal/state partnership that supports nutrition education for persons eligible for SNAP benefits or food stamps. ANEP is part of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Education Program Education (SNAP-Ed). It is funded by the USDA through Alaska Department of Health & Social Services, Food Stamp Program. The mission of ANEP is to provide educational programs to people eligible for food stamps in order to equip them with the information needed to make healthy food choices within a limited budget. The targeted audiences are individuals and families who qualify for food stamps, although receiving food stamps is not a requirement.

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Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) is a nutrition education program that teaches families how to plan, shop and prepare tasty and healthy meals within a limited budget. If your clients receive any form of public assistance (such as food stamps, WIC or school lunches) they may be eligible for the EFNEP program. The program includes an actual trip to the grocery store with a nutrition educator to help the client make thrifty, nutritious choices when purchasing food.

Mother/daughter teams particularly enjoy this program; learning how to create a shopping list, review ingredients and make their own basics such as salad dressings and brownies. Training sessions are conducted at client homes, via correspondence or in group settings. This program empowers clients to make informed decisions about the food they eat; client choice at its best.

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Cooking with Kids

The 'Cooking with Kids' curriculum, designed for grades K-1, grades 2-3, and grades 4-6 is part of EFNEP. Through hands-on classes, children learn that good food is delicious and that cooking is an important way to take care of yourself. Classes include basic nutrition education with tips on eating a healthy breakfast and including more fruits and vegetables in your diet. Along with exercise, fitness and caloric balance, this program focuses on the necessary basics for healthy growth. Youth are reached in the classroom through partnerships with local school districts. Other successful partnerships include youth groups such as 4-H, Boy Scouts, Campfire, church groups, Girl Scouts, Girls and Boys Clubs and Head Start.

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Recovery Programs

Organizations that help people transition from life challenging situations also benefit from ANEP and EFNEP. Clients are provided with skills training, budgeting and cooking. At Homeward Bound in Anchorage this year, nutrition educators helped clients create and maintain a garden. Clients learned how to prepare meals that included the kale, carrots, zucchini, onions and lettuce they grew.

Resources

University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Services
<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/hhfd/>

2010 American Time Survey, Bureau of Labor Statistics
<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/atus.nr0.htm>

Center for American Progress

http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/01/three_faces_report.html

Cooking with Kids

<http://cookingwithkids.net/>

The Alaska Food Coalition is here to help. Copies of Alaska Food Coalition White Papers are available Online: <http://www.alaskafood.org/whitepapers.shtml> for additional information, contact Vanessa Salinas, Alaska Food Coalition Manager: afc@foodbankofalaska.org

- ***NEXT MONTH:** “CSFP, CACFP, TEFAP – What Do They Mean?” will be featured in the January 2012 issue.