

Faculty and Community Involvement

The Tennessee Nutrition and Consumer Education Program was planned, developed and taught through the work of county-based nutrition education coalitions, and is supported by The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service (UTAES) specialists and faculty. Approved nutrition curricula and programming are provided through UTAES and Extension faculty who are actively involved with each coalition. In 95 counties, Extension faculty have made a commitment to the program. TNCEP is currently reaching Tennessee families through in-depth programming in 94 percent of Tennessee counties. Through social marketing efforts, all Tennessee counties were reached with awareness level programming.

The county coalitions identified nutrition needs of Food Stamp recipients and eligible recipients. Based on their conclusions, coalitions mobilized local services and resources to conduct an active nutrition education program for adults and youth, followed by evaluation documenting program impact.

County coalition members represented a variety of community people. During the 2002 program year, coalition members were involved in nutrition education in counties. These coalition members represented local and state government agencies and officials, educators, community organizations, businesses, Extension faculty and more than 133 Food Stamp recipients. Coalitions appoint a chairperson and secretary, but operate as a council of equals.

"I love our TNCEP classes. The best thing is I am less stressed and have more time and money for my kids. As a single mother, the menu planner helps me make quick decisions, involve my kids in cooking, and saves me money and trips to the grocery store. This has changed my life for the better."

Implications for the Future

In addition to effective nutrition educational programming, TNCEP coalitions are doing the following:

Developing a county infrastructure that is reducing duplication of services from government agencies,

Creating a culture of local community "ownership" for nutrition issues of Food Stamp recipients and

Taking responsibility to solve community nutrition and consumer education problems.

Food Stamp recipients who are serving as nutrition coalition members and those being trained as trainers of others are developing citizenship skills that help them positively influence others. Recipients are seeing their ideas become reality through the programs related to nutrition and consumer education. Tennessee Food Stamp families understand more about nutrition and are healthier for it.



Hands-On Demonstrations and Classes are the key to successful TNCEP Programs

This project funded under and agreement with the Department of Human Services and Food and Nutrition Services, USDA.



Tennessee Nutrition & Consumer Education Program Executive Summary

Improving Lives of Food Stamp Families

Program Year 2001-02

Background

The Food and Nutrition Services division of The United States Department of Agriculture reports that 604,765 individuals in Tennessee are receiving Food Stamps (April, 2002), which is a 15.7% increase from April, 2001. The number of households receiving food stamps has increased 13.8% to 258,419 households. The average benefit per person in the State of Tennessee is \$72.61 per month. Currently, Tennessee ranks 9th in the country in total households receiving Food Stamp Benefits. (Source: USDA website <http://www.fns.usda.gov>)

Tennessee families receiving Food Stamps report a lack of knowledge in the areas of cooking, food purchasing, managing food dollars and identifying alternatives to purchasing fast foods and pre-prepared foods. During the 2002 Fiscal Year, 95 counties utilized local Tennessee Nutrition Consumer Education Program (TNCEP) coalitions to design and deliver nutrition education to address these critical concerns.



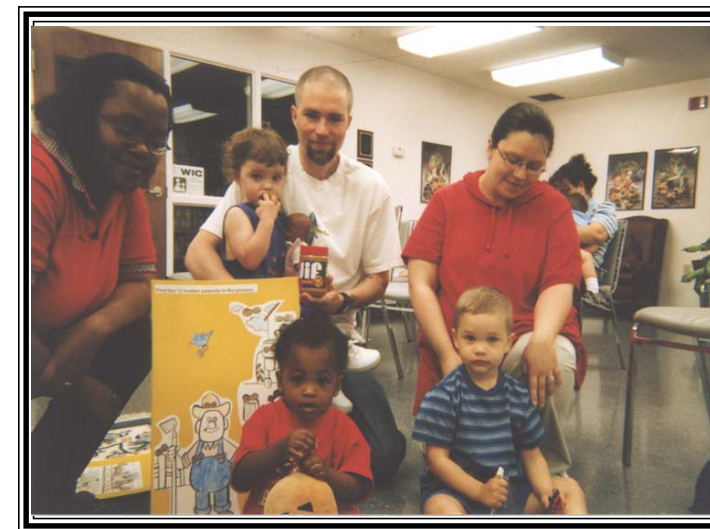
Hamilton County Senior participating in "Cranking Up Your Calcium."

Goal

The goal of the Tennessee Nutrition and Consumer Education Program (TNCEP) is that Food Stamp individuals and families will gain knowledge and skills needed to reduce the risk of inadequate nutrition while becoming empowered to move toward self-sufficiency. This goal will be accomplished by helping families effectively use Food Stamps and related resources.

Resources Required

During 2002, Tennessee conducted a \$5.5 million nutrition education program in 95 counties. Half the funding was contracted through the Tennessee Department of Human Services and USDA Food and Consumer Services. The other half was matched through in-kind contributions by The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service and the 95 county nutrition coalitions.



TNCEP programs are for the entire family!

Improving Lives of Food Stamp Families

The Agricultural Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability or veteran status and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS

The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating in furtherance of Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914.
Agricultural Extension Service, Charles L. Norman, Dean

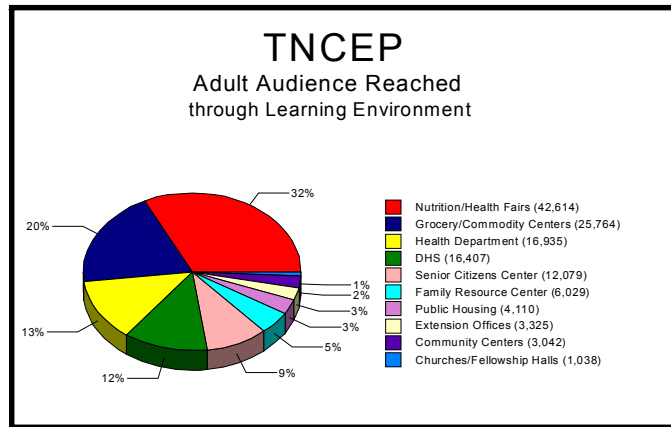


Tennessee Department of Human Services and Food Nutrition Service, USDA



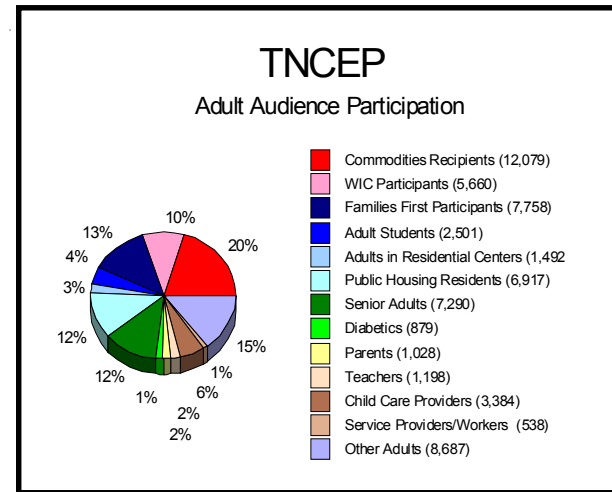
County coalitions established learning environments throughout the community.

- Extension faculty, county coalition members and program partners conducted 48,857 teaching sessions. As a result of these classes, 250,812 contacts were made with Food Stamp eligible recipients.
- Forty-five counties conducted educational programming as a part of the "Tennessee Welfare-to-Work Families First" program.
- Coalition development training was conducted for every county coalition.
- Educational programming occurred in places frequented by Food Stamp recipients.

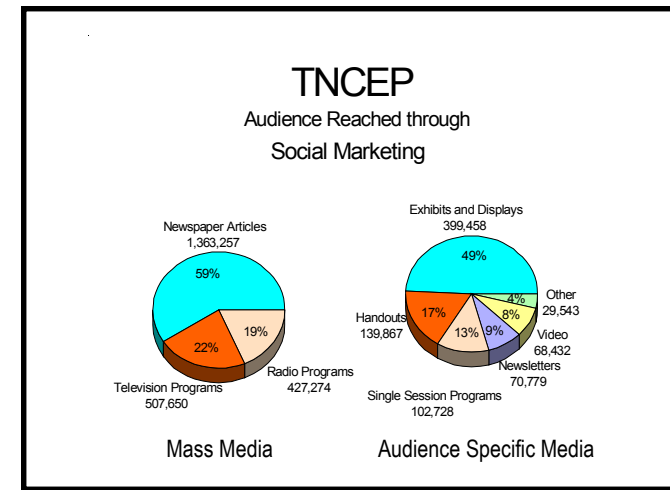


- Specific efforts were made to reach every Tennessee household receiving Food Stamps. Two strategies for reaching families were to provide news stories to local newspaper vendors and radio stations.
- Nine cable television outlets and 40 radio networks across the state aired TNCEP news stories through Extension's UT Connections Program, the national syndicated Ag Day Program, UT Hotline and Radiosource.net.
- Poverty simulations were conducted for program partners, community leaders and agencies with shared program goals. These workshops allowed 1,236 individual in sixteen sessions to experience and address issues relating to families with limited resources.
- "Food Fiesta", an interactive youth educational program was developed and the program was piloted in 9 counties. The curriculum has been distributed statewide.

- TNCEP Celebration is an annual, two day event showcasing programming excellence. More than 340 extension staff and program partners participated to learn more about successful county programs, nutrition education strategies, and coalition development.
- Through matching partner participation, 69,075 hours were contributed to TNCEP by 4,139 educators. The cost benefit to our program is \$993,729.



- Through non-matching volunteer private program support in communities, more than 6,321 hours were contributed to TNCEP by 889 volunteers. The cost benefit to our program is \$86,298.
- A bilingual Hispanic Head Start Pilot Project was developed to teach migrant workers and their children in five counties using Breakfast Bunch curriculum.
- Extension specialists maintain links for nutrition and health related subject matters as part of UTAES Extension Website. Topics pertinent to TNCEP audiences are identified to assist educators accessing research-based nutrition and health information and resources. TNCEP's web site is <http://www.utextension.utk.edu/tncep/>.
- TNCEP trained 76,566 volunteer nutrition educators in 2,448 "train-the-trainer" sessions. Community personnel including classroom teachers, day care providers and school food service workers participated in these educational sessions. These volunteers conducted an average of three community-based nutrition education programs each for individuals or small groups.



- Through social marketing and mass media, 2,874,842 contacts were made with Tennesseans. While all contacts made through these point-of-delivery methods were not Food Stamp recipients, they were the targeted audience of this educational effort.
- A Comprehensive School Health Project was initiated in 24 counties through teacher inservices, health fairs, agency fairs to improve the overall health of Tennessee's children. Personal BMI's (Body Mass Index) were recorded for the children receiving services in these counties and education will continue in FY03. Methodist Le Bonheur Hospital was a program partner for West Tennessee..
- Facilitator Workshops for Program Assistants were conducted providing face-to-face training. Additionally, a three-hour video training program for basic nutrition classes was piloted in the Smoky Mountain District.
- Through a Kellogg Foundation Partnership and East Tennessee State University, three East Tennessee counties have completed a five year community nutrition education program. This Colonial Nutrition Project has received national recognition.
- Ten counties in the Western District and Central District piloted this "This Schools-A-Cookin'" program - a Kindergarten through Fourth grade, teacher lead class emphasizing dietary quality.
- Inservices were conducted for extension faculty and program partners in 62 counties to develop learning centers for implementing "The Breakfast Bunch" curriculum designed to teach nutrition education to youth in grades K through 4.
- TNCEP programming was showcased through an interactive educational session at USDA Southeast Region \$6 Million Dollar Conference in Birmingham.

- Statewide curriculum training was conducted for FF-News (Families First -Nutrition Education and Wellness Systems), "Take Charge of Your Health for Busy Families," and "Walk Across Tennessee."
- Four TNCEP "Career Edge" interns have been employed as county Extension Agents. Additionally, two TNCEP Program Assistants have been promoted to Extension Agent.

County evaluations indicate TNCEP Educational Programing is making a change in knowledge level, skills gained, attitudes toward food and behavioral changes.

- In Harden County, 95% of 3rd grade participants are eating more fruits and vegetables.
- Sixty-seven percent of participating students in Stewart County report a change in healthy food choices at school .
- Carter County reports a 33% increase of children eating breakfast as a result of breakfast emphasis programs.
- Shelby County reports 34% of participating, overweight children have reduced their weight by 5 lbs. or more.
- Dyers County Cooking School participants are reporting an average savings of \$4.38 per family each week.
- Recommended hand washing practices have been adopted by 93% of Coffee County's participating children.
- In Hancock County, 21% of participants have increased their walking/physical activity.

