

Tennessee Nutrition & Consumer Education Program Executive Summary

Improving Lives of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Families

2007-2008

State of Affairs

The Tennessee Department of Human Services reports that 960,799 individuals in our state are receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)* benefits (September 2008). This represents a 9.8 percent increase from the previous year. The average Supplemental Nutrition Assistance benefit per person in Tennessee is \$96.70 per month. Currently, we rank 11th in the country in total households receiving SNAP benefits (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/SNAPmain.htm>).

**As of Oct. 1, 2008, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the new name for the federal Food Stamp Program. The new name reflects the changes made to meet the needs of our clients, including a focus on nutrition and an increase in benefit amounts.*

Extension Response

The goal of the Tennessee Nutrition and Consumer Education Program (TNCEP) is to help SNAP and SNAP-eligible individuals and families gain the knowledge and skills needed to reduce the risk of inadequate nutrition while becoming empowered to move toward self-sufficiency. This goal is accomplished by providing our clients with nutrition education that teaches them to effectively use SNAP and related resources. We focus on promoting healthy eating habits and physically active lifestyles.

During 2008, Tennessee conducted a \$6.2 million nutrition education program in 92 counties. Half the funding was contracted through the Tennessee Department of Human Services and the USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The other half was matched through in-kind contributions by University of Tennessee Extension and 92 county nutrition coalitions.



Economic Impact

TNCEP returns benefits of \$66 million in reduced long-term healthcare costs for \$6.2 million spent in FY 2008.

TNCEP Connects Statewide

- Through matching partner participation, 61,981 hours were contributed to TNCEP by partner educators. The cost benefit to our program was \$1,665,921.
- Through non-matching volunteer private program support in communities, more than 4,780 hours were contributed to TNCEP by volunteers. The cost benefit to our program was \$95,803.
- County coalition members represent a variety of community people. During the 2007-2008 program year, 1,658 coalition members were involved in county-level education. These coalition members represented 949 different organizations, including local and state government agencies, education programs, community organizations, businesses, Extension faculty and more than 120 SNAP recipients.

Program Participants Are Making a Change

- 82% have increased their consumption of fruits and vegetables.
- 93% are adopting healthier lifestyles by increasing their physical activity.
- 90% are now washing their hands more often before and after food-handling.
- 79% are now planning meals ahead of time.
- 76% have decreased their consumption of high-fat foods.
- 79% have increased their consumption of whole grains.
- 74% are eating fewer high-sugar foods.
- 63% are now reading food labels to help select the most nutritious food.
- 81% have improved their food preparation skills.
- 79% are now planning healthy meals based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- 84% are now managing their family resources to ensure adequate provision of food.



Education

- Extension faculty, county coalition members and program partners conducted 20,810 teaching sessions. As a result of these classes, contacts were made with 443,144 SNAP recipients and eligibles.
- Educational programming occurred in 713 different locations frequented by SNAP recipients. These learning environments included schools, community centers, Department of Human Services offices, health departments, childcare centers, elderly service centers, family resource centers and public housing sites.
- Twenty-one counties conducted educational programming for families at DHS office facilities.
- Forty-one counties provided educational experiences for families in public housing sites.
- Through social marketing and mass media, 3,090,462 indirect contacts were made with Tennesseans. Although all contacts made through these point-of-delivery methods were not SNAP recipients, the key nutrition messages were targeted for SNAP recipients and eligible audiences.
- Extension specialists maintain links for nutrition and health-related subject matters as part of the UT Extension Web site. Topics pertinent to TNCEP audiences are identified to assist educators accessing research-based nutrition and health information and resources.

For nutrition resources and program information, visit our Web site: <http://fcs.tennessee.edu/tncep>

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This Family & Consumer Sciences Department project is funded under an agreement with the Tennessee Department of Human Services and the USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

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Visit the UT Extension Web site at
<http://www.utextension.utk.edu/>



09-0144 R12-5310-121-020-08
Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development. University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating.
UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

