What is the Alaska FNP?

The Family Nutrition Program in Alaska, a SNAP-Ed/EFNEP collaboration, helps families and individuals learn how to plan, shop for and prepare tasty and healthy foods within a limited budget.

Lesson topics include MyPlate, low-fat cooking, food safety, heart-healthy eating, reading food labels and physical activity.

Individuals who qualify for any form of public assistance are eligible for the Family Nutrition Program.

How does it work?

Through free, informal and easily accessible educational programs participants can develop knowledge and skill related to:

- Nutrition and meal planning
- Food purchasing and preparation
- Food safety
- Food resource management

All information is research-based from accredited institutions and the USDA. Paraprofessionals offer classes at partner agencies, WIC offices, SNAP offices, food pantries, senior centers, local Extension offices, libraries, schools, grocery stores and other locations that are convenient and accessible to the target audience.

Between October 1, 2012 and September 30, 2013, the Family Nutrition Program reached 3,734 adults and 3,061 youth using direct education.

Outcomes

After participating in the Family Nutrition Program:

- 52% of adults prepared food without salt more often
- 54% of adults used the “Nutrition Facts” label to make food choices more often
- 40% of youth improved their physical activity habits
- 88% of sixth–eighth graders adopted one or more food selection behaviors consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans

Helen Idzorek, FNP Coordinator
UAF Cooperative Extension Service,
907-474-7930 or haidzorek@alaska.edu

www.uaf.edu/ces • 1-877-520-5211

UAF is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer and educational institution.
Nutrition educators in Alaska

Nutrition educator makes an impact

Tracy Hupe of the Eagle River Boys and Girls Club says that sometimes volunteers can make a bigger impact on youth than parents or staff. This was certainly the case when Heather Campbell, nutrition educator from Cooperative Extension Service, taught nutrition lessons at the club last fall. After seven sessions, one of the parents, Jennifer Rivera, stopped the clubhouse manager and complimented her on the program. She said her son, Ozzy, “doesn’t want to miss any of these sessions because he likes to learn how to be healthy.”

Lesson topics included hand washing, food safety, fruits, vegetables, protein, grains, milk and fats. Heather also focused on fitness and the importance of eating breakfast, which were topics of special interest to several boys on the football team. After most of the lessons, participants made some kind of food that related to the lesson topic, which encouraged them to try new foods.

Although Heather was not always sure she was making an impact on the kids, she said, “When I announced we would be ending in a couple of weeks, everyone was moaning and wanting more sessions.”

As for Ozzy, his mother says, “He has been trying to eat food that he would not even have tried before, like spinach.”

How the Family Nutrition Program changes lives

Residents at one site in Anchorage began using refrigerator and meat thermometers in their kitchen and while preparing meals to prevent food borne illness.

A teacher reported that an overweight young man became very involved with the lessons as they progressed. She told the nutrition educator that the lessons changed his lunch choices. He took the message home and influenced his parents to add more vegetables to his lunch, and he stopped bringing soda and sweetened juices!

A nutrition educator was shocked to learn that the first ingredient on a product label must be 100% whole grain for the product to actually be considered whole grain. She started looking around her kitchen and noticed that she needed to replace foods that she had believed were whole grain and actually were not.