OUR PURPOSE

Community Nutrition Education Programs (CNEP), a service of OSU Extension, utilizes SNAP-Ed funding to educate and empower low-income individuals, families and school-age youth to improve nutrition and physical activity behaviors.

THE HEALTH OF OKLAHOMA

- 36.8% of adults are obese¹
- 34.8% of children ages 10-17 are overweight or obese²
- 5.1% of adults meet national, daily recommendations for fruit and vegetable intake³
- 9% of high school students eat vegetables 3 or more times a day⁴

WHAT WE DO

Paraprofessionals and OSU Extension Educators deliver research-based, hands-on learning experiences for youth and adults regarding diet quality, food safety, physical activity, food security and food resource management. CNEP also supports community grant projects across the state with a focus on promoting health through policy, systems and environmental changes. By providing applicable education and changing the environment where we eat, learn, live, play, shop and work, CNEP is improving the lives of Oklahomans.

OUR LOCATIONS

INVESTING IN THE SOLUTION

- 52 Jobs to local citizens
- 782 volunteers committed 4,896 hours
- $133,158 estimated value of volunteer time⁴

GET TO KNOW US

EDUCATIONAL REACH

- 9,291 Program participants
- 5,316 Youth reached by the traveling Farm to You exhibit
- 4,145 Program graduates
- 86,566 Program participants, family members and community members reached with educational content

¹ USDA National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 2017-2018
² National Center for Health Statistics, 2019
³ US Department of Agriculture, 2019
⁴ CNEP Oklahoma 2020 Annual Report
COVID-19 RESPONSE

In March 2020, social distancing guidelines implemented statewide resulted in schools closing for the remainder of the school year and in-person programming for Extension to cease. Many of these disruptions continued through September 2020. During this time, CNEP paraprofessionals have worked tirelessly to educate participants virtually and distribute resources electronically or safely in-person.

300 Adults and youth taught virtually
67,756 Program participants, family members and community members reached with educational resources
129 Community partners helped facilitate virtual education or distribute educational resources

2020 IMPACTS

ADULT GRADUATES

- 94% improved diet quality behaviors
- 80% improved food resource management behaviors
- 74% improved food safety behaviors
- 49% eat fruit more often
- 43% eat vegetables more often

YOUTH GRADUATES

- 81% improved diet quality behaviors
- 54% improved food safety behaviors
- 35% of 3rd-5th youth drink fruit-flavored drinks less often
- 33% of 6th-8th youth eat fruit more often
- 39% of 9th-12th youth eat vegetables more often
One woman enrolled in the adult program after being diagnosed with diabetes. Her mother had died as a result of diabetes complications, furthering her desire to make changes. She reports eating more fruits and vegetables, not drinking soda, and reading food labels to decrease sugar and salt intake. Since starting the program, her diabetes has improved, she and her son have lost weight, and she is cooking more meals at home. Her future goals are to continue eliminating soda from her diet and becoming more nutrition “wise.”  

– Caddo County

As a result of the youth program, one teacher stated, “I have noticed the children washing their hands better. Some students have told me about different types of foods they have tried.” Another teacher responded, “I have observed them talking about the food groups at lunch and the different choices,” and in response to how it has changed the teacher’s choices: “it definitely makes you aware of choices.” One first grade teacher stated, “I have noticed them talking about what foods are in the different food groups from their meals in the cafeteria. We have talked about eating more vegetables (in the classroom). We love the germ lesson. We have had better hand washing routines with the kids singing their ABC’s.”  

– Okmulgee County

“I’ve had students tell me they have each food group on their tray at lunch or identify a specific food group.” The teacher said the program also helped her remember when loading her plate to incorporate a healthy variety. She said it is always good to get a refresher of the food groups, and the importance of a balanced, healthy meal. According to the teacher, she reads the menu during morning assembly and calls on students to identify specific food groups. She states they are really good at knowing which food is in each group.  

– Osage County

CNEP COMMUNITY GRANT PROJECTS

CNEP funds policy, systems and environmental (PSE) change projects in low-income communities across the state of Oklahoma. PSE approaches enhance educational programming to provide access to healthy foods and physical activity by facilitating community gardens or assisting food pantries, local wellness policies and community coalitions.

12,518 reached by projects in 5 counties
47 volunteers committed 102 hours
$2,774 estimated dollar value of volunteer time

Community Grants Help Food Pantries Succeed

CNEP Community Grants in Adair and Muskogee counties helped local food pantries store more fresh produce for those who need it. In Muskogee county, the Community Food Pantry had formed a relationship with the Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma, which allowed them to meet qualifications for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) food boxes. These food boxes are given to income qualifying recipients at no additional cost to the pantry. However, the additional food puts a strain on storage. The shelves that were purchased with CNEP Community Grant funds were able to fill that gap, and, as a result, feed more hungry individuals through the pandemic. In Adair County, the CNEP Community Grant funds were used to purchase a refrigerator for the Hope Center Food Pantry. This made a significant difference as they did not have any refrigeration to store food. The grant also helped leverage more funds for the pantry to purchase four deep freezers and six shelving units. These additions to both food pantries are system changes that reflect making healthy food available and helping combat the hunger issues in these counties.

There is More Than One Way to Have A Successful Community Garden

The purpose of the Alva Community Garden initiative was to provide fresh, home-grown vegetables to those in need in Alva, OK, and to teach the importance of incorporating vegetables into a healthy diet. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the garden could not be fully implemented. In place of the on-site garden, committee and community members grew starter plants in containers placed at various locations in Alva. Some placements included Beadles Nursing Home, The Homestead Retirement Community, the Alva Food Pantry, Northwestern Oklahoma State University, and at individual homes. Sites such as the nursing and retirement homes, as well as the food pantry, utilized their own produce for their residents or food recipients. Other growers donated their produce to the Alva Food Pantry, to “blessing boxes,” and to other citizens in need in Alva. The container garden adaptation was not anticipated or ideal, but the ultimate goal of growing produce and distributing it to those in need was accomplished! The Alva Food Pantry served, on average, about 70 people per week. During the peak growing season from June to August, community members donated fresh produce to over 800 individuals.