



WASHINGTON STATE
UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION



IDEAS FOR HEALTHY LIVING

BY THE NUMBERS

- Provided 53 health and wellness classes, 18 food preparation demonstrations, 7 community events, and 3 diabetes prevention series.
- Provided 212 hours of facilitated learning to individuals throughout Skagit County.

In 2015 IFHL program efforts reached wide and diverse audiences by:

- Demonstrating more than 20 different nutritious recipes in Skagit County to low-income audiences using local, seasonal food.
- Providing health and wellness classes to more than 400 individuals in the community.
- Engaging 33 individuals at risk for developing type 2 diabetes in the Center for Disease Control Diabetes Prevention Program.
- Promoting physical activity and healthy hydration to more than 1,000 individuals with interactive displays including our "Blender Bike/Re-Think Your Drink" display and "Eating A Rainbow of Color" display and presentation.

2016

ISSUE

The health and well-being of a changing society is a critical concern for Skagit County and lack of access to healthy food is one contributing factor to the health status of community members. A recent community health needs assessment identified excessive weight, obesity, and improving nutrition (fruit and vegetable consumption) as priorities. While the Skagit Valley is a rich agricultural area, access to food is difficult for many county residents. It is estimated that 1 in 9 households experience food insecurity, including the 27% of households with children who struggle to put food on the table. The Department of Health chronic disease profile of Skagit County reports that 27% of adults, and 13% of 10th graders are overweight. Only 25% of adults consume the recommended 5-9 servings of fruits and vegetables per day, and just 1 in 10 youth report eating more than 1 serving of fruits and vegetables daily.

RESPONSE

The Ideas for Healthy Living (IFHL) program at Skagit County WSU Extension has designed interactive learning experiences for each step along the consumer food pathway – selection and purchase, growing and harvesting, preparing and cooking, storage and waste reduction, and movement and physical activity. Choosing healthy foods no matter where someone shops, whether at the supermarket, corner store, farmers market or food bank, is promoted through supermarket tours, recipe tastings, and educational displays. Culinary skills needed to prepare easy and delicious meals are presented in small, group classes for young and old alike. A food safety and food preservation advice phone line, instructional classes, and handouts present best-practices for preserving food, and information on how to reduce food waste and incidence of food-borne illness. Promoting healthy habits to reduce the risk of chronic disease and help maintain a healthy weight occurs in small, group meetings, after-school programs, early learning centers, and at health fairs. Skagit County WSU Extension incorporates best-practice theory in interactive learning that is engaging and meaningful to participants. Additionally:

- Parents, childcare providers, and preschool teachers learn proper food portions and nutrition tips for preschoolers to support the development of positive eating habits for preschoolers and youth;
- Food bank shoppers learn how to select and prepare items available at the food pantry through educational displays and recipe demonstrations;
- Older adults and seniors adopt new strategies for meal planning and physical activity with the support of a lifestyle coach in the Diabetes Prevention Program;



QUOTES

"I had never considered using peanut butter in a recipe before (Thai Chicken recipe demo) and loved it!" - *Food bank shopper*

"After my child learned about MyPlate, we identify the food groups at every meal at home." - *Preschool parent*

"I will never eat fast food again. I can't believe how much fat is in that stuff!!!" - *Health resource fair participant*

"I have loved being able to get rid of the 'diet' mentality. Lifestyle changes have been 'eye opening' to me, as it has proven that simple changes and choices do matter." - *Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) participant*

"The every week coming back together is a very good motivating force." - *DPP participant*

"The food preservation class was so much fun. It was like being in the kitchen with my grandmother, learning with love through conversation and demonstration." - *Food preservation class participant*

"This program is just enough to scratch the surface of the more complex lifestyle adjustments. ... It's an eye-opener to what and how much needs to change." - *DPP participant*

- Teachers and preschool students learn about MyPlate and develop a preference for fruits and vegetables through preschool nutrition education and garden activities; and
- Families are strengthened through participation in the Family Supper Club "Eat Together Eat Better," where they practice healthy celebrations, conversation, and cooking.

IMPACTS

- As a result of IFHL programs, on average, 85% of participants report learning something new, and 75% report that they intend to use the new information.
- Thirteen food preparation classes were offered, and 90% of participants reported increased knowledge and skills relative to key learning objectives, and 70% applied at least one practice learned.
- Three Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) class series were offered in 2015, attended by 33 individuals. The weight loss average for all groups combined was 5.5%, with a range of 2.1%-17.3%. Many participants reported reduced blood sugar levels. Since both excess weight and elevated blood sugar levels are associated with the development of diabetes, the DPP program had a positive impact on the health of those participating, reducing the risk of prediabetes advancing to diabetes.
- 326 preschool students participated in the MyPlate nutrition series. Only 21.4% of children correctly identified foods in the corresponding food groups prior to the lessons. After lessons, 100% of children were able to correctly identify food groups according to MyPlate healthy food choices. Concepts of food groups, balance, and variety are important for children in establishing a foundation for healthy eating patterns that will continue into adulthood.
- 158 youth participated in nutrition and physical activity programs. 100% of students identified how to make celebrations healthier by choosing different ingredients. The frequency of eating together and cooking together showed an 85% increase from the pre- to post-program surveys. The value of celebrating together was identified in both pre- and post-program surveys.
- Community outreach at events and cooking demos and recipe tastings at food banks, health fairs, and youth activities provided a venue to promote healthy food choices and physical activity. The "blender bike" was a draw at many of the events combining the importance of hydration with low-sugar or sugar-free beverages and strategies for incorporating movement and exercise in daily routines. 100% of participants reported through retrospective surveys and/or verbal feedback an increased awareness of healthy food choices. 80% of participants intend to use the new information in meal preparation and label reading for making healthier choices.