

AgriLife Nutrition Education

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Overview



The Dallas County Texas A & M AgriLife Extension Office offers two nutrition education programs that incorporate research-based, practical lessons in basic nutrition, food preparation, food budget management and food safety in settings convenient for the participants. The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) helps families with children and youth who have limited resources and are most vulnerable to hunger and food insecurity. The second program, Better Living for Texans, is designed for adults who are receiving or eligible to receive food stamps, TANF, WIC and other public benefit programs.

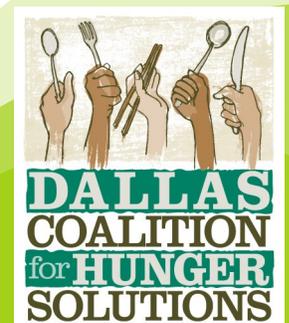
Impact on Hunger

- ◆ Program graduates reflect significant and lasting improvement in eating behavior and establishing healthy food habits.
- ◆ Participants and their families are serving and eating more fruits and vegetables.
- ◆ In 2014 in Dallas County, 97 percent of EFNEP participants consumed 0.5 more cups of fruits and vegetables at completion compared to entry.
- ◆ Participants are saving an average of \$39 per month in out-of-pocket food expenses.
- ◆ Studies have shown that for every \$1 spent on EFNEP, \$10 were estimated to be saved in health care costs and \$2 saved in food costs by participants; for Dallas County, this is \$4.5 million in estimated health care cost savings and almost \$898,542 in food costs.

How to Help

Congregations can participate in EFNEP by scheduling the program for young families and youth with limited resources and supporting lessons that include menu planning, grocery shopping, budgeting and cooking demonstrations.

Congregations can schedule Better Living for Texans programs for their members. These programs can be conducted as single lessons or as a multi-lesson series. Programs may include food demonstrations. All materials and supplies are provided by the Better Living for Texans program.



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Testimonials



“Because of the Expanded Nutrition Program, I am able to provide updated nutrition information, activities, and food demonstrations to youth. This information provides them with a roadway to good health. The classes provide information that can make a difference in the lives of our youth.” *EFNEP Trainer, Dallas Parks and Recreation.*

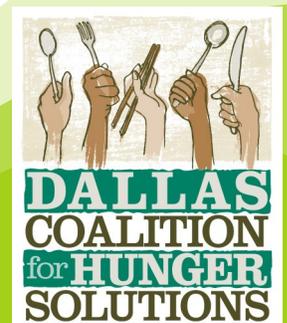
“Though our pantry’s selection varies week to week, we make sure to supply them a whole-grain option every time they receive food. Unfortunately, most of our clients opt for the refined grains because of their taste and texture. Enter Abeer and the “Make Half Your Grains Whole” class. After an engaging, interactive, thorough, and informative session we observed the selections the attendees made in their grains. We are happy to state that none of them chose refined grains but rather selected the healthier option after understanding the benefits. Once clients were knowledgeable on the subject, they took the initiative to make a change in their diets. On behalf of our clients and our team, we are thrilled the Better Living for Texans program is in place to enhance the dietary education of our community.” *Crossroads Community Services on Better Living for Texans class*



Contact

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The Cooking Matters program is a six-week course that teaches participants to shop smarter, use nutrition information to make healthier choices and cook delicious, affordable meals. Cooking Matters also offers one-session courses, including Cooking Matters at the Store. Cooking Matters is a direct service program of Share Our Strength offered locally through the North Texas Food Bank. It is dedicated to empowering low-income individuals and families with the tools necessary to maintain a healthy diet on a limited budget.

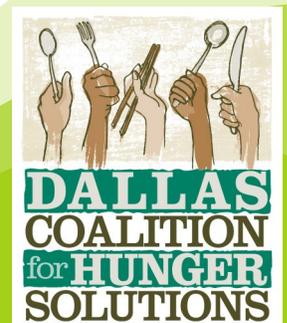
Impact on Hunger

- ◆ Families on a tight budget report that the cost of healthy groceries is their biggest barrier to making healthy meals at home. Food skills, like smart shopping, can help overcome that barrier.
- ◆ Today, 85 percent of participants in the Cooking Matters six-week courses graduate, taking with them improved nutrition practices, eating habits, and food budgeting skills.
- ◆ The average graduate from Share Our Strength's six-week Cooking Matters for Adults course plans meals ahead of time 55 percent more often, shops with a grocery list 50 percent more often and runs out of food 20 percent less often.
- ◆ Following the Cooking Matters at the Store tour, most families have high confidence in their ability to make their food purchases go farther (74 percent) and to get the most produce for their money (72 percent).

How to Help

Congregations can host a one session course or a six-week Cooking Matters course, either for adults, for families, for teens or for children. Congregations are encouraged to provide volunteers to serve as grocery shoppers and classroom managers, in addition to providing space for classes.

If a congregation member has a culinary or food industry background he or she could serve as the volunteer chef, and if a congregation member has nutrition or dietetics experience he or she could serve as nutrition educator. The curriculum for the courses and teaching instructions will be provided to all such volunteers.





"I enjoyed the class and would recommend it to my grandma to start eating right."

Michael

"I've learned so much during the last 6 weeks. I'm eating and cooking smarter because of it; I think that if I continue I'll live a longer, active, and healthier life."

John

"I learned to combine my dishes, to choose healthier food, to read labels, to flavor my food with herbs, and use less salt."

Rosa

Contact

Email nutrition@ntfb.org to receive the nutrition education request form and other information.

Upon receipt of the completed application, the nutrition services team at the North Texas Food Bank will respond with their availability and any additional steps necessary prior to the requested education.

The nutrition services team can also connect you with additional resources (handouts, materials, workshops, etc.) that they offer in addition to Cooking Matters should you be interested.

