



EFNEP - Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program

2003 National Impact Data

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) is a unique program that operates in nearly 800 counties throughout the 50 states and territories. EFNEP is designed to assist low-income audiences in acquiring the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and changed behavior necessary for nutritionally sound diets, and to contribute to their personal development and the improvement of the total family diet and nutritional well-being.

EFNEP targets two primary audiences: low-income youth and low-income families with young children. In Fiscal Year 2003, EFNEP reached 380,835 youth and 157,939 adults; an additional 582,746 family members were indirectly reached through the adult participants.

Who Are EFNEP Families?

Seventy-four percent (74%) of EFNEP families were enrolled in one or more food assistance programs at the time they enrolled in EFNEP. Eight percent more received benefits from 1 or more food assistance programs due to assistance from EFNEP as referenced in figure 1.

How Is EFNEP Taught?

EFNEP is delivered as a series of lessons, often over several months, by paraprofessionals and volunteers, many of whom are indigenous to the target population. The hands-on, learn-by-doing approach allows the participants to gain the practical skills necessary to make positive behavioral changes. Through EFNEP, participants learn self-worth—that they have something to offer their families and society.

How Are Impacts Measured?

Adult Component

EFNEP Serves Those In Greatest Need
 Poor health disproportionately affects minority and low-income U.S. populations. EFNEP focuses heavily on minority populations. In 2003, of the total EFNEP audience, 34% were Hispanics, 28% were African Americans, 2% were Native Americans, and 3% were Asian or Pacific Islanders (refer to figure 2).

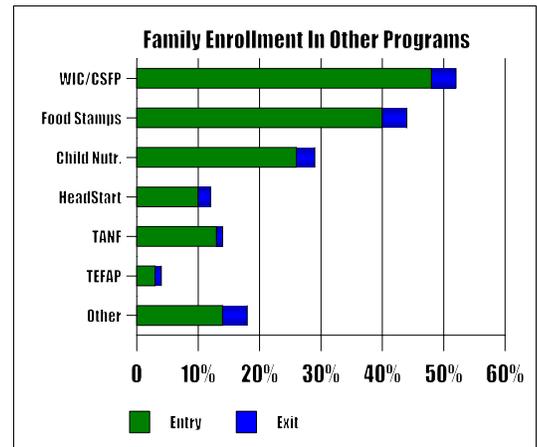


Figure 1

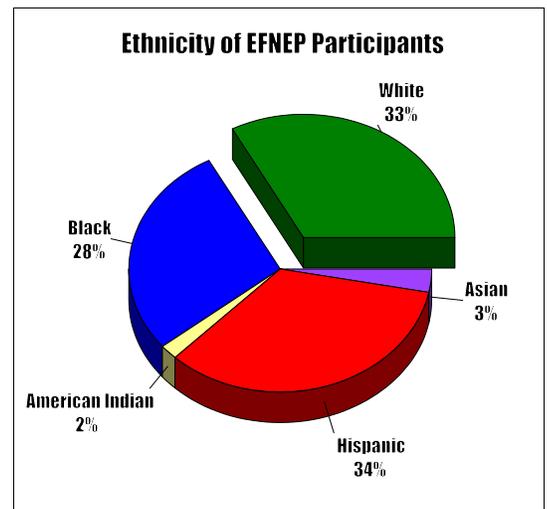


Figure 2

Data from the EFNEP Evaluation/Reporting System are used to measure food practices and dietary improvements. Ten key food-related practices were measured at entry into EFNEP and upon graduation. These behavioral changes translate into significant improvements in daily living skills. Results based on data from 101,969 graduates show that:

- **84% improved in one or more food resource management practices (i.e., plans meals, compares prices, does not run out of food, or uses grocery lists);**
- **88% improved in one or more nutrition practices (i.e., makes healthy food choices, prepares foods without adding salt, plans meals, reads nutrition labels, or has children eat breakfast); and**
- **67% improved in one or more of the food safety practices (i.e., thawing and storing foods properly).**

As figure 3 indicates, when participants first enrolled in the program, only 3% followed the desirable practices for all 10 indicators. At the end of the program, 27% had achieved this goal. These practices were measured based on entry and exit assessment of four indicators of Food Resource Management (FRM), five indicators of Nutrition Practices (NP), and two indicators of Food Safety (FS).

Dietary Changes

The dietary intake of six key nutrients that are often limited in the diets of low-income audiences—protein, iron, calcium, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, and Vitamin B₆—are also measured. Intake levels for each nutrient increased as a result of participation in EFNEP.

There were also substantial improvements in the intake of food to meet the recommendations of the Food Guide Pyramid. As figure 4 illustrates, mean number of servings for each of the five groups improved. Servings increased as follows: .9 in the Breads & Cereals group, .8 in the Fruit group, .8 in the Vegetable groups, .5 in the Calcium/Dairy group, and .4 servings in the Meats & Alternatives group. At entry, only 20.9% of the 102,895 graduates measured had a diet that provided at least half the recommended number of servings from each of the food groups. At exit, 49.9% of the participants had achieved this minimal level of intake. Ninety-three percent (93%) showed positive change in at least one food group at exit.

Youth Component

Data from the EFNEP Evaluation/Reporting System are also used to measure food practices and dietary improvements for youth. One or more of 4 key impact indicators were measured at entry into EFNEP and upon graduation. Results based on data from 346,985 youth from 15,565 youth groups show that:

- **82% of 79,227 youth from 3,606 groups now eat a variety of foods;**
- **75% of 103,147 youth from 4,515 groups increased their knowledge of the essentials of human nutrition;**
- **66% of 76,488 youth from 3,387 groups increased their ability to select low-cost, nutritious foods; and**
- **74% of 88,123 youth from 4,057 groups improved practices in food preparation and safety.**

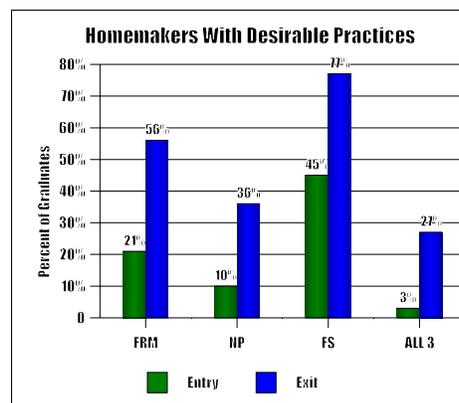


Figure 3

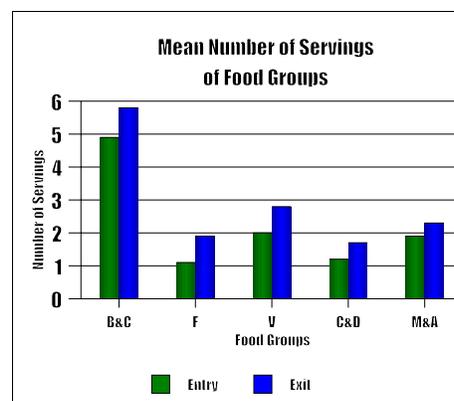


Figure 4

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