The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) is a Federal Extension (community outreach) program which began in 1965. It is funded through the Smith Lever Act, Section 360, and receives approximately $68 million annually in Federal funding. The current study is based on Federal EFNEP funding for 2007 through 2011 which equals $331,253,727.

Results

Participants from all racial and ethnic backgrounds improved their nutrition practices, stretched their food dollars farther, handled their food more safely, improved their diet quality, consumed more fruits and vegetables, and increased the number of minutes they were physically active.

Data demonstrates that five-year averages for races/ethnicities individually were comparable to National averages for all EFNEP graduates.

- Charts 1, 2, and 3 show improvements reported by graduates through entry and exit behavior checklists.
- Chart 4, 5, and 6 show improvements reported by graduates through entry and exit diet recalls.

Research demonstrates that EFNEP is an excellent nutrition education model. 2007-2011 EFNEP data for graduates confirm:

- 95% improved their Diets
- 88% improved Nutrition Practices
- 86% stretched Food Dollars Further
- 66% handled Food More Safely
- 28% increased Physical Activity Rates

And, 0.8 additional cups of fruits and vegetables were consumed.

Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders emerged as having the greatest overall improvement. They had the highest scores in four out of the six categories.

Each year EFNEP reaches over 600,000 low-income adults and low-income youth from over 800 counties nationwide. The current study includes data from 365,185 adults who graduated from EFNEP between 2007 and 2011.

Table 1 shows the breakdown of adult graduates between 2007 and 2013 by race and ethnicity. At least 70% self identified as minorities.

Of those participants, over 85% reported being at or below 100% of poverty, earning $25,000 a year or less for a family of four.

Even though scores varied to some degree for each race, strong improvements were demonstrated for all races. Additional research is needed to:

- Test statistical significance of results.
- Determine if lower starting values led to higher overall change.
- Assess poverty levels and dosage effects.
- Monitor improvements in physical activity — changes are likely to increase with added programmatic emphasis.

In conclusion, the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program is an effective community-based nutrition education program. It successfully improves nutrition, physical activity and food related behaviors across low-income audiences and it may serve as a useful model for future interventions.

For More Information:

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Table 1: Racial and Ethnic Breakdown of Adult Graduates (2007-2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity for Adult Graduates (2007-2011)</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black or African American</th>
<th>American Indian or Alaska Native</th>
<th>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander</th>
<th>Multiple Races Indicated</th>
<th>NH/OPI</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>365,185</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Population</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Population who graduated EFNEP</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Background Photo: University of Connecticut

[Chart 1: Percentage Improvement in Nutrition Practices by Race/Ethnicity for Adult Graduates (2007-2011)]

[Chart 2: Percentage Improvement in Diet Quality by Race/Ethnicity for Adult Graduates (2007-2011)]


[Chart 4: Percentage Improvement in Food Safety Practices by Race/Ethnicity for Adult Graduates (2007-2011)]

[Chart 5: Additional Cups of Fruits and Vegetables Consumed by Race/Ethnicity for Adult Graduates (2007-2011)]

[Chart 6: Percentage Increase in 30 Minutes or More of Physical Activity by Race/Ethnicity for Adult Graduates (2007-2011)]