P84 (continued)

Background: The environment in which people live affects food and physical activity decisions, but low-income communities often lack the resources to support more healthful choices. Understanding the perceived barriers and facilitators to engaging in healthful practices in communities is an important first step in developing targeted interventions to improve health.

Objective: To determine Extension nutrition educators' perceptions about the healthfulness of the environment in the communities they serve.

Study Design, Setting, Participants: Focus groups (n = 16) and in-depth interviews (n = 6) were conducted in English (n = 11) and Spanish (n = 5) with Extension nutrition educators (n = 84) working in low-income communities in Kansas, Florida, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, and West Virginia. Trained focus group moderators used a semi-structured script to ask questions about the healthfulness of the community environment in which they work.

Measurable Outcome/Analysis: Audio recorded focus groups and in-depth interviews were transcribed verbatim and content analyzed to identify themes.

Results: Across all states, participants described a healthy lifestyle as a multifaceted approach to wellness that promotes healthy eating, physical activity, and mental and spiritual health. Perceived barriers for English and Spanish participants included the lack of access to and availability of healthy food and public transportation; lack of nutrition education and nutrition resources; and limited mental health resources. Spanish participants emphasized the need for culturally and linguistically appropriate nutrition materials and suggested that participant attrition from education programs was due to the increased anxiety related to participants' immigration status. Perceived facilitators were limited but included access to trustworthy education resources and food banks/pantries.

Conclusions: Extension nutrition educators across several states listed similar barriers and facilitators to a healthy lifestyle for low-income individuals. Data will be used to develop focus group questions for low-income community residents with a long-range goal of developing a survey to measure perceived healthfulness of low-income communities.

Funding: Agricultural Experiment Stations from Participating Universities.

Agricultural Production and Food Systems

P85 The Seed to Supper Program and Its Effect on Fruit and Vegetable Consumption Among Low-Income Beginning Gardeners in New Mexico

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Objective: To assess whether Seed to Supper, a beginning vegetable gardening program designed for adults

gardening on a budget, is associated with healthy behavior changes among participants.

Use of Theory or Research: The Diffusion of Innovation theory guides the Seed to Supper program and its use of a train-the-trainer model utilizing Master Gardener volunteers.

Target Audience: Twenty-two adults who participated in Seed to Supper classes in 3 counties in New Mexico.

Program Description: Using a train-the-trainer model, New Mexico State University Master Gardener volunteers were trained to teach the Seed to Supper series in the community at SNAP-Ed and EFNEP eligible sites. Each series consisted of 6 classroom based garden education lessons. Topics covered included planning, soil, planting, garden care, and harvesting.

Evaluation Methods: Participants completed a pre- and post-intervention survey. The surveys collected information on participants' gardening experience, learning goals, and fruit and vegetable consumption. The Master Gardener volunteers were trained in data collection methods.

Results: The survey showed positive results, with 62% of participants reporting eating fruits more often and 33% of participants eating vegetables more often after completing the Seed to Supper series.

Conclusions: The findings from this pilot test suggest participating in the Seed to Supper series can increase fruit and vegetable consumption among adults.

Funding: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education; Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program.

Physical Activity

P86 Evaluation of the Bodywise Program for Older Adults Residents of the District of Columbia

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Objective: To evaluate the implementation of the Bodywise program, a free program designed to promote health, wellness, and fitness for elder DC residents.

Use of Theory or Research: Physical activity and its association with healthy aging is an important public health issue. Physical activity decreases different causes of mortality and plays an important role in the prevention of many aging-related chronic diseases. However, the number of older adults who are physically active enough to maintain wellness is low and decreases with age. The University of the District of Columbia (UDC) worked to improve physical activity in older adults by offering free exercise classes.

Target Audience: Participants were DC residents aged 60 or older.

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