

Scott County Making the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice

Community Partners for Healthy Mothers and Children | Scott County WIC | Davenport, Iowa | Presented By: Kim Tapia and Annika O'Melia (WIC coordinator and NWA grant supervisor)

Introduction

Scott County is located in eastern Iowa with about 167,000 people residing. This project sought to address the inadequate fruit and vegetable consumption in almost 80% of the adult population as well as the obesity rate at 30.8% which is higher than the state and national average.

The vision for the project was to provide knowledge about healthy food habits on a large scale so that our community can learn together and then teach their children good health. Our team also wanted to show the community that eating healthy does not mean having to empty pockets of all your money!

We helped achieve this goal of making the healthy choice the easy choice by using in store promotion techniques, nutrition education, increasing access to community resources, and bringing community members of all facets together.



Project Overview

Our project focused on encouraging our community to increase their fruits and vegetable intake in their diets. We did this through a series of interventions. First, we received the Share Our Strengths Cooking Matters grant which enabled us to hold store tours in the local Hy-Vee grocery stores. We were able to utilize the store dieticians to conduct the tours which focused on reading food labels and how to shop with a healthy plan in mind.

Second, we developed signs for the local Hy-Vee stores to place around their store. The grocery stores tend to be like a communal "watering hole" so to speak so it is a great place to share resources! We were able to have signs with brochure holders for WIC information as well as other community resources.

Third, we partnered with Riverbend Food bank who were able to donate fresh produce to the WIC clinic as well as the Edgerton Women's Health Center. Riverbend Food bank provided boxes and a variety of delicious produce for our patients to be able to incorporate into their diets.

Activities

Some of our most vital activities:

- Set up meetings with 4 grocery store Directors to discuss promotion and signage strategies to increase purchase of fruits and vegetables at their store.
- Update resource guide with current food and social services in area, particularly where WIC vouchers are accepted.
- Meet with Great River Bend Food Bank to discuss the possibility of implementing a pop-up (mobile) produce stand at the WIC clinic.
- Reach out to local Hy-Vee grocery store dieticians to meet and discuss being a tour leader.
- Organize a system of store tours to be held after receiving Share Our Strengths Cooking Matters grant.
- Create a Pinterest page of fun and unique recipes that utilizes WIC approved food items and fresh produce for WIC families.
- Create a newsletter for community partners with monthly updates and current information about the progress and achievements of the CPHMC project.



Great River Bend Food Bank donated boxes of food as well as extra produce for clients to take.

Outcomes

Over the course of this project, we were able to create stronger partnerships the local Hy-Vee grocery stores, Great River Bend Food Bank, Iowa State Extension and many more.

We were able to put our signs in 4 different Hy-Vee grocery stores to promote WIC services and other community resources. We were also able to put up WIC stickers on produce signs to help increase healthy diets and utilizing WIC produce checks.

With the Share our Strength Cooking Matter store tours, we were able to reach over 150 families in teaching healthy shopping and eating habits!

We successfully developed a WIC Pinterest page, a TV commercial and billboards that reached our 167,000 person community!

Lessons Learned

This project allowed for some barriers which ended up being lessons learned. Keeping our provider involved and engaged was a little bit of a challenge since her schedule was not always the same week to week. Instead of creating coalition meetings around her schedule, we presented her with direct information from the meetings and received her input to present at the next meeting.

One of our interventions was to have Meridian insurance create a pilot reimbursement program for WIC services. Due to many variables, we were not able to keep this as an intervention and decided to drop it from the project. It is definitely doable with the right insurance company and a good amount of time to do a pilot program!

Best Practices

- Had a very active WIC participant that created the Pinterest board.
- Limited our interventions to a few things we could do well instead of spreading ourselves thin with too many.



Keep An Eye Out For Our WIC Friendly Recipes!

Grocery Store signs were created to promote WIC services and other community resources.



Next Steps

Our coalition was invited to put their own resources in the brochure holders in the Hy-Vee stores. We are also hoping to continue to partner with Hy-Vee in holding produce taste testing so people can try a variety of fruits and vegetables cooked in a variety of ways. This will help customers increase their daily amount of produce as well as expand the different ways in cooking them so they can be even more delicious!

We are planning to continue working with the Great River Bend Food Bank to receive produce donations on a more regular basis to distribute to our community. The idea is to increase healthy produce in diets without the increase in cost for under-privileged families.