



## Community Nutrition Education

A healthy, well-nourished population depends on well-informed consumers making wise health choices supported by strong research and education programs in human nutrition, food systems, and food safety. Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) delivers community-based nutrition education programs that help individuals, families, and communities make informed choices about food and lifestyles that support their health along with their economic and social well-being. Nutrition and health programs are designed to connect research and practice, result in behavior change, build on the strengths of families and youth, and develop strong collaborations resulting in community changes for optimal health promotion and provide policymakers with the knowledge to develop appropriate policies for citizens.

Through the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and Food Stamp Nutrition Education (FSNE), CCE staff educate low-income participants, who are particularly vulnerable because poverty is associated with poor health. During 2005, classes were provided to over 17,000 adult and 16,000 youth participants. Those completing the programs improved their dietary and food related practices. Data from questionnaires administered before and after graduation indicate improvements in nutrition knowledge, food practices, food safety, and resource management skills. Retention studies document that these desired practices continue at least one year after graduation.

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## Talking with Kids about HIV/AIDS Parent Education Project

The “Talking with Kids about HIV/AIDS” Project educates adults about HIV/AIDS, child/adolescent development, and intergenerational communication strategies in order to reduce HIV-related risk and stigma among children, teens, and their adult caregivers. TWKAHA’s goals are to reduce youth risk for HIV infection by increasing effective, strength-based intergenerational communication about HIV-related topics; reduce adult participants’ risk for HIV infection and increase their role-modeling of safer behaviors; and reduce HIV-related fear and stigma. Workshops have statistically significant impacts on the number, duration, and scope of parent-child conversations about HIV, the likelihood that parents teach children specifics about HIV transmission and risk reduction, and the likelihood that parents seek HIV antibody testing. During 2001-2005, the project engaged 48,668 people in workshops, trainings, and one-to-one educational activities. TWKAHA is a program of the Family Life Development Center; FLDC programs use ecological and strength-based approaches to address social problems affecting children and families throughout NYS, nationally, and internationally.

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## Economics of Obesity

Obesity is caused by energy imbalance: more calories consumed than expended. The foods people eat and activities they pursue are the result of the enjoyment they receive from those foods and activities, and the constraints they face with respect to money and time. The economics of obesity studies how people make decisions about food and time allocation given the tradeoffs that they face.

Research programs in the economics of obesity include studies of the causes and consequences of obesity, as well as the effectiveness of anti-obesity interventions. For example, one study of the causes of obesity is an economic analysis of the impact of food advertisements on youth consumption.

Cornell researchers are also studying the labor market consequences of obesity—measuring its impact on wages, employment disability, and the transition from welfare to work. Other research ongoing in this area includes evaluations of anti-obesity interventions such as physical education in schools, anti-obesity drugs, and bariatric surgery.

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### **Cornell NutritionWorks**

*Cornell NutritionWorks* is a web site for nutrition and health professionals that uses distance technology to provide an affordable, convenient way to meet professional development needs. Members can access cutting edge nutrition information, interact directly with Cornell experts, communicate with other practitioners, and earn continuing education credit online. Participants include registered dietitians, professionals certified in family and consumer sciences, health education specialists, school food service nutritionists, registered nurses, and medical doctors.

The newest offerings include three topics related to obesity: Strategies to Address the Obesity Epidemic; Obesity, Physical Activity, Eating, and the Built Environment; and Socioeconomic and Racial/Ethnic Disparities in Obesity. They are an outcome of a June 2005 conference, the Ecology of Obesity, sponsored by the College of Human Ecology, the Weill Cornell Medical College, the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry, and the New York State Health Department.

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### **Residential Child Care Project**

The *Residential Child Care Project* (RCCP) addresses the need to ensure safe environments for children who reside in residential child care institutions, group homes, and foster care. Two major programs strive to prevent institutional child abuse and improve the quality of residential childcare. The purpose of the Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) project is to provide a crisis prevention and intervention model for residential child care facilities to assist organizations in preventing crises from occurring, de-escalating potential crises, managing acute crisis phases, and reducing potential injury to children and staff.

The Institutional Child Abuse (IAB) prevention and investigations programs assist local and state public agencies that are responsible for the prevention, investigation, and corrective action plans of reported institutional abuse. Members of the Family Life Development Center provides RCCP training in over 40 states, Canada, Puerto Rico, Russia, Australian, Ireland, and the United Kingdom. TCI is used in hundreds of residential child care institutions and has been adapted for other congregate care settings, as well as for foster and adoptive families.

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