

Adult/Senior TRACKS Report

PENNSYLVANIA NUTRITION EDUCATION TRACKS

On track with healthy eating for low income audiences

During 2011 TRACKS adult and senior programs:

- Were delivered by 14 Local Partners in 33 Pennsylvania counties.
- Provided 32,222 direct education contacts to 8,160 participants.
- Delivered education programs in over 300 sites.



Spotlight on Seniors

Seniors represent 64% of the TRACKS adult audience and usually receive TRACKS education at their local senior center. Series classes are the most common means of reaching this audience.

Heart Healthy Lesson at Muncy Valley Senior Center



Teaching **HEART HEALTHY** foods in Valentine's Day themed class.

Everyone benefits from the nutrition programming...

“Two of the most popular classes were reading food labels and food safety. The participants not only learned how to read labels, they are actually using that skill... This is one of the most beneficial programs at our center.”

(Muncy Valley Senior Center Director)

Eat Smart, Live Strong, a set of lessons focused on increasing fruit and vegetable consumption and physical activity in older adults, is often used as a teaching tool with seniors.

199 clients completed feedback surveys after attending *Eat Smart, Live Strong* classes:

- 92.7% rated the information they received as useful or very useful.
- 89.2% reported they planned to eat more fruits and vegetables in the week following the session.
- 77.9% indicated they planned to increase physical activity in the week following the session.

Clients' comments

♥ “I look forward to going to class, Marcia always teaches us something new and I love the recipes that go along with the class, they are helpful.”
(Montgomery County participant)

♥ “Because of these classes, I have increased my consumption of fruit and also lost 14 pounds!”
(Sullivan County participant)



Program Highlight

City Harvest Urban Garden



TRACKS Partners sometimes team up with other organizations to reach clients in non-traditional settings. One example of this is City Harvest, an urban gardening project in Philadelphia. City Harvest volunteers teach gardening skills that enable low-income residents to grow nutritious food. Over 20,000 pounds of crops are produced each year. At the garden sites, TRACKS educators teach clients how to store and prepare fresh vegetables and provide recipes and samples to taste.



Participant Feedback on City Harvest education:

- “[You] could actually taste the fruit and veggies”
- “I tried the chocolate cake made with beets. It was great.”
- “Foods demonstrated are simple and use inexpensive ingredients.”
- “Very informative and healthy”
- “Everything is delicious and very colorful.”

Could Your Site Qualify?

Sites where 50% or more of clients have incomes \leq 185% of poverty level may qualify to receive TRACKS funds. Contact TRACKS to learn more:
panutritiontrack@psu.edu

Evaluation Results



To assess outcomes, clients complete surveys that self-report behavior before attending a class and indicate future intended behavior. Three topic-specific surveys are used; 663 surveys were completed by clients. Some interesting findings include:

- ◆ 26.6% of respondents reported using a food thermometer to ensure raw meats are cooked to a safe temperature before education, while 70.3% intended to use one in the future.
- ◆ Only 9.4% clients reported eating the recommended 3 cups of dairy products daily before education, while 15% intended to do so after education. Although this reflects improvement, it also shows need for continued education to help clients meet recommended intake levels.
- ◆ Planning meals before shopping for groceries showed positive intent to change, with 45.0% of respondents reporting the behavior “before” and 70.5% reporting the behavior “after”.



TRACKS Partners provide newsletters to local food pantries to accompany food boxes. Newsletters contain recipes, information on using the food provided, and nutrition or shopping tips. Three partners administered feedback surveys to a total of 381 newsletter readers. Respondents report that information in newsletters helped them make positive changes.

- **65%** report they eat more fruits and vegetables
- **58%** indicate they choose healthier snacks
- **65%** report they read food labels more often



For more details about evaluation results, visit:
<http://www.panutritiontracks.org/public/results.asp>

