

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Grand Challenges

K-State Research and Extension develops and delivers practical, research-based solutions to challenges faced by all Kansans, which includes the grand challenges:

- Global Food Systems
- Water
- Health
- Community Vitality
- Developing Tomorrow's Leaders

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Grand Challenge: Health

Title: The Value of Nutrition Education in Youth

Why is this issue important?

In 2024, 72.5% of all U.S. public-school lunches were served free or at a reduced cost for children and adolescents aged 5-17. According to the Kansas Department of Education Free or Reduced Lunch, the percentage of students who receive free or reduced-cost meals at USD 501 Topeka Public Schools is higher than > 67.3%

How did Extension address this issue?

Every school year, Shawnee County EFNEP educators go out to the middle schools to deliver the Teen Cuisine lessons to seventh and eighth graders. Teen Cuisine aims to empower teens adopt healthier lifestyles while teaching them about skills needed to prepare nutritious and delicious meals and snacks. This year, we observed an increase in student participation driven by the positive feedback from classmates who have experienced the program through their FACS classes. From students eagerly asking for the recipes to take home and share with their parents, to them sharing stories about what they cooked over the weekend, it demonstrates the program's effectiveness in equipping youth with valuable life skills that support a healthier future.



What was the impact?

Diet Quality

- 88% of youth improved their abilities to choose foods according to Federal Dietary Recommendations

Food Safety

- 65% of youth use safe food handling practices more often

Physical Activity

- 80% of youth improved their physical activity practices

Food Resource Management

- 49% of youth improved their ability to prepare simple, nutritious, affordable food or gain knowledge.

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service
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