

Healthy Food Choices and Fun Fitness for Your Family

The goal of the “Healthy Food Choices and Fun Fitness for Your Family” was to determine weight changes for family members during a 6 months’ time frame. This project was a collaboration between the Community Nutrition Education Services, Inc (CNES Inc) and United American Indian Involvement Inc.

The United American Indian Involvement, Inc. provides public health case management services to eligible American Indian/Alaskan Natives residing in the Los Angeles County area. The focus of these services is on individuals and or families; children with special needs or disabilities; individuals over the age of 65; and individuals with chronic health conditions. The CNES Inc, a non-profit corporation, promotes healthy nutrition and obesity prevention through community based collaborative research and nutrition education.

Twelve (12) families (including 15 adults and 24 children) were initially enrolled in the “Healthy Food Choices & Fun Fitness for Your Family” Program. Among the 15 adults were 14 females and 1 male; six (6) of the adults were grandparents/guardians. Initially, there were 24 children ranging in age from 4 to 15 years participating in the program. A majority of the children were females (n=14).

The staffing included a Registered Dietitian (CNES Inc.) certified by the American Dietetic Association in both Adult and Child/Adolescent Weight Management. A second Registered Dietitian/Health Educator, employed by the United American Indian Involvement Inc., was skilled and trained in physical assessment techniques, performed measurements of heights and weights for every adult and child.

The families planned menus/and food shopping lists for breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks. This effort was guided by the food examples presented for ‘tasting’ in the classes that also included the popular cultural food “Indian Tacos”; reading food labels; the use of nutrition education materials; and by the families sharing experiences with each other. The physical activity sessions began very slowly. The first week included 5 minutes of exercise but by the 4th sessions,

the families were actively exercising for at least 30 minutes by jumping rope to music , dancing ,using hula hoops, and playing games such as ‘hokey pokey’. The 4 week educational plan is at the end of this report.

At 6 months follow-up, 3 children and 2 adults met their weight goals. Overall, there were more goals achieved by the families related to nutrition and healthy eating than were reported for physical activity. The continuing health education efforts should focus of both eating healthy and physical activity on a routine basis.

The written comments regarding the classes from the families are noted below.

Exercise

“We learned to exercise. We danced and hola hooped.”

“Now my kids understand why to work out on whatever activity.”

“I enjoyed the exercise since I and my family don’t really exercise, I feel the movement and the energy.”

Involvement of children

“Meeting more new people and learning about health and nutrition and being with children watching them answer questions when asked by the nutritionist.”

“Children need to hear and learn about healthy choices.”

Nutrition

“We learned the importance of learning about food labels.”

“How to eat healthy. Meeting different families and share our food groups-learn about each food group.”

“Helped me cut down on fat, sodium, and calories.”

The 4 week sessions are summarized below:

	Objectives	Instructor Role	Interactive Activity
Week 1	<p>Identify:</p> <p>2 self determined nutrition goals</p> <p>& 2 self determined exercise goals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure height and weight of each family member. • Present educational curriculum content on nutrition guidelines, food label reading, dining out of home. • Eat healthy-lower-fat meats/ /alternates, whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and lower fat dairy products. • Samples of healthy snacks provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family discussion favorite foods and the nutritional contributions. • Family demonstrates the favorite family physical activity • 5 minutes of physical activity.
Week 2	<p>Plan a nutritious balanced breakfast and snacks for 7 days.</p> <p>Develop a shopping list for the meals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure weight of each family member. • Present educational 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families shared ideas for healthy breakfast and snack menus.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> curriculum content on nutrition guidelines, food label reading, dining outside of the home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 minutes of physical activity.
Week 3	Plan a nutritious balanced lunch for 7 days. Develop a shopping list for the meals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Samples of healthy breakfasts provided. Measure weight of each family member. Present educational curriculum content on nutrition guidelines, food label reading. Samples of healthy lunch items provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families shared ideas for healthy lunch menus. 20 minutes of physical activity
Week 4	Plan a nutritious balanced dinner for 7 days. Develop a shopping list for the meals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food for taste testing-cultural foods using low fat meat, dairy items. (Indian Tacos). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families shared ideas for healthy dinner menus. 30 minutes of physical activity.

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THE 'INDIAN TACO' RECIPE IS AVAILABLE AT CNESIC.ORG

SEE PHOTOS IN THE PHOTO GALLERY AT CNESINC.ORG

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