

## My Plate: Meal planning and shopping tips for teens

### AT A GLANCE

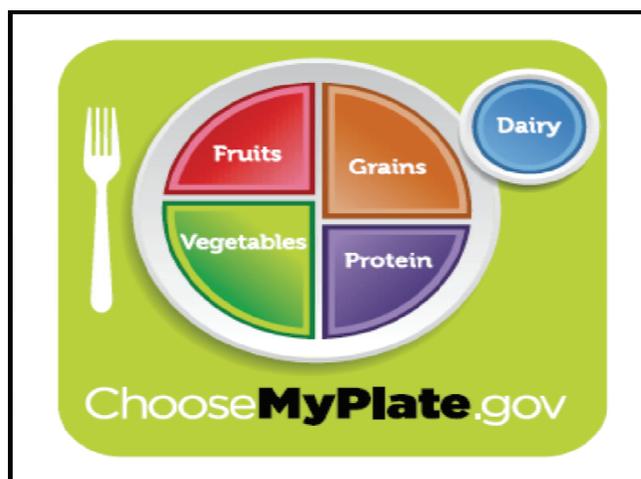
After this program, high school senior participants were more apt to increase fruit, vegetable and dairy, decrease overall sugar intake, and prepare more meals and snacks at home.

### The Situation

According to the 2013-2014 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, individuals aged 12-19 in America did not meet the recommended intake for several nutrients, some nutrients inadequate and others excessive. Teens in this survey consumed an average of 14.5 grams fiber/day, as opposed to 26-38 grams/day recommended for this age range. Calcium intake was also inadequate, with an average intake of 1014 mg/day compared to the average recommendations of 1300 mg/day. The survey reflected an excessive sugar intake, with an average of 46 percent of total daily carbohydrates being consumed from sugar. The survey also reflected a high percentage of foods being consumed away from home. The average teen consumed 34 percent of foods away from home, with 25 percent coming from fast-food restaurants. Higher percentages of foods consumed away from home can be a strong contributor to lower intakes of fiber and calcium, and higher intakes of sugar.

### Our Response

The family and consumer sciences facilitator for University of Idaho Extension, Bonneville County developed a nutrition education program targeting high school seniors. The program was piloted to six classes of seniors. Nutrition education was based on the United States Department of Agriculture My Plate model and included guidelines for meal planning,



portion control, grocery shopping and healthy snack options. Emphasis was placed on sources of dietary fiber and calcium, and alternatives to high sugar snacking. Students were provided written materials and encouraged to engage in active discussion of each topic area. Age-appropriate recipes were provided, coinciding with meal planning guidelines. Snacks were offered which encouraged exploration of new foods, including fruits and vegetables for additional fiber, and low fat calcium sources.

### Program Outcomes

Of the 91 participants, 84 completed the post-survey. Ninety-nine percent of the students reported learning at least one new nutrition fact. Ninety-eight percent of the students indicated an intention to change one or more eating behaviors based on what they learned.

Piloting the My Plate nutrition education program to high school seniors demonstrates the majority of par-

ticipants leaned and intended to apply new concepts to improve dietary choices. We will continue to expand this program to students of all ages within our community, benefiting a variety of youth.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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