

ABOUT FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALTH

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Hidalgo County Family & Community Health and Prairie View Cooperative Extension program topics include nutrition, diabetes education, mental health, MyPlate for youth and adults, physical activity, anger management and parenting skills, car seat installations and financial literacy.



HELPING THE COMMUNITY BE PREPARED

Andréa A. Valdez, Ph.D., M.P.H.

County Administrator, County Extension Agent-Family & Community Health

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Hidalgo County has a relatively high risk for hazards such as hurricanes, heat waves, hail or flooding. To raise social awareness and help the community be prepared for natural disasters, the **Dinner Tonight Emergency Preparedness (DTEP) program** teaches how to make healthy recipes without electricity. A multi-partner and multi-jurisdictional program educated **133 participants** on the importance of emergency preparedness and demonstrated various recipes without electricity from the DTEP cookbook where **77% of participants showed an increase in confidence in preparing healthy meals.** Throughout hurricane season, Dr. Valdez filmed 4 "Weather Chef" videos with **County Judge Richard Cortez** and 2 videos with **McAllen Mayor Javier Villalobos.**



part of the Dinner Tonight State Team, Dr. Valdez created recipes and content shared on social media reaching over **119,000 people.**

Health programs such as **Cooking Well with Diabetes** and **Cooking Well for Healthy Blood Pressure** continue to be implemented to address chronic disease through diabetes education and teaching participants health recipes, food safety, and cooking techniques. As



STRONG PEOPLE, HEALTHY LIVES

Joanne Ureste-Armijo, M.S.

County Extension Agent, Family & Community Health

County Health Rankings.org reports that in 2023, **33 % of adults in Hidalgo County are physically inactive** and **28% of adults report being in poor health.** The **Strong People, Strong Bodies** program is a strength training program aimed at improving the health of adults by increasing access to strength training. Of the **22 graduates** of this program, **89% of participants increased their strength** and **99% improved their flexibility.** To promote health and provide education on dietary habits, the **Step Up, Scale Down** program reached 63 individuals with **23 graduates.** Through the **Walk Across Texas** program which encourages physical activity through tracking walking mileage, **36 Hidalgo County residents** walked a total of **5,223.39 miles!** The **Master Clothing Volunteer**



(MCV) program provides opportunities for personal growth and home-based business skill development. The MCV program has **34 volunteers** with **3,081 volunteer hours valued at \$87,931.74.** The MCVs implemented **18 workshops with a total of 133 participants** at 2 locations along with **3 community service projects for a total of 336 community service hours.** As part of the **Child Passenger Safety** program, **54 car seats** were inspected with an **economic benefit of \$118,832 for child passenger safety.** The first annual **Heart Strong Conference**, in collaboration with community partners, had **102 participants** with **72% of participants increasing their knowledge of heart health education.**

HELPING COMMUNITIES BE HEALTHY

MELISSA DE LEON, M.S.

EXTENSION AGENT-EXPANDED FOOD & NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) provides educational classes to limited-resource adults with children on topics related to dietary quality, food resource management, food safety, and physical activity through a series of, at least six nutrition education lessons. In addition to offering “hands-on” groups settings, several virtual group classes were offered due to COVID-19. Online Self-Paced and Phone Script lesson sessions offered had **674 (82% of 441)** participants who completed the series of EFNEP learning sessions on stretching food dollars, improving eating habits, and practicing food safety principles. Of those graduates, **349** clients were surveyed to determine the following food and nutrition-related behavior changes:

- **97%** (349 Adults) showed improvement in one/more diet quality practices - ate more fruits & vegetables, drank regular soda and sweetened beverages less often.
 - **95%** (292 Adults) had improvement in one or more food resource management practices.
- In addition, Hidalgo County's EFNEP faculty enrolled **11,270** youths; of which, **9,305** youth contacts were graduates during the Fiscal Year 2022-2023. Of those graduates, **1,741** youths were sampled to determine the following food and nutrition-related behavior changes:
- **86%** showed improvement in one or more diet quality practices – ate more fruits and vegetables, drank regular soda and sweetened beverages less often.
 - **52%** showed improvement in use of safe food resource handling practices more often or gained knowledge.

Studies have shown that for every \$1 spent on EFNEP, \$10 were estimated to be saved in health care costs and \$2 saved in food costs by participants. For Texas, this is **\$43 million** in estimated health care cost savings and almost **\$9 million** in food costs.



2023 PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS



Dinner Tonight Emergency Preparedness Multi-Jurisdictional Program (City of Edinburg, Hidalgo County)



Master Clothing Volunteers Community Service at Sekula Library



EFNEP Program Participants



Mental Health First Aid faculty graduates from South Texas College (STC)



HEALTHY HABITS

TINA MUNOZ, M.S.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION AGENT- FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALTH



PRAIRIE VIEW
A&M UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
AND HUMAN SCIENCES

Cooperative Extension Program

This year, the Hidalgo County Extension Office welcomed Ms. Munoz as the Family & Community Health agent for the Prairie View Cooperative Extension Program. The Prairie View Cooperative Extension Service programs are focused on providing education to underserved communities. In youth programming, the **Choose Health: Food, Fun and Fitness (CHFFF)** program for 3rd-8th graders targets behaviors shown to reduced unhealthy weight gain and chronic disease by teaching healthy eating and active play. In 3 locations in Hidalgo County, **198 youth** completed the 6 week series. The **STEM Discovery** program included 2 youth classes with **13**



participants. The Cooperative Extension Program adult program include the **Eat Smart, Be Active** curriculum educated **25 low resource adult learners** in 2 locations on physical activity, nutrition, food preparation and healthy lifestyle choices. The 3 week **Cooking Well for Healthy Blood Pressure** series aimed at those that struggle with high blood pressure was implemented at 2 locations for **20 participants.**

The **Families Reading Every Day (FRED)** program which encourages families to read together was implemented at 1 site with **12 participants** completing the month long program.

The **Heat Stress in the Workplace** program was presented at 1 location for **60 individuals** and a **MyPlate presentation** helped **55 participants** at 2 locations learn the benefits of MyPlate and how to keep their plates colorful.

29,948

TOTAL FAMILY &
COMMUNITY HEALTH
AGRI LIFE EDUCATIONAL
CONTACTS