



FoodWise Nutrition Educator Duties and Tasks

Revised January 2017

Subject Content & Outcomes

The primary function of a Nutrition Educator is to support and empower program participants in achieving behaviors consistent with healthy eating and active living. Nutrition educators teach subject content that supports accomplishing the following outcomes and behaviors:

Participants will make food choices that are consistent with the [*Dietary Guidelines for Americans*](#)

- choosing foods & beverages to meet nutrient needs without eating too many calories
- eating sufficient grain foods, especially those made from whole grains
- eating a variety of fruits and vegetables
- making healthy choices from the milk group
- making healthy choices from the meat & beans group
- choosing & preparing foods with less fat, especially solid fats
- choosing & preparing foods & beverages with less added sugar
- choosing & preparing foods with little salt
- choosing healthy food & beverages when eating away from home
- balancing calories from foods & beverages with calories used through physical activity

Participants will choose and prepare age-appropriate meals and snacks that are consistent with preferences and needs of family or household members.

- food for pregnant or breastfeeding women
- feeding infants
- feeding toddlers or preschoolers
- feeding school age children

Participants will handle food safely when buying, preparing, serving and storing food.

- keeping hands and surfaces clean
- avoiding cross contamination
- cooking to proper temperatures
- refrigerating promptly

- storing food safely

Participants will develop spending and savings plans to ensure that adequate money is available for food, thus improving their food security.

- determining resources for food
- living within a spending plan

Participants will plan, buy and prepare affordable nutritious meals and snacks.

- planning meals & snacks
- shopping for food
- preparing food low in fat and added sugars
- eating away from home using a budget

Participants will use community programs and resources, such as FoodShare/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), to improve their food security.

Participants will use vegetables and/or fruits grown in home or community gardens to enhance family food security.

Nutrition Educator Duties & Tasks

References to “subject content” in the list of duties and tasks below are reflective of the outcomes and behaviors listed in the first section of this document.

A. Function as part of a team

- Know mission of UW-Extension and FoodWise
- Communicate regularly with Coordinator
- Contribute to program planning and evaluation
- Communicate with Family Living educator as determined
- Communicate with Department Head, State FoodWise Program Coordinator as needed
- Give and receive co-worker support
- Participate in committees within time constraints of own position
- Help train others within time constraints of own position

B. Build rapport with agencies

- Work with Coordinator to identify community agencies with mutual interests
- Meet with staff from agencies to get acquainted and to promote potential educational opportunities
- Network with agencies: joint education efforts, advisory groups, other appropriate committees
- Maintain visibility in community: use identifiable materials, wear name tag, health fairs, newsletters, news releases
- Present an appropriate image and attitude

- Explain UW-Extension mission and FoodWise role in that mission

C. Build rapport with participants

- Establish contact with participant
- Show genuine interest in participant: be a good listener, demonstrate a caring attitude, welcome questions, be on time, respect diversity
- Share and learn from each other-self disclosure as appropriate
- Know where personal/professional boundaries are
- Maintain confidentiality

D. Plan teaching events for participants

- Respect participant diversity
- Assess the needs and abilities of the participant(s)
- Schedule time for lesson preparation and teaching
- Prepare a lesson plan -- set objectives appropriate to participant(s), select teaching methods and materials, be aware of current issues in the community and media, arrange for child care (groups), plan options for changing situations
- Utilize techniques to empower participants to continue desired practice/behavior

E. Teach subject content for youth and adults

- Respect participant diversity
- Respect needs and priorities of host site
- Place display in strategic location at peak traffic time (mini lessons)
- Get and maintain participant's attention
- Share information using displays, activities, food preparation/samples; games, discussion, handouts, quizzes, videos, etc.
- Utilize team teaching method and volunteers when appropriate (group lessons)
- Use basic group dynamic skills
- Establish boundaries, stay on track
- Engage participant in conversation about subject content
- Help participants set a goal
- Give positive reinforcement-incentives, verbal encouragement
- Provide follow-up: additional information, other opportunities
- Adapt teaching to changing situations
- Bring closure to session
- Complete session evaluation

G. Teach subject content at home visits with adults

- Respect participant diversity

- Review content and expectations
- Complete required forms
- Assess participant needs and interests (on-going)
- Share information using videos, activities, discussion, food preparation
- Share information about other programs and community resources
- Manage teaching with children and/or significant other present -- handle distractions
- Help participant set realistic goal -- give positive reinforcement
- Use good judgment in time spent teaching -- know when to leave
- Bring closure and set next appointment
- Tabulate information for required reports

H. Evaluate the teaching event

- Use range of statewide evaluation tools such as surveys, interviews, letters, as determined by your unit team with direction from FoodWise specialists
- Evaluate what was taught
- Evaluate how it was taught
- Determine the impact
- Interpret evaluation results to strengthen teaching process

I. Manage time and paperwork

- Use office procedures
- File and keep records
- Prepare accurate and timely reports
- Maintain reasonable amount of flexibility with own schedule

J. Take care of oneself

- Assess a potentially unsafe location or situation
- Have a plan for getting out of potentially unsafe situations
- Know what to do in an emergency -- 911 or other emergency procedures, report to your advisor
- Practice preventive measures for personal health and safety -- lifting, carrying, infection control, stress management

K. Continue to learn skills and subject content

- Keep current on relevant issues -- read newsletters, talk with colleagues
- Use range of educational opportunities to update and renew skills (communication, organizational, teaching, computer) and knowledge of subject content