

## Better Living for Texans Highlights

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### Brown County

2021

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More than 3.7 million individuals receive benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). In Brown County, an estimated 5,397 households receive these benefits. Better Living for Texans (BLT) nutrition programs teach low-income audiences to prepare nutritious meals, stretch their food resources, improve their food-safety practices, and participate in regular physical activity. This not only improves the quality of life and reduces the risk of chronic disease for participants, but also lowers public health care costs.

### Contact

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### Adult Programming

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**These series address previously identified Texas Communities Future Forum (TCFF) issues and BLT committee priorities as follows:**

- Enriching Family/Personal Environment through Life/Job Skills - Elder care, life skills for independent living
- Food Safety and Nutrition - food preparation, food safety and nutrition education

**Overall adult programming reach: 87 sessions – 997 contacts – 116 graduates.**

Fresh Start to a Healthier You! – (in person and on AgriLife Learn) – teach adult participants about nutrition. Emphasis on increasing fruit and vegetable intake, physical activity, food safety, and food resource management.

- 21 sessions delivered – 81 contacts – 16 graduates
- Post Behavior Changes were seen with the 12 who completed pre and post paper surveys.
- 60% are exercising 30 minutes or more in an average week
  - 57.1% are planning their meals prior to grocery shopping
  - 41.7% increased the times a day veggies are eaten
  - 60% increased the times a day fruit is eaten

Get the Facts – teaches how to read Nutrition Facts Label and identify portion sizes, sodium, fat, and added sugar found in foods. Participants age range was from 33 to 92 years old. Sessions were weekly or bi-weekly.

- 21 sessions delivered – 198 contacts – 30 graduates
- Comparing the 17 completed Pre and Post surveys an overall increase was found.
- How often do you look at calorie information on the food label when you buy food?  
 Response: Most of the time Pre:42.9% Post: 53.3% Overall Increase: 19.1%
  - How often do you look at the serving size on a food label?  
 Response: Always or most of the time Pre:21.4% Post: 35.7% Overall Increase: 14.3%
  - How often do you use food labels to select foods that are better for your health?  
 Response: Sometimes Pre: 42.9% Post: 53.3% Overall Increase: 10.4%

December 13, 2021

(Exhibit #10)

*The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons.*

**Walk Across Texas!** -- (Implemented virtually with three in person events) – Partnered with Keep Brownwood Beautiful for the 25<sup>th</sup> year anniversary challenge! Four adult teams and 30 adults participated in the fall. Fourteen participants completed pre and post electronic surveys. There were three events: a kickoff, midway, and wrap up celebration. During these events participants walked and picked up litter at three parks and kayaked to retrieve litter from the Pecan Bayou. Through a team-based approach, participants walked 5,781 miles virtually across Texas almost seven times and picked up a total of 375 pounds of litter. The economic impact or savings on future healthcare costs total \$148, 242 if they continue with the same level of physical activity.

## Youth Programming

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**This series address previously identified Texas Communities Future Forum (TCFF) issues and BLT committee priorities as follows:**

- Educating Youth on Basic Life Skills
- Food Safety and Nutrition – food preparation, food safety and nutrition education

**Overall youth programming reach: 10 sessions (including 4-H GLOBE camp) -- 415 contacts – 45 graduates**

**Color Me Healthy** – In partnership with Brownwood ISD Head Start the BLT agent implemented this series virtually via ZOOM using animated videos. The students were in the school setting and the classroom teachers distributed the fruit and vegetable samples, educational incentive items, and parent handouts provided by the Extension Agent. The district was closed to the public due to COVID. This series focuses on nutrition and physical activity in a fun, innovative, interactive way. It is a multi-sensory curriculum. Schools are in a unique position in that they can provide both physical activity and nutrition education. Youth from homes with limited resources are at higher risk of childhood obesity.

Forty-five preschool aged children completed this nine-session series.

Noted improvements per paper evaluations by the three teachers:

- This child is more willing to taste fruit. 100%
- This child is more willing to taste vegetables. 81.3%
- This child's physical activity has increased. 45%

## Future Implications

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- All adult series will be offered again in 2022. The BLT program is always looking for new opportunities to reach the limited resource audience.
- To increase physical activity and willingness to taste vegetables, the BLT committee and Heidi Gardner (Director of Special Programs) agreed that Learn Grow Eat and Go for Early Childhood is best for 2022. The BLT agent will continue to collaborate with the teachers at Head Start and recruit volunteers to implement this new hands-on curriculum with all 5 classrooms (approximately 100 students) in the spring of 2022.

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