

About *Ideas for Living*

Ideas for Living was established in 1993 in response to requests from social service agencies for basic life skills classes for their clients. The classes are presented by trained volunteers using lesson plans developed by WSU Extension. There are 15 different lessons each addressing a specific topic related to parenting, healthy eating, food safety, budgeting, time-management or consumer skills. The classes are taught on site at local social service agencies.

The program's goals are to:

- reduce dependence on public assistance.
- help food stamp recipients learn about nutrition and healthy eating.
- decrease isolation by establishing stronger social networks.
- promote more positive family functioning.
- increase individual self-sufficiency and self-confidence by validating present knowledge and expanding skills.
- increase community understanding of the challenges faced by low-income families.

Ideas for Living is administered by Washington State University Skagit County Extension. The program provides research-based information to at-risk and low-income individuals in a consumer-friendly format.

World Class. Face to Face.



For More Information Contact

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This material was funded in part by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact your local DSHS Community Service Office.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Ideas 
for Living

***2008
Impacts***



**We're helped by
your support to
United
Way**

2008 Life Skills Classes and Nutrition Demonstrations

Ideas for Living volunteers and staff provided 190 life skills classes and nutrition demonstrations to 1,756 individuals in Skagit County at the following locations: Head Start, Upper Skagit Tribe, Skagit County Community Action Agency (WIC and Family Development programs), Skagit Valley College (English as a Second Language, and Foreign Student programs), Mount Vernon Manor, Northwest Youth Services, Mount Vernon School District Community Transitions Program, Skagit Connections, Washington Elementary School parents, Little Mountain Elementary School, Skagit Parent to Parent, St. Charles Church, Gear Up, Archdiocesan Housing Authority (Casa de San José), Immaculate Conception Church (Maternity Lending Center), and Washington State Department of Social and Health Services. Currently 10 of the 15 lessons in the *Ideas for Living* program are available in Spanish as well as English.

Impacts

- 699 individuals attended classes
- 1,057 individuals participated in nutrition demonstrations at DSHS and the Maternity Lending Center
- 100% of participants reported learning new information
- 95% of participants reported they planned to use the information they learned
- 94% of participants were low income and 46% were minorities

A follow up telephone interview was conducted 1 to 12 months following each class.



2008 Volunteers

144 participants were successfully contacted (52% response rate).

- 100% of the people contacted remembered taking the class
- 100% reported they were using ideas they learned in class and were able to cite specific examples

Comments included:

- “I use MyPyramid as a guide when I plan, shop and prepare meals.”
- “We turn the TV off when we eat.”
- “I give my children raw vegetables as a between-meal snack.”
- “We are eating more vegetables and fruit.”
- “We are having regular, well-balanced meals and cutting down on snacks.”
- “I am getting my kids involved in planning and preparing meals.”
- “We are paying attention to portion sizes.”

Additional Educational Outreach

Monthly *Ideas for Living* newsletters containing information in both English and Spanish and quarterly *Working Families* newsletters provided by University of Illinois

Extension are posted on our web site. The site (<http://skagit.wsu.edu/FAM/IFL.htm>) contains the newsletters, program information, nutrition quizzes, and much more. It is designed so agencies can download information to use in their own newsletters and handouts. We ask only that they credit us for the information. In 2008 more than 7,000 people visited these pages.

In September 2008 we began a weekly radio program in Spanish on KSVR 91.7 FM. In a county-wide survey conducted in 2005 of 3,000 Spanish-speakers self-identified as “Hispanics-non-white”, 75% indicated that they get their information and news from KSVR.

If you would like to be a part of this award winning program, give us a call! We would be happy to talk to you about scheduling classes or discuss how you, or someone from your organization, can become an *Ideas for Living* volunteer.



Facilitator and students at an *Ideas for Living* class at the Mount Vernon Community Transitions Program.