



BETTER LIVING  
FOR TEXANS

**Helping Texans**  
*Better Their Lives*

2020 Webb County – Better Living for Texans

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**Relevance:**

In Webb County, approximately 76,511 eligible individuals meet the requirement to receive SNAP benefits (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.) From eligibility to actual recipients, the number dwindles down to 29, 210. This means that there's 47, 301 that face food insecurity yet were unable to receive supplemental food assistance. Pairing limited resources with food deserts and lack of access, families living among those conditions are inclined to buy more inexpensive yet less nutritionally dense food which leads to an increased risk of chronic conditions, such as obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease.

Based on the statistics provided by Feeding Texas, CDC and Texas Health & Human Services, 10.7 % of households in Webb County live in food insecure homes and 25. 7 % live below the poverty line. Aside from lack of resources and access, Webb County residents face health risks with 37% suffering though obesity while 29.7% are physically inactive.

**Response:**

The Better Living for Texans Program is a cooperating program among Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service, Texas Health and Human Service Commission (HHSC) AND Food & Nutrition Service (FNS) of USDA. Better Living for Texans facilitates nutrition and physical education to individuals that are either SNAP recipients or SNAP eligible to give them the tools of making better decisions in their everyday life. Topics relating to meal planning, budgeting, food safety, nutrition labels, and strong emphasis on MyPlate is the dominant theme in the BLT programs such as *Be Well, Live Well*, and *Fresh Start to a Healthier You!* Physical activity and access to fresh fruits and vegetables is also emphasized and delivered through programs like *Walk N Talk* and *Learn, Grow, Eat, GO!* In Webb County, we focused on four core curriculums: *A Fresh Start to a Healthier You!*, *Walk & Talk/Walk Across Texas*, *Be Well Live Well* and *Learn Grow Eat Go*.

**Results:**

Throughout the latter part of 2019 to the early months of 2020, Better Living for Texans offered 27 courses (ranging from 4 weeks to 8 weeks), in which 16 were *Fresh Start to a Healthier You!*, 4 sessions were *Be Well Live Well*, and 7 sessions were *Walk and Talk*. Up until program delivery came to a halt in early March of 2020 due to COVID-19, 357 adult participants completed and graduated the 3 programs delivered by Better Living for Texans-Webb County and reached a total of 1,955 adult contacts. In collaboration with Healthy South Texas, *Learn Grow Eat Go!* And *Walk N Talk* resulted in 1,922 graduates from participating BLT schools, and a total of 6,896 youth contacts.

Behavioral changes of adults who completed the *Be Well Live Well* Program were evaluated through a Pre and Post survey. The average age of participants in this program was 66 years old, 94.7 were Hispanic, 78.9 were female while 5.3% were male. The following tables reflect the behavioral changes in fruit and vegetable consumption, food management, and increase in physical activity.

**Goal: Increase Fruit and Vegetable Consumption**

Be Well Live Well pre-surveys displayed that only 5.9% of participants attempted to eat fruit once a day while 47% consumed fruit. After the course, 26.7% implemented food in their diet at least once a day while 13.3% ate fruit regularly.

Pre-surveys showed that participants rarely ate vegetables with 31.6% checking off 0 as the amount of vegetables implemented in their day to day. After the course, 36.8 percent incorporated vegetables in their plates at least once a day.

**Goal: Increase Physical Activity**

Surveys display a steadiness to how regular participants maintained themselves in their physical activity. Pre-surveys showed that 50% exercised 3 times a week and Post Surveys results remained the same with 50% of participants keeping on with their physical activity routines.

**Goal: Nutrition Label Understanding & Meal Planning**

Pre-Surveys show that 5.6% of participants planned their meals daily, after the course, 25% of participants began to implement daily meal planning. Participants also increased their knowledge of nutrition label reading with pre-surveys showing that 5.6% usually reading the nutrition label to after the course, 43.8% paying a closer attention to their food products.

**Acknowledgements:**

Partnering agencies and collaborators are the backbone to our delivery efforts across the Webb county area. Such partners include partnered school districts, community centers, senior housing authorities, public libraries, health departments/clinics, faith based religious centers, and peer support groups.

**Future Plans:**

This year, we had an unprecedented global pandemic affect our day to day operations, consequently impacting our face to face delivery. Fortunately enough, Better Living for Texans has swiftly adapted to a new model of educational delivery to continue on with BLT programs. BLT in Webb County will focus on the delivery of virtual programming and molding to the new normal as we navigate new mediums to better reach our respective audiences. The focus will remain on the delivery of adult and youth programming and finding innovative ways to make our programming engaging form a virtual platform. Finally, Better Living for Texans-Webb County will keep building and expanding on partnerships and host a recognition event to outstanding partners and participants.




*Be Well Live Well Graduation Photo with Extension Agent- BLT, Genesis Hernandez*



*Walk N Talk with Program Associate- BLT, Valeria Arredondo*

**VALUE**

**Better Living for Texans**



These 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.

**EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE**  
*Providing Solutions*