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### **Eating Habits of low-Income Families**

Last year I received a grant to offer training to child care providers on ways to encourage children to eat more nutritious foods. The persons who provided the funding continue to offer up-dates on relevant research. Recently I received an article which really interested me. I thought you would enjoy this brief summary of the findings of a study they completed related to the eating habits of low-income families.

*Share our Strength's Cooking Matters* staff conducted a survey of families making less than \$60,000 a year and found that they want to make healthy meals, and believe eating healthy is realistic for them, but are struggling to do so.

*It's Dinnertime: A Report on Low-Income Families' Efforts to Plan, Shop for and Cook Healthy Meals* was released last month, with support from the ConAgra Food® Foundation.

Key findings include:

- 8 in 10 low-income families cook dinner at home at least five times a week. As income decreases, the frequency of eating dinner made at home increases.
- While low-income families are large satisfied with the variety (61%) and quality (64%) of healthy grocery times available to them, only 30% are satisfied with their price.
- A better understanding of the health benefits of frozen and canned fruits and vegetables could put more healthy options in reach for low-income families.
- Low-income families that regularly plan meals, write grocery lists and budget for food make healthy meals from scratch more often (5+ times a week) than those who don't

This survey gives voice to families like those targeted by Extension programs, who are doing the best they can to make healthy meals but struggling to do so. It also underscores the need for more cooking, shopping and nutrition-based education among all populations. Extension programming can help narrow that achievement gap; people who shop and cook with a plan are putting healthy meals on the table more often.

Coming Soon.....

Wakulla County Extension sponsored cooking schools.

Watch for the announcement and enroll.

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