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March is National Nutrition Month. Find out how CCKC is working to ensure SNAP Benefits are being provided to qualifying Custer County Families. Also, learn how school lunches are being provided to all students for rest of the school year at the Custer County School on page 1.

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CCKC Highlight: Angie Shehorn is the CCKC regional child care resource and referral agency. Take a look at her role in CCKC on page 2.

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Cooking Matters, a campaign helping to end childhood hunger, is partnering with CCKC to help provide Custer County families with affordable meal planning. Read on page 3.



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NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH: SNAP

March is Nutritional Awareness Month and in Custer County, CCKC is working diligently to spread awareness about the national food assistance program known as SNAP, Supplemental Food Assistance Program. SNAP is a federally funded program administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service and partnered with state and local agencies to be provided the program locally, which help eligible low-income families purchase the food they need to attain good health.

SNAP benefits are based on income, resources and the number of individuals in the households. Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards, used like debit cards, are used to receive the benefits and apply at participating food stores to supplement the food budget for families in need. Not only does SNAP supplement families food budgets, SNAP Education (SNAP-Ed), teaches people to shop for and cook healthy meals how to make their SNAP dollars stretch for their families. Cooking Matters, an integrated nutrition education program, is actually a Colorado State SNAP-Ed Program that teaches parents and caregivers, with limited food budgets, to shop for and cook healthy meals. More on the Cooking Matters program can be found on page 3 of this Newsletter.

For more information about SNAP or to apply, contact the Fremont County Department of Human Services at 719-275-2318 or go to their website at <https://cdhs.colorado.gov/snap#apply>.



CUSTER COUNTY SCHOOL FREE LUNCHES

Feeding children throughout the Nation is a continual challenge and this year, due to the COVID-19 crisis, is no different. Last year, the CDE School Nutrition Unit contacted Jeri Sumpter, the Custer County School District Food Service Director, to offer assistance for the students at the Custer School District through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Jeri Sumpter has been an essential part of the school's free lunches and thanks to her and the NSLP program the students at the school have had free lunches and will continue to through September of 2021. She feeds an average of 50 breakfasts and 175 lunches per day, with the state offering the grant again next school year, Fall 2021.

CCKC HIGHLIGHT



ANGIE SHEHORN: DIRECTOR OF THE CHILDREN FIRST DEPT, PCC

Angie Shehorn has been the Custer County Kids Council (CCKC) regional child care resource and referral agency since the planning of the council began. In 2017 CCKC was fortunate to have Angie’s expertise and support as the founding members applied to be an early childhood council, and she has continued to provide that expertise and support over the years for agency collaboration and projects within CCKC. In speaking with Angie she has said that she would love to see the Council continue to assess the needs of the community across the domains of the Family Support & Education, Health & Well-Bing; learning & Development as it pertains to children and families prenatal to 8 years and then continue to strive to meet those needs. She also hopes to see the Council continue to think innovatively, try new things and remove barriers as the Council’s capacity grows.

For the last 8 years, Angie has been the Director of the Children First Department at Pueblo Community College (PCC) and a member of several early childhood boards. Children First vision, as the leader in early childhood information in Southern Colorado, is to bring about accessible and affordable, quality early learning opportunities. Children First is also the home of the regional child care resource and referral agency, serving 11 counties in southeast Colorado, and the early childhood council of Pueblo; all of which is why Angie’s expertise is so important to CCKC.

Angie Shehorn is also a Colorado Native, living in Canon City, CO with her husband, Joe, of 25 years. She has a son, daughter-in-law and grandson, Robert, Ana and Sterling; and a daughter and future son-in-law, Jessica and Austin. She’s been in early childhood for nearly 30 years as an in home childcare provider, child care referral specialist, early childhood coach, and now as a Director of the Children First Department. Here at CCKC we appreciated and welcome all that she brings to the Council.

“I am thrilled to see how robust the CCKC has become in such a short time and applaud the Council staff and Council members in their dedication and work involved to make this happen.” Angie Shehorn



COOKING MATTERS

Cooking matters, an integrated nutrition education program from the Colorado State SNAP-Ed Program, is a campaign helping to end childhood hunger by inspiring families to make healthy, affordable food choices. The cooking matters programs teach parents and caregivers with limited food budgets, to shop for and cook healthy meals. The idea behind this program is to give parents and caregivers the skills needed to prepare healthy, low-cost meals for their families that cover nutrition and healthy eating, food preparation, budgeting and shopping.

This program is an important resource for the Custer County Kids Council (CCKC) because we partner with Cooking Matters to bring these workshops to the community to help educate and explore fun new ways to bring nutrition into homes for both younger and older members of the family. These workshops not only teach parents and caregivers to shop for and cook health meals, but to build a foundation within the home where healthy eating choices become second nature, habit, and are no longer a battle with our younger generation.

CCKC partners with Cooking Matters to bring 6-week Hands-On Cooking Courses to Custer County that provides educational tools to empower families with the skills to be self-sufficient in the kitchen. CCKC’s own coordinator Stacy Terrill and several other community members have been trained to facilitate and teach these 6-week Cooking Courses. The lessons in these courses cover meal preparations, grocery shopping, food budgeting and nutrition. Participants practice fundamental food skills, including proper knife techniques, reading ingredient labels, cutting up a whole chicken, and making a healthy meal for a family of four on a \$10 budget. Adults and teens take home a bag of groceries after each class so they can practice the recipes taught that day.

For more information about this campaign and future courses CCKC will be providing, contact CCKC at custercountyecc@gmail.com or go to the CCKC website at <http://custerkids.org/> to stay up to date on future endeavors with Cooking Matters.

Anna Powell



“Helping end childhood hunger by inspiring families to make healthy, affordable food choices.”

