



NEW YORK CITY HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION AND CORNELL UNIVERSITY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION ENCOURAGE BROOKLYN FAMILIES TO “CUT THE JUNK” THROUGH HANDS-ON EDUCATION AND A HEALTHY EATING GUIDE AT FORT GREENE FOOD STAMP CENTER

Citywide ad campaign currently running in buses, subway and bus shelters in 8 Community Districts in Brooklyn until the end of September

September 13-14 2012. Today, the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA) and Cornell University Cooperative Extension of NYC (CUCE-NYC) held a “Cut the Junk” healthy eating class, in which [“Cut the Junk” brochures](#) were handed out in English and Spanish to clients and applicants visiting Bronx Concourse and Brooklyn Fort Greene Supplemental Assistance Nutrition Centers. “Cut the Junk,” which HRA created in partnership with Cornell University Cooperative Extension-NYC (CUCE), is the City’s first ever illustrated healthy eating and cost comparison booklet to show that cooking at home can be healthier and less expensive than eating take out or fast food. Deputy Mayor Linda Gibbs and HRA Commissioner Robert Doar [launched the Cut the Junk campaign in mid-July](#) followed by a month-long educational subway and bus ad campaign in communities throughout the five boroughs that started in late August. Additionally, Cornell staff conducted a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) learning station at the center. SNAP-Ed is a federally funded program that HRA administers in New York City which educates Supplemental Nutrition Assistance recipients with the goal of helping them make more informed and healthier food choices within a limited budget.

“Chronic illnesses associated with obesity, such as diabetes, can be devastating for families and costly for the City,” said HRA Commissioner Robert Doar. “Our campaign sends a strong message that we need to ‘Cut the Junk’ from our diets, and that good nutrition can both save lives and taxpayer dollars. This common-sense guidance and ads promoting less expensive alternatives to unhealthy foods can help stretch a family’s food budget further. We are very proud to come directly to people’s neighborhoods to promote good nutrition habits.”

“We are gratified to learn that our Eat Smart New York classes transform the lives of thousands of families every year,” said Carol M. Parker-Duncanson, Program Leader at Cornell University Cooperative Extension's Nutrition and Health Program. “These families make long term decisions on how to use their food dollars and food stamp benefits wisely, by making nutritious choices. Making change to our diets can be challenging, but by working with the City’s ‘Cut the Junk’ campaign we can give New Yorkers the tools they need to reduce their risk of obesity and chronic disease through improved nutrition and health practices.”

HRA operates several nutrition education programs including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Outreach Program and SNAP-Ed. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Outreach Program educates New Yorkers who are eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program by visiting communities throughout the five boroughs. The program provides training on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program and application process, pre-screens applicants who may qualify, helps them with the application process, and provides education on good nutrition. HRA runs two SNAP-Ed programs in partnership with local organizations: Eat Smart NYC, with the Cornell University Cooperative Extension (CUCE-NYC); and Cook Shop, with the Food Bank for NYC. SNAP-Ed programs encourage New Yorkers who receive food stamps to make healthy food choices.

HRA's "Cut the Junk" campaign emphasizes that eating healthy foods can be less expensive than unhealthy foods, which is especially important for low-income families stretching their food budget dollars. The "Cut the Junk" booklet details the cost effectiveness of a meal made at home. For example, a whole baked chicken can be made at home for nearly forty percent less than the price of the typical fried take_out version. The booklet emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean meats. "Cut the Junk" also contains a list of healthy snacks, educates readers on how to understand food labels, and warns about foods that may have more sugar than readers think, such as iced tea and cereal. The booklet also includes suggestions on portion-control strategies, such as using smaller plates. Choosing healthier options could mean a difference of hundreds of additional calories every day, as well as savings in real dollars and food stamp benefits. The campaign launch in mid-July was preceded by a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Economic Research Service report emphasizing that many healthy foods, including fruits and vegetables, cost less than foods high in saturated fat, added sugars, and/or sodium.

The Concourse Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Center currently serves 130,000 food stamp recipients living in Bronx neighborhoods such as Melrose, Morrisania, Woodlawn Heights and High Bridge. The Fort Greene Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Center currently serves almost 76,000 food stamp recipients living in Brooklyn neighborhoods such as Crown Heights, Clinton Hill, Fort Greene and Boreum Hill. As of July 2012, there were over 489,000 and 659,000 food stamp recipients in The Bronx and Brooklyn, respectively. Copies of the "Cut the Junk" guide are being distributed at locations throughout New York City's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Offices, food pantries, and farmers' markets, and available online at www.nyc.gov. To get updates on this initiative, follow us on Twitter [@NYCHRA](https://twitter.com/NYCHRA).

Facts on the HRA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Participation (as of August 2012):

- A total of 1,844,896 New Yorkers receive food stamps.
- The vast majority (1,168,432) do not receive Cash Assistance.
- Participation in the Food Stamp program has increased by 124 percent since Mayor Bloomberg took office, while Cash Assistance has shrunk to its lowest levels since the 1960s.

- Despite the rapid growth, HRA has maintained a high rate of accuracy without substantially adding staff.

Awards:

- 2006: HRA received USDA performance bonus award for “Most Improved Program Access Index (PAI)”
- 2007: Food Stamp Outreach Program in conjunction with F14 received USDA Hunger Champions Award
- 2009: Nine HRA Job and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance centers were honored by the U.S.D.A. as well as the City and State for excellent accuracy ratings.
- 2010: HRA received the ‘Nor’easter’ award for outstanding efforts to increase participation in the Food Stamp program.
- 2011: HRA won a “Silver Plate” U.S.D.A. Hunger Champions Award for efforts to improve service by increasing communications between Food Stamp Centers and non-profit and community groups.

Facts on the HRA Emergency Food Assistance Program (EFAP)

- 494 emergency food programs throughout New York City
- 373 food pantries (a food pantry distributes food items that can be prepared and eaten at home)
- 121 soup kitchens (a soup kitchen serves meals to individuals in a congregate setting)
- EFAP has programs that service the homeless populations with special dietary needs (kosher and halal), and people living with HIV/AIDS
- All programs are open to the public and free of charge

In Fiscal Year 2012:

- EFAP distributed 12,174,751 pounds of perishable and non-perishable food, through our partnership and contracts with the Food Bank for NYC
- EFAP programs reported serving an average of 269,000 meals a month in soup kitchens, and an average of 843,000 people a month in food pantries
- EFAP budget for FY’12 was \$8.2 million
- EFAP receives an additional \$1.3 million from the City Council, which enabled EFAP to expand its inventory to include frozen food
- EFAP distributes \$300,000 annually in Administrative grants for non-food related expenses