



Kiwaniis
NEBRASKA-IOWA DISTRICT

“Veggie Kits” for Hungry Kids

How to help limited-income families make their own healthy meals



If Kiwanis would like to have a fulfilling, hands-on volunteer opportunity, they can offer to sponsor a public class or “party,” in which families with low-income (who are not already enrolled in a nutrition education program) learn about healthy food preparation, sample a healthy meal, and receive resources that will help them prepare healthy meals at home.

What to do: First, contact an ISU Extension nutrition specialist to offer sponsorship of a public health nutrition education class for parents with low income. (See list of specialists). A Kiwanis group may help the specialist cover the costs of publicity, food, door prizes, and/or free childcare for the event.

Kiwanis groups can offer to make “Veggie Kits” for each family that attends the class. A veggie kit is a collection of low-cost tools that encourage families to prepare and eat more vegetables. It can be a bag or box that contains low-cost items such as a cutting board, paring knife, carrot peeler, vegetable steamer, colander, hand soap, salad tongs, salad bowl, and/or a mason jar. Many families with limited incomes lack these basic tools. They can be purchased most inexpensively at dollar stores.

Kiwanis volunteers can also volunteer to help set up and clean up the teaching site, greet attendees at the door, and serve food.

A Kiwanis group can document its success in improving children’s health by the number of nutrition classes or “parties” they sponsor, the number of families and children who attend, and the number of families who decide to eat more vegetables. The Extension specialist can provide the evaluation results for these events.