

Waukesha County Nutrition Coalition Minutes

June 24, 2025

Location: Waukesha Public Library

Attendance: *Michael Egly- Food Pantry of Waukesha County; Eva Platte- Waukesha Head Start; Chloe Bingenheimer- Community Smiles Dental; Shanna Krause- La Casa de Esperanza Early Head Start; Jill Herz & Jillian Smith- UW-Madison Extension; Alyssa Pisarski- Waukesha Public Library; Jenna Biermann- Waukesha County Recycling; Marissa Hartzell- The Women's Center; Jessica Kapsos- Hebron House; Nancy Munoz-Catholic Charities; Sandy Pollari- Eras Senior Network; Rob Shelledy- St. Vincent de Paul of Waukesha County.*

Coalition Updates- Michael Egly:

No Food Recovery updates this month. August meeting location and presentation is TBD; switched Sussex Outreach to October meeting. We will keep everyone informed about the details of the next meeting.

Presentation: Extension Health & Well Being, Farm to School, and FoodWise Programs

Presenters: Jillian Smith, Health & Well Being Educator and Jill Herz, FoodWise Administrator

See PowerPoint slides that were sent to the email list. Summary:

University of Wisconsin- Extension in Waukesha County is comprised of several program areas that engage Waukesha County citizens in educational programs to transform lives and communities. View the Extension Waukesha County website for more information on available programs: <https://waukesha.extension.wisc.edu/> Extension programs bring university research-based education to local audiences.

Extension Health & Well Being Programs: The goal of Health & Well Being (HWB) programs in Waukesha County is to deliver health education to improve physical activity, reduce chronic conditions, and increase healthy coping skills. Programs offered include Strong Bodies, WeCope, Mind Matters. Jillian also provides support for local youth wellness programs such as the Youth Garden and Farm to School. Strong Bodies is a community-based strength-training program offered typically for older adults but can be for anyone over 18. WeCope is a program that helps adults cope with life stress. Mind Matters provides hands-on learning for ages 12-adults on the effects of adversity and toxic stress, the healing process, and building resilience. A Farm to School workgroup consisting of HHS, Extension, and two Waukesha School District elementary schools were able to obtain funding this year for an AmeriCorps Farm to School specialist (Anastasia Doyle-Bruce). Anastasia worked with Summit View and Hawthorne elementary schools from the beginning of the school year until late April/early May, when program funding was cut federally. During her time there, she revitalized disused garden beds, provided nutrition & garden education lessons during the school day and afterschool, and engaged kids in vermicomposting and seed starting. She also ran a Farm to School Career Day at Hawthorne during her last week. We are looking for ways to carry on this work without an AmeriCorps member. Jillian continues to work with a Positive Youth Initiatives youth garden program in collaboration with HHS. For more information on HWB programs, contact Jillian: jillian.smith@wisc.edu

Extension FoodWise Programs: FoodWise is a statewide nutrition education program, in 70/72 counties in the state of Wisconsin. FoodWise promotes healthy habits for families with low income, who are eligible for FoodShare, free/reduced price school lunch, WIC, etc. FoodWise empowers families with limited financial resources to eat nutritious meals, plan/prepare healthy meals on a budget, and become more food secure. FoodWise works with preschool-age youth, elementary-age youth, teens, adults, and senior citizens with evidence-based programs that fit the needs of those groups. FoodWise teaches people where they are: schools, apartment complexes, childcare centers, clinics, shelters, gardens, and a variety of other community organizations. FoodWise

is funded by SNAP-Ed and EFNEP federal grants. Most counties receive SNAP-Ed funding only. Urban counties (Dane, Rock, Waukesha, Racine, Kenosha, Milwaukee) receive both SNAP-Ed and EFNEP funding. Currently, it is being proposed in the House/Senate budget bills to eliminate SNAP-Ed funding. This has passed the House and is currently in the Senate. FoodWise participants show improvements in sugary beverage intake, label reading, saving money on food, cooking skills/using recipes, food safety, intake of fruits and vegetables, and physical activity. FoodWise focuses on prevention; exposing youth to healthy foods/new recipes to try, and teaching skills that are needed for healthy habits throughout life. Last year, FoodWise reached 1,802 learners with education in Waukesha County, with most of those learners participating in series of 4-8 lessons. For more information on FoodWise programs, contact Jill: jill.herz@wisc.edu

Agency Updates:

Waukesha Head Start- Eva Platte: Currently enrolling for next year. We were granted funds—the amount stayed flat but happy to have funding. 4K is full. Still enrolling for others. Head Start serves children birth to 3, 3-4 year olds, as well as two 4K classrooms. They also have childcare.

La Casa de Esperanza Early Head Start- Shanna Krause: Shanna is Home-Based educator with La Casa Early Head Start. 16 kids will be aging out of Early Head Start program, so those slots will be open. Some kids are on a waiting list that can fill a few slots, but will still have about 9 slots open. La Casa Health Fair is August 9th (flyer distributed).

Hebron House- Jessica Kapsos: Jessica is case manager for the men at Hebron House. As of yesterday, have started to take new intakes. There has been a waiting list, but anticipate that things will be moving forward. Located at 1210 Sentry Dr. (old firehouse). Juno House is for families.

Catholic Charities- Nancy Munoz: (distributed Community Counseling brochure). Community counseling available to anyone looking for help. Catholic Charities has a sliding fee scale. Most clients do not pay anything. Spanish therapist is available (currently over the phone only). Looking to hire another Spanish-speaking staff member.

Eras Senior Network- Sandy Pollari: Eras Senior network provides connections for older adults and seniors with disabilities. Volunteers provide the services (100+ volunteers). Eras provides unique services in that they match volunteers to needs. Also are able to refer people to other community resources. They are in full swing with helping people over the summer with various needs. They are blessed to work with so many agencies around the table.

Waukesha County Recycling- Jenna Biermann: Recycling specialist for Waukesha County. Providing education at Retzer Nature Center and also going in to schools to teach youth about using resources wisely. Looking into ways to reach more adults with education.

St Vincent de Paul of Waukesha County- Rob Shelledy: We are a volunteer organization of Catholic parishes in Waukesha County, 1 in Walworth County. Conducting home visits to help people who are in need. St Vincent de Paul will also be providing free summer lunch at Roberta Park from 12-12:30 Monday-Friday throughout the summer, a snack for the kids at La Casa summer programs, and a snack for kids in the Parks and Rec Swim program. 4 Waukesha Catholic Parishes are merging into 1, beginning on July 1st. There will be 1 food pantry, open 1x/month starting in July.

Food Pantry of Waukesha County- Michael Egly: There is a waitlist for the senior Stockbox program. The ADRC recently came to the pantry to distribute senior farmers market vouchers. They are now directly available at the ADRC. Will be distributing backpacks and school supplies starting in August in partnership with United Way; do not have an exact date yet. There is a summer free lunch program offered through the school district at summer school

sites. (Food Pantry of Waukesha County does not offer summer lunch program anymore). There is a Senate bill proposal currently on the table that affects many sources of federal funding for community programs; waiting to learn the results of these proposals and if the budget bill passes.

Community Smiles Dental- Chloe Bingenheimer: Community Smiles Dental has two clinics in Waukesha and Menomonee Falls. They are fully staffed, serving primarily children. There is currently a waitlist, but it is much smaller than this time last year. Doing some advocacy, meeting with senators and representatives to advocate for funding and showcase the importance of these services. If you have any summer tabling events/fairs, please feel free to keep us informed of those opportunities to attend.

The Women's Center- Marissa Hartzell: Walk-in hours continue to be Monday-Friday, 9-4. No major updates this month.

Waukesha Public Library- Alyssa Pisarski: Currently busy with our summer reading program. The Waukesha Public Library is a cooling center. We are open 9-8:30 Monday-Thurs, Friday 9-6, Saturday 9-5, and closed Sundays. Working on planning fall programming. Looking into having an office hours-style reservation for organizations; if you are interested in opportunities to connect with people in the community to offer your services.

Emailed updates:

Waukesha County WIC- Lisa Topp:

Final WIC grant funding amounts have been awarded to local agencies and there has been a welcomed and surprising increase in funding to carry out the 2025 grant year with 2026 appearing to be stable based upon current budget negotiations. The State WIC Office is preparing for the rollout of the new WIC food rule that has been approved. The changes will roll out in 3 phases with the first phase beginning Sept. 29th. The first phase will incorporate the most significant changes. Details about the new food rule will be shared more widely with partners once the marketing materials have been finalized and shared with local agencies. Overall, the new food rule will provide greater flexibility in purchases and greater variety to better meet the needs of the diverse families we serve and to align better with the nutrient needs of the families being served. FMNP benefits have been decreased for 2025 from \$40 to \$25 per booklet. Booklets will contain five \$5 vouchers per eligible participant. We will also be receiving less booklets to distribute. We are excited that we can still issue benefits to each eligible family member versus only one packet per family. However, due to the decrease in the number of booklets issued per agency, we will be screening families more diligently to identify if they have a history of redeeming the FMNP checks and/or have a plan or the capacity to redeem them. Historically redemption rates for Waukesha WIC families have been quite low (averaging 36% over the past 5 years) as we have been liberal with providing them to almost all eligible families despite their redemption history. We are not overly concerned with the decrease in the number of booklets for this reason. We will just need to be more judicious when issuing them. We have recruited a new PH Tech, Tina Katzer. She currently is in training and comes to us with experience in a variety of health care settings.

Waukesha Free Clinic- Rosa Zibell: Waukesha Free Clinic is in the process of closing our fiscal year at the end of the month. One of our nurses will be leaving, so a new job position will be open in one month.

ADRC- Courtney Klepp: The Senior Farmers Market voucher distribution is going very well. We are about ¾ of the way done with our scheduled community events. We have 702 vouchers and they are going quickly!

Next Meeting: August 26, 2025 at 9AM
Topic and Location: TBD