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NUTRITION AND EXERCISE AWARENESS FOR TEENS (NEAT)

A Behavior Modification Approach to Weight Control

Extension Division
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Blacksburg 24061

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Nutrition and Exercise Awareness for Teens
(NEAT)
A Behavior Modification Approach to Weight Control

Developed by
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Most teenagers are concerned about their figures and appearance and desperately want to do something about their weight problems. For the majority of young people, good times mean going for hamburgers after the movies, stopping for ice cream after class, ordering pizza after dinner, having cook-outs, etc. All of these activities involve eating various amounts of high-calorie foods. Teenagers lead busy lives; they sometimes don't pay as much attention as they should to what they eat. This frequently leads to eating too much of the wrong foods, and unwanted weight gain can result. They need help.

Obesity is a serious problem for young people. There are many disadvantages associated with obesity -- especially for the young person. Adolescence is a time when young people want to be accepted by their peer groups, when they especially want to feel good about themselves and their appearance. Obesity can become a vicious circle -- social rejection, because of a weight problem, may cause a teenager to eat more in an attempt to overcome bad feelings. This only increases the severity of the problem by contributing to further weight gain. Studies show that the public tends to discriminate against the overweight teenager. It can be more difficult for obese young people to get the jobs they want or to get into the college of their choice than for their slimmer counterparts. As the young person grows into adulthood, the obese state tends to persist along with accompanying physiological and psychological problems. The incidence of certain disease conditions increases for the overweight adult.

The authors have developed a program based on diet, exercise, and behavior modification for use with overweight teenagers. NEAT is the name of this special program for teenagers. NEAT stands for Nutrition and Exercise Awareness for Teens. It is a program designed to help teenagers achieve ideal weight for height, safely and nutritiously. This integrated approach to weight reduction and weight maintenance recognizes the importance of food intake (energy input) as well as activity (energy output). It uses the principles of behavior modification to encourage changing actions or habits related to overeating and/or under-activity and the development of habits conducive to weight loss and long-term weight maintenance.

There are ten planned lessons in the program. It is suggested that the lessons be taught on a weekly basis, or as can be best planned to fit into the teenagers' schedule. The ten lessons should not be covered in less than a ten-week period because this would not allow adequate time for a substantial weight loss. Some groups may wish to continue to meet after the ten lessons have been completed. Volunteer leadership should be encouraged to continue the program.

The titles of the lessons and the suggested order of presentation are:

1. Introduction to the NEAT Program
2. Behavior Modification Techniques
3. The NEAT Diet Plan
4. Low Calorie Cooking
5. Food Nutrients
6. Energy Metabolism
7. Physical Activity
8. Fad Diets
9. Fashions for Slimming
10. Eating Out

Class time should be divided into four parts: Weigh-In Time, Sharing Time, Educational Time, and Activity Time. You may find that there is more material in some lessons than can be comfortably covered in the allotted class time. In such cases, you may plan to continue a lesson at the next group meeting and to spread the program out.

An instructor's guide has been developed for each lesson outlining content and teaching methods. Most lesson guides give very complete information. The content for other lessons can be found in the student handouts. The transparencies or slides to support each of the lesson are available from Extension Specialists, Foods and Nutrition. A list of other supporting audio-visuals has been developed. Some of these are available through the Department of Human Nutrition and Foods or can be obtained from various agencies. You may decide that certain ones would be appropriate for use with your particular group and may want to purchase these for your unit. Student worksheets have been developed for use with each lesson. You will want to look these over to be sure you understand the content before working with the group.

A knowledge and attitude questionnaire has been designed by faculty in the Department of Human Nutrition and Foods to assess the success of the program by determining if and to what extent participants have actually made changes in knowledge, attitude, and behavior as a result of the program. The RCALL computer program will be used to analyze dietary intake. Both the knowledge and attitude questionnaire and the RCALL program should be administered during the early part of the program (Lesson 2) and again at the completion of the ten lesson series (Lesson 9, RCALL; Lesson 10, Questionnaire).

Included in this information material are a brief summary of the teenage obesity problem, a list of all the audio-visuals which have been developed or purchased to accompany the program, five sample news articles, a sample bulletin board item, a sample letter to teen clubs in your community, and a sample letter to be sent to NEAT participants before beginning and upon completing the program. Look through the material carefully. The summary on the teenage obesity problem will provide you with the necessary background to understand the scope of the program. You will probably want to use certain of the news items in publicizing your program. Decide what items would be most useful to you. Copies of the instructor's manual for each of the ten lessons accompany this material: Additional student handouts are available through the Extension Distribution Center.

Ideally, you should cooperate with school nurses, guidance counselors, home economics and physical education teachers, and school food service personnel in conducting the program using an interdisciplinary approach to the comprehensive management of obesity in the high school student. The materials could be adapted for use as part of organized courses in home economics, health, physical education, and the sciences, through Extension activities such as 4-H special interest groups, or through other youth organizations.

Consultation and program assistance may be obtained from the authors.

THE TEENAGE OBESITY PROBLEM

Obesity is one of the major nutrition-related health problems in the United States. Fifteen to twenty percent of individuals between the ages of 12 and 20 are significantly overweight, so as to be classified as medical problems. Health professionals are becoming increasingly aware of the problem of obesity and the associated health, social, and economic disadvantages, especially among adolescents and young adults.

Incidence of Obesity. It has been estimated that between 20 and 30 percent of the teenage population is significantly overweight. Jean Mayer suggests that 15 to 20 percent of American teenagers can be classified as genuine medical problems due to overweight. Nutritional studies from Maine to Oregon have shown that alarming numbers of adolescents do have serious overweight problems. These findings are especially disturbing in view of the fact that childhood obesity with its onset at a young age generally persists into adulthood, resulting in a severe obesity extremely resistant to treatment.

Growth Characteristics of Adolescents. The greatest single physiological difference between adolescents and younger or older people is the rapidity and extent of their growth. At no other time, except during the first year of life, does one grow as fast. At about age 11, girls experience a spurt in growth. Boys, will experience a similar growth spurt 1 to 3 years later. Therefore, between the ages of 11 and 13, girls are often taller than boys of the same age. After the age of 16, girls do not grow in height to any extent. Boys may continue to increase in height until their early twenties. After the age of 18, girls do not generally increase in weight unless they add too much fat. Boys will continue to increase in weight until the age of twenty or older. Consequently, normal adolescent growth is characterized by an increase in velocity of weight gain and linear growth. If the teenager overeats, the gain in weight will be disproportionately greater than the increase in height, resulting in a tendency towards obesity.

Nutritional Aspects. Nutrition is very important during the demanding growth changes associated with adolescence. The nutritional aspects of weight control in the adolescent are critical. Nutrient requirements during this stage are complex because the individual has not reached a state of stability in terms of growth. Any diet must meet the requirements of growth and development and, at the same time, result in a slowing of weight gain. Our aim is the establishment of a nutritious life style rather than weight loss alone.

Most teenagers, indeed most people, have a mental block to the subject of nutrition. To many, it means eating what they don't like, when they don't want to, on someone else's advice. Therefore, a knowledge of nutrition is essential when discussing diet with the overweight adolescent. Food fads and periodic bouts of starvation seem to appeal to the adolescent who is trying to lose weight. Such methods of weight loss need to be discouraged. The obese adolescent needs a diet which will supply adequate amounts of the nutrients required for normal growth and development and at the same time slow down or stop the rate of weight gain until a gain in height will accommodate the present weight. It is extremely important that calorie and nutrient intake not be cut in anyway that will interfere with normal growth. Prolonged low calorie intake may retard linear growth in the rapidly growing adolescent. Any severe restriction of caloric intake to lose weight should be avoided by the adolescent, particularly by the individual who has not yet reached peak height velocity.

There are basically two appropriate goals for the obese adolescent. If the overweight teenager has not yet reached peak height growth, the most realistic and appropriate physiological goal is to try to stabilize weight so that the individual can gradually grow in height to accommodate weight. If the teenager does not lose any weight over a specified amount of time, but adds two inches of height while maintaining present weight, that's a significant achievement. For the obese teenager who has attained peak height the appropriate goal is a slow but relatively constant loss of weight, at a rate of no more than two pounds per week, in order to achieve ideal body weight over a period of several months. It may take from several months to a year or more for the overweight teenager to achieve ideal body weight for height. Teenagers should understand that achievement of ideal body configuration will not necessarily be a steady process, but that with perseverance the ultimate goal of successful weight control can be realized by changing one's eating habits.

Nutrition counseling may be a problem unless teenagers want to improve their nutritional habits. Throughout this program we will try to help adolescents understand nutrition as it applies to their individual physiological and psychological needs. The basic four food groups and their nutrients will be presented from the point of view of recommended amounts for different age groups, and their relationships to growth and physical activity. We will attempt to provide reducers with an understanding of the need for setting realistic weight goals. The nutritional education of participants in relation to eating patterns is imperative if weight loss is to be satisfactorily maintained. Behavior modification lessons will stress the importance of becoming aware of what individual eating patterns actually are. By studying patterns and trends noted in food records, participants will learn where behavior changes need to be made and how to implement those changes. A gradual growth toward normal weight for height can be achieved through good nutrition.

Diet Plan. We recognize that adherence to any diet plan is directly related to the ease of availability and preparation of the foods prescribed and also to the degree of normality of the diet in relation to the environment of the individual. We would like the obese adolescent to realize that a reducing diet can be varied and satisfying. It need never be so restricted that favorite teenage foods, such as hamburgers or ice cream, are forbidden. We do not plan to teach calorie counting or elimination of favorite foods from the diet. Rather, we will emphasize selection of a variety of foods and portion control. We will provide the overweight adolescent with information on nutritional snacking and on how to follow a diet plan when eating out. The basic fundamentals of well-balanced meals must be firmly grasped. Making their own judgements in the selection of foods for daily meals, or making suitable choices when faced with a menu when eating out, will be easier for those individuals who have a basic understanding of nutrition.

Causes. We cannot stress enough the need to communicate with every overweight teenager in the program, to try to understand them and to motivate them to help themselves. But, before you can help any participant, you need to understand some of the common causes of obesity in the adolescent.

Genetic predisposition appears to be a major factor in the development of obesity. Approximately 70 percent of the adolescents who are obese have at least one obese parent. How much of such weight gain is related to heredity and how much to poor family eating patterns is difficult to determine accurately. Metabolic abnormalities or defects in energy metabolism can also produce weight problems, although this is rather rare.

Physical inactivity is a major cause of obesity in the adolescent. Many nutritionists and public health specialists have found that overweight teens often eat no more calories than do their slim counterparts. They are, however, less active physically. Girls, in particular, are apt to drop out of active sports in their teen years and slow down to sedentary indoor activities. Not only does the lack of activity lead to overweight but the overweight person tends to become even more inactive.

Psychological problems, emotional disturbances, and environmental stress can lead to obesity in the adolescent. Many overweight adolescents exhibit an extremely passive and dependent relationship with their parents. They may be insecure, unhappy, and have difficulty in making friends. Eating may be an escape from such problems.

Poor food habits resulting in poor selection of food and excessive food intake is the most prevalent cause of adolescent obesity. Teenagers are inclined to eat only a limited number of foods. They tend to choose breads, pastas, sweet rolls, doughnuts, cookies, candies, and soft drinks frequently. Fruits and vegetables are eaten much less frequently. Many teens recognize that excess food intake leads to overweight, but are so unaware of their actual food practices that they do not realize what or how much food they are consuming.

There are obviously many causes which can be involved in the development of adolescent obesity. When working with the overweight teen, it is necessary to consider all causes. You need to recognize that the solution of an overweight problem for certain teens may require the advice of a physician or psychologist. The public health department or school nurse can help too. Such problems may be beyond the scope of this program.

Motivation. Individual teenagers must provide their own motivation to lose weight. You cannot do it for them, nor can their parents. The young person will lose weight only when he or she recognizes his or her need to change and takes steps towards that goal. This program has been designed to encourage motivation in the individual. The obese teenager needs a close friend, someone to share confidences with. You and other adult leaders can help by taking a personal interest in every class member. Listen to them. Accept them as they are. You can encourage your class members and support them in their weight control efforts.

The group approach which we are using in this program will also provide an accepting climate in which the obese teenager can meet and share with individuals who have similar needs. The support and encouragement of family and friends outside the group can also help to motivate the teenager. Family members should encourage and not ridicule or tease the obese teenager. Mothers are often in a key position to encourage the weight-loss efforts of their obese children as they plan and cook meals for them. Parents can also show support by taking the initiative in enlisting health check-ups and by seeing that the home environment prevents, rather than contributes to, the development of obesity.

Summary. The traditional approach to treating the overweight teenager has been to balance food intake with energy output (in other words, to count calories) for a specified amount of time. Research has clearly demonstrated that this procedure is not effective in maintaining weight loss over a long period of time. The application of behavior therapy techniques to eating and activity behavior has shown that changing eating and activity patterns does lead to long-term maintenance of weight loss. This program will enable teenagers to become aware of the need to develop eating and exercise habits conducive to weight loss and to long-term maintenance of weight loss.

ADDITIONAL AUDIOVISUALS

The following list describes audiovisuals and other educational aids which may be used to supplement those mentioned in individual lessons. Some of them are general in nature and could be used as an overview or review to accompany any of the lessons. Others are recommended for use with specific lessons.

Slide Series:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| General | 1. <u>Today's Choices</u> - Provides key facts on nutrients, weight control, breakfast, and cereals in a manner that relates to teenage interests and life styles. Can be used as an introduction to stimulate interest in the nutritional importance of breakfast, food selection and habits, diet, exercise, and weight control. Developed by the Cereal Institute, 59 slides and an audio cassette, 12 minutes. Available from Extension Specialists, Foods and Nutrition, VPI&SU. |
| General | 2. <u>Food to Grow On: The Teenager Versus Nutrition</u> - Directed to the teenage audience. Good discussion of food habits, lifestyles, peer pressure, independence, diet, and weight control. Consequences of food choices and eating habits are pointed out. Encourages young people to evaluate and revamp their own eating patterns. Developed by Tupperware, 68 slides and an audio cassette, 12 minutes. Available from Extension Specialists, Foods and Nutrition, VPI&SU. |
| General | 3. <u>Nutrition -- What's In It For You: Weight In! Weight Out!</u> - For the teenage audience; discusses fad diets, pills, snacking habits, calories, exercise, and weight control. Developed by J. C. Penney Co., 23 slides and an audio cassette. Available from Extension Specialists, Foods and Nutrition, VPI&SU. |
| General | 4. <u>Beautiful -- Naturally</u> - Directed to the teenage girl, this covers grooming, exercise, nutrition, and weight control. Developed by the Florida Citrus Commission, 112 slides and audio cassette. Available from Extension Specialists, Foods and Nutrition, VPI&SU. |
| Lesson 10
Eating Out | 5. <u>Fast Foods -- How Nutritious Are They?</u> - Teenagers consume a large proportion of their food at one or more of the numerous fast-food chains springing up all over the country. As fast-food assumes a more significant role in the diet, it is appropriate for the teenager to understand the nutritional value of assembly-line eating. This slide series covers food available in fast-food restaurants, what the most nutritional choices are, and how to plan the remainder of the day's food intake to meet essential nutrient requirements without taking in excess calories. Developed by L. Janette Taper, Extension Specialist, Foods and Nutrition, 117 slides and an audio cassette. Suggested for use with Lesson 10 -- Eating Out. Available from Extension Specialists, Foods and Nutrition, VPI&SU. |

- Lesson 8
Fad Diets
6. The Diet Craze - A series of slides (cartoon style) developed by the Nutrition Department of General Mills. Script written by Extension Specialists, Foods and Nutrition. The series covers many popular crash diet regimens and the use of drugs in weight control. Recommended for use with Lesson 8 -- Fad Diets. Forty-one slides and an audio cassette. Available from Extension Specialists, Foods and Nutrition, VPI&SU.
- Lesson 4
Low Calorie
Cooking
7. Keep the Calories Down - This series was developed by the Nutrition Department of General Mills. The script was written by Extension Specialists in Foods and Nutrition. The slides provide information about portion sizes, calories, desserts, snack/entertaining, main dish/dinner, breakfast, and lunch/brunch ideas. Recipes are available for approximately twenty-one of the menus shown. Recommended for use with Lesson 4 -- Low-Calorie Cooking. Fifty slides and an audio cassette available from Extension Specialists, Foods and Nutrition, VPI&SU.
- Lesson 9
Fashions for
Slimming
8. Creating Your Own Image - This series demonstrates that making the right choices in clothing is easy and fun, once the individual has learned some basic principles of lines and color selection and how to apply them. Recommended for use with Lesson 9 -- Fashions for Slimming. Twenty-three slides and an audio cassette available from Extension Specialists, Foods and Nutrition, VPI&SU.
- Lesson 5
Food Nutrients
9. Nutritional Needs of Your Body - Developed by Sunburst Communications for use with teens; shows a young reporter researching a nutrition series for the local paper. He talks with a public health nutritionist and a biochemist about food nutrients and the importance of eating a variety of foods in order to obtain all the essential nutrients. Recommended for use with Lesson 5 -- Food Nutrients. Eighty-three slides and an audio cassette available from Extension Specialists, Foods and Nutrition, VPI&SU.
- Lesson 8
Fad Diets
10. How to Diet Sensibly - Developed by Sunburst Communications for use with teens; deals with certain beliefs people have about food, health, and dieting. Teens will learn that overweight is not always inherited but can come from food habits acquired early in life. Sensible approaches to dieting are contrasted with some of the dangers associated with fad dieting and fasting. High protein foods, vitamin supplements, and vegetarian diets are discussed. The program concludes with an examination of typical school lunches and their nutritional adequacy. Teens are encouraged to select from each of the four basic food groups to provide a balanced meal. Recommended for use with Lesson 8 -- Fad Diets, or with any lesson as a general overview of weight control. Ninety-three slides and an audio cassette available from Extension Specialists, Foods and Nutrition, VPI&SU.

Games:

- Lesson 6
Energy
Metabolism
1. The Calorie Game - This game teaches many of the principles of nutrition. The players are involved in purchasing with calorie "currency" a variety of foods represented on the game board. Teaches the relationship between activity and caloric expenditure, and nutrient and caloric values of certain foods. Two or six players or teams. Suggested for use with Lesson 6 -- Energy Metabolism. Available from Extension Specialists, Foods and Nutrition, VPI&SU, or can be purchased from Graphics Co., P. O. Box 331, Urbana, IL 61801.
- General
2. Good Loser - A fun way to learn about weight control. Teaches food and exercise facts. Each player begins the game 20 pounds overweight and must lose that weight during the game in order to win. Players go through a series of real-life hazards in which decisions must be made that have an effect on weight control. The first player to lose the excess weight wins. Two or six players. Available from Extension Specialists, Foods and Nutrition, VPI&SU, or can be purchased from Didactron Inc., Diator Systems, P. O. Box 1501, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.
- Lesson 5
Food Nutrients
3. Wheels - A game that departs from the usual way of teaching about vitamins and minerals and their role in nutrition. The objective is to equip a Good Nutrition Truck with its eight vitamin and mineral wheels. Teaches a knowledge of the vitamin and mineral composition of foods. Up to 40 players. Suggested for use with Lesson 5 -- Food Nutrients. Available from Extension Specialists, Foods and Nutrition, VPI&SU, or can be purchased from Didactron Inc., Diator Systems, P. O. Box 1501, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.
- Lesson 3
The NEAT
Diet Plan
and
Lesson 5
Food Nutrients
4. Soup's On - A Bingo-like game to teach balanced nutrition. Leads to an understanding of the planning of balanced meals. Up to 40 players. Suggested for use with Lesson 3 -- The NEAT Diet Plan and Lesson 5 -- Food Nutrients. Available from Extension Specialists, Foods and Nutrition, VPI&SU, or can be purchased from National Health Systems, P. O. Box 1501, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.
- Lesson 5
Food Nutrients
5. The Four Food Groups for Better Meals Game - Again, a game similar to Bingo. Suitable for any age group. Teaches four food groups. Up to 25 players. Suggested for use with Lesson 5 -- Food Nutrients. Developed by United States Department of Agriculture. Available from Extension Specialists, Foods and Nutrition, VPI&SU.

Booklets:

Lesson 3
The NEAT
Diet Plan

1. Exchange Lists for Meal Planning. This updated, colorful, attractive booklet reflects current thinking in the area of meal planning using the Exchange Lists. It emphasizes total caloric intake in relation to essential nutrient intake. Should help individuals get started on the right track to good nutrition and better health. Recommended for use with Lesson 3 -- The NEAT Diet Plan. Available from your local American Diabetes Association or The American Dietetic Association, 430 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60611 (65¢/copy).

Lesson 5
Food Nutrients

2. How Food Affects You - Developed from the slide set of the same name. Teaches basic nutrition needs and the roles of various nutrients in an appealing manner. Text and attractive illustrations suggested for use with Lesson 5 -- Food Nutrients. Available from Extension Specialists, Foods and Nutrition, VPI&SU, or can be purchased in bulk from Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402 (60¢/copy).

Other Visual Aids:

Lesson 3
The NEAT
Diet Plan
Lesson 5
Food Nutrients
Lesson 10
Eating Out

1. Nutrient Comparison Cards for Teenagers - Developed by the National Dairy Council. Food values of 50 commonly eaten foods are shown in graphic form using multicolored bars on individual cards. Printed on 8½x11-inch durable cardboard. Designed for use on an easel, blackboard tray, or in card holders. Useful as an aid to teaching the relative food values of familiar foods. Suggested for use with Lesson 3 -- The NEAT Diet Plan, Lesson 5 -- Food Nutrients, or Lesson 10 -- Eating Out. Available from Extension Specialists, Foods and Nutrition, VPI&SU, or from your local Dairy Council Office.

Lesson 3
The NEAT
Diet Plan

2. Food Models - Developed by the National Dairy Council, the food models provide life-size, color photographic reproductions of commonly eaten foods. All models show food in standard serving portions. The nutrient composition of each food pictured is printed on the back of each model. Very effective in helping individuals visualize foods as served. Especially useful in teaching portion size. Recommended for use with Lesson 3 -- The NEAT Diet Plan. Available from Extension Specialists, Foods and Nutrition, VPI&SU, or from your local Dairy Council Office.

NEWS RELEASE
(Newspaper, radio, and TV)

(name of county) is introducing NEAT, a new weight control program for teenage boys and girls.

Through the NEAT program, teens will learn about nutrition, exercise, and behavior modification in relation to weight control. They will gain a better understanding of themselves and others.

NEAT will be available to all teens who want to learn more about weight control, said (name of Extension Agent), Virginia Tech Extension Agent, (name of county).

The 10-week program will begin (date). All interested teens are urged to call the (name of county) Extension office, (phone number), to learn more about the program or to register.

NEWS RELEASE
(Newspaper, radio, and TV)

(name of county) teenagers in (name of county) completed the NEAT weight control program on (date) and lost a total of (number) pounds, said (name of agent), Virginia Tech Extension Agent.

The course was a first in this county. Subjects included physical fitness, nutrition, behavior modification, fad diets, eating out, fashions, and the relationship or importance of all these to weight control.

Optional last paragraphs:

(a) Because of NEAT's enthusiastic reception, the (name of county) Virginia Tech Extension office will repeat this teen weight control program (when). Advance registrations are now being accepted for the next session.

(b) Include quotes from successful teens, using local names if possible. Might include a picture of one teen exercising or whipping-up a NEAT recipe at home.

(c) List some comments made by teens. Mention behavioral changes resulting from program.

NEWS RELEASE
(Newspaper, radio, or TV)

NEAT is a new weight control program to help teenage boys and girls learn to control their weight safely and nutritiously through proper diet, exercise, and behavior modification.

Teenagers enrolled in NEAT will become more aware of nutritional values and more physically active. They will learn to control their weight while having fun.

NEAT is a 10-week program, beginning in (name of county)
on (date) .

Call (name and phone number) , your (name of county)
Virginia Tech Extension Agent to find out more about NEAT.

NEWS RELEASE
(Newspaper, radio, or TV)

Teenagers! Do you want to be slimmer? Have you unsuccessfully tried to lose weight for a long time? Would you like to help some of your friends lose weight? Would you like to have fun while losing weight?

If your answers are yes, or even maybe, (name of Extension Agent) ,
Virginia Tech Extension Agent, (name of county) , has good news
for you.

On (date) , the (name of county)
Extension office will begin a new weight control program called NEAT.

The program for teens is a series of 10 lessons on nutrition, physical fitness, fashion, and food habits related to weight loss.

A teen wanting to register, or any person wanting further information should call (phone number) before (date) .

MODEL NEWS RELEASE
(Newspaper, radio, and TV)

Teenagers still have time to enroll in NEAT, a new weight control program offered by the (name of county), Virginia Tech Extension Office.

The course will begin (date), according to (name of agent), Virginia Tech Extension Agent, (name of county), coordinator of the program.

The 10-week program will help teenagers understand weight control, learn about nutrition, learn about fashions, become more physically fit, and have fun at the same time!

Each weekly session has a special-interest topic, a rap session and time for weighing and recording.

According to (name of agent), Virginia Tech Extension always looks for new ways to help teenagers cope with their problems.

(name of agent) believes this program will help overweight teens solve health problems that could become more serious if not corrected now.

Interested teens can register by calling the (name of county) Virginia Tech Extension Office at (phone number).

MODEL BULLETIN BOARD ITEM

WHAT: NEAT Weight Control Program for Teenagers

WHEN: Beginning (date) and lasting 10 weeks

WHERE: _____

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Teens will meet in groups to work together to learn about weight control. Each teen sets his or her goal to lose or maintain weight. Along with weight control, the teens will learn about nutrition, exercise, fashions, and understanding themselves and others.

Any interested teen wishing to know more about NEAT should call the (county) Virginia Tech Extension Agent, (name), (phone) .

Here is an announcement concerning an event of interest to your community. If you have any questions concerning this, or if I may be of help in any way, please contact me.

Agent's name
Address
Telephone number

MODEL LETTER TO ANY TEEN CLUBS IN YOUR AREA

Dear (Teen Organization President's Name),

Have you or any of your members been wanting to lose weight? Would you like to work together and help each other? Would you like to make some new friends and work with them to lose weight?

If any of your answers are yes, I have good news for you!
On (date) a new weight control program for teenagers called NEAT will begin in our county.

You or any of your members can become a part of NEAT. There will be 10 weekly meetings, each one with a different special-interest topic. Not only will you get a special NEAT diet just right for you, but you'll learn more about weight control, exercise, and fashion. There's going to be a lot of fun, and NEAT can help you lose weight!

We want every teen who wants to know about weight control to know about NEAT. Please read this letter to your members at your next meeting.

If you or any of your club members are interested in knowing more about NEAT, or in registering for NEAT, call me. I am your (county) Virginia Tech Extension Agent.

Sincerely,
Name of Extension Agent
(County) Virginia Tech Extension Agent
Telephone Number

MODEL LETTER TO TEENS

Dear (Teen's Name),

I am delighted to welcome you to NEAT. You are in for a lot of fun and learning while you lose weight or control your weight.

Of course, weight control is not easy -- but you can do it through NEAT! You can do it faster if you get the help of the person in your family who plans the food. This person is probably your mother. Share what you learn in NEAT with her. If she understands how your diet works, she can help you by planning family meals to fit your diet. The foods you need to eat will be good for other members of the family too -- especially if some of them need to lose a little weight.

Your first meeting will be held on (day and month),
at (place).
It will begin at (time) and last about 2 hours.

The first meeting is very important, so please try to attend and to be on time.

I'll look forward to seeing you there.

Sincerely,
(Name of Extension Agent)
Virginia Tech Extension Agent

MODEL LETTER TO NEAT PARTICIPANTS

Dear (Person's Name),

Congratulations! You have completed the NEAT Program. We hope you've had a lot of fun and learned a lot too.

Now that you've lost some weight, or just maintained your present weight, we hope you'll continue to follow your NEAT diet. This will help you lose more, if you need to. If you've reached your weight loss goal but want to stay at your present weight, your NEAT diet can help you do that, too. Treat yourself to some extra calories each day. If you begin to gain a little weight, go back to your original diet.

Now that you've learned to control your weight, I know you are proud of your new shape, so be careful about what you eat -- watch your diet. You will feel better and you'll look better, too.

I am glad you've been a part of NEAT, and I hope you made some friends through NEAT who will help you control your weight now that the regular sessions are over.

Call me if I can help you in the future.

Sincerely,

(Extension Agent)

Virginia Cooperative Extension Service Programs, activities, and employment opportunities are available to all people regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, handicap, or political affiliation.

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