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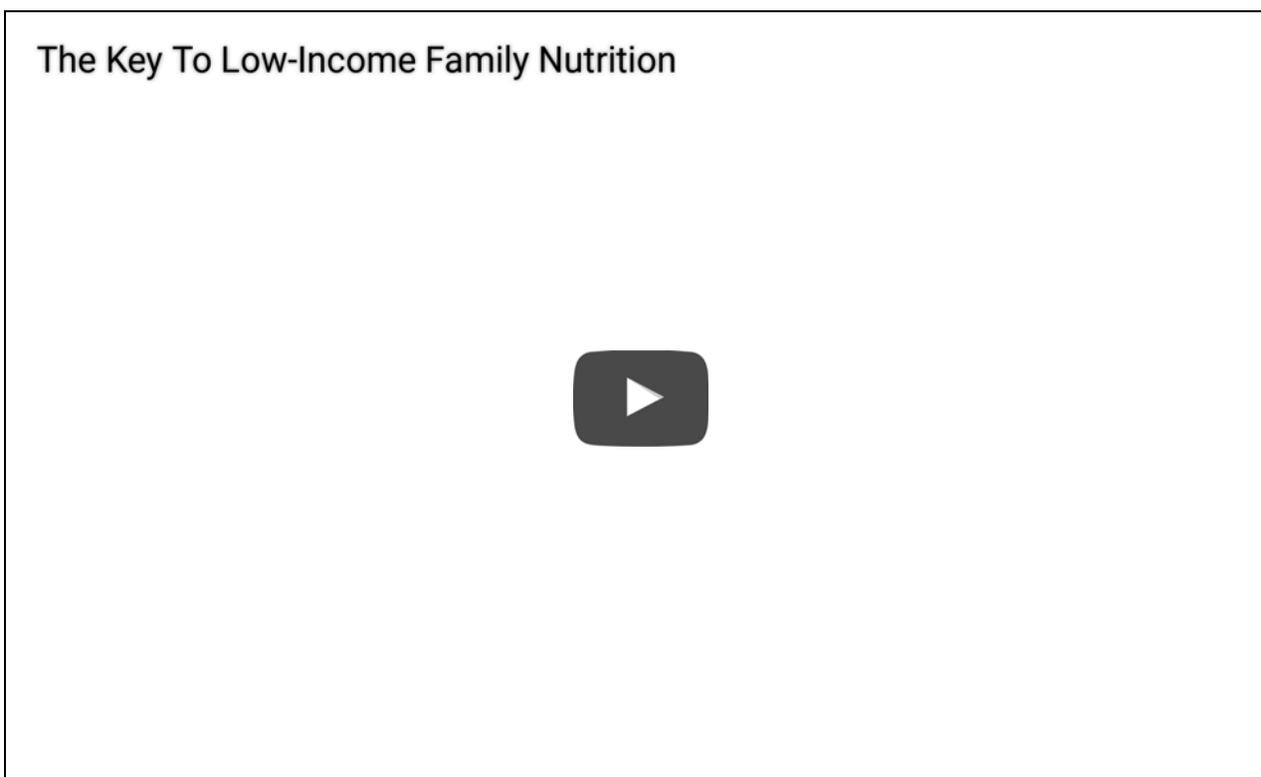
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The Key To Low-Income Family Nutrition

Food Hero to the rescue!

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The key to low-income family nutrition might just not be building a supermarket in a food desert. The Oregon State University Extension Service launched a social marketing program, Food Hero, in 2009, to encourage healthy eating among low-income Oregonians.

[Medical.net](#) ^[1] reports on two new research studies from Oregon State University. "The success of the program is by far exceeding the scope of what we envisioned when we started," said Melinda Manore, a professor of nutrition in the College of Public Health and Human Sciences at OSU and co-author of the studies. "Getting people to change their diet and eating behavior, especially when they do not have much money, is very difficult, and this program is helping to do that."

So what are they doing that's changing behaviors?

One study published in the journal, *Nutrients*, explains how Food Hero was developed and

tested. The goal was to increase fruit and vegetable consumption among those eligible for SNAP benefits in Oregon, with a particular focus on low-income mothers. The strategy includes providing clearly focused messages, writing in plain language, being positive and realistic with the messaging, and offering simple tools for action that include an explanation of what to do and how to do it.

The other study, published in the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, examines Food Hero's recipe project. The recipes used in the Food Hero campaign are formulated to be healthy, tasty and kid-friendly. To date, the Food Hero recipes have been accessed millions of times via the website and social media sites such as Pinterest.

Lauren Tobey of the Extension Family and Community Health at OSU, leads the program and explained: "All of the recipes are simple to make and cost-effective for families on tight budgets. Many families can't afford to have a recipe fail or try an untested recipe the family may not end up liking."

The recipes have been tested with more than 20,000 children who complete surveys or participate in a vote. If at least 70 percent of participating children say they "like the taste" of a recipe, it is considered "kid-approved." A little over one-third of the tested recipes have received the "kid-approved" rating to date.

To learn more and/or subscribe to Food Hero Monthly, an electronic magazine that includes recipes and tips, click [here](#) [2].

Food Hero is a collaboration with the Department of Human Services, Department of Education and Oregon Health Authority.

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Links

[1] <http://Medical.net>

[2] <https://foodhero.org/monthly-magazine>

[3] <http://www.progressivegrocer.com/%7B%7Burl%7D%7D>