

Free seminar to explore healthy eating on a budget

By Jenn Watt

Grocery shopping isn't easy at the best of times. Besides stocking up on enough food, you also have to think of which items offer the most nutritional value and stay within budget.

This past year has made the situation all the more difficult with the cost of fresh veggies up 14.9 per cent over last year, according to Statistics Canada.

To help Haliburton County residents find practical solutions, the Service Providers' Network is putting on two sessions on Tuesday, May 17, called Food Frustration: Healthy Eating on a Budget.

The session is being organized "because of the skyrocketing prices of groceries, especially for our most vulnerable members of our population," says Nancy Brownsberger, community outreach co-ordinator for Haliburton Highlands Health Services' Community Support Services.

"We'd like to really get the community engaged in it," she says.

Megan Stong, public health food worker from the local health unit, will be talking about healthy eating; and Laura Mount, a volunteer with Abbey Gardens, will talk about gardening.

"Just alternative ways to create capacity for healthy eating for everyone, what the opportunities are in the community ? and how to shop a little smarter locally," Brownsberger says.

Food Frustration is part of the Need to Know series, which has been running for about three years. Started by Marilyn Rydberg and Brigitte Gebauer, the original idea was to offer training to volunteers of the various service providers groups in the county. The women discussed the benefits of opening the sessions to the general public, and the series was born.

"We were focusing on volunteers and we thought, while we're doing this for volunteers, we might as well broaden it to the community," Gebauer says.

"Our whole idea was to have the education, but to also have something fun and interesting for people as well," she says.

The sessions will be held on Tuesday, May 17, in Haliburton at the United Church from 10 a.m. to noon and at the Lloyd Watson Centre in Wilberforce from 2 to 4 p.m. Food Frustration is free and includes refreshments. Donations are gratefully accepted. RSVP is appreciated, but not mandatory. Give Community Support Services a call at 705-457-2941.