

Initiative: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-ED)

Project Leader: Lisa Sullivan-Werner

Project Overview

The UMass Extension SNAP-Ed program is part of a national nutrition education effort funded through the US Department of Agriculture's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The overarching goal of SNAP-Ed is to provide nutrition education programs and activities that help adults and youth eligible for SNAP to establish healthy eating habits and physically active lifestyles. To achieve this goal, our nutrition education staff, based at UMass Amherst and in five field offices (Boston, Raynham, Lawrence, Springfield, and Worcester) are providing nutrition education to SNAP participants in five regions (West, Central, Northeast, East, and Southeast.) in partnership with over 50 collaborators throughout the Commonwealth.

A second goal of SNAP-Ed is to work on multiple levels to bring about policy, systems, and environmental change to decrease obesity in the SNAP population. Two multi-level UMass Extension Specialists, hired in FY15 and based in Boston at DTA, are focusing on these initiatives and working with the four Massachusetts SNAP-Ed implementing agencies to prevent and reduce obesity in the SNAP population.

Activity Summary – 2015

- Displays (266)
- Farmer’s Market Food Demonstrations (125)
- Newsletters (4)
- SNAP-Ed Workshops (2542)
- Single Session Workshops (377)

Total Educational contacts

	Youth Contacts	Adult Contacts
In Person	57851	2362
Indirect Contacts (Print, Web, etc...)	20847	122926

Narrative summary and Impact

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) provides nutrition education to SNAP participants and those eligible for SNAP. Nutrition education programs and activities assist SNAP participants to establish healthy eating habits and physically active lifestyles.

Staff in five field offices (Boston, Lawrence, Raynham, Springfield, and Worcester) and one subcontractor site (Barnstable County Cape Cod Cooperative Extension) reached 60,213 adult and youth participants with direct education, making a total of 219,094 direct nutrition education contacts in FY 2015. A total of 227,951 individuals were reached through indirect nutrition education methods (displays, farmers' market food demonstrations, leave-behind enrichment activities for school staff to use with children, newsletters, blog, and telephone Tip Line) in FY 2015.

Evaluation measures showed that SNAP-Ed programming resulted in statistically significant change from pre to post with:

- Adults eating 2 or more cups of fruit daily more often
- Adults drinking sugar sweetened beverages less often
- Grade 3-5 and grade 6-8 youth eating vegetables more often
- Grade 3-5 and grade 6-8 youth eating fruits more often
- Grade 3-5 and grade 6-8 youth being physically active more often
- Grade 6-8 youth drinking sugar sweetened beverages less often
- Grade 6-8 youth choosing whole grains more often

In FY 2015 we implemented two special SNAP-Ed projects:

1. Hired two new Multi-Level specialists to work with local/regional and statewide policy, systems, and environmental change initiatives to address obesity in the SNAP population (continuing in FY 2016).
2. Contracted with Market Street Research, Inc. to review, assess, and recommend online and social media nutrition education strategies (website, blog, Facebook, Twitter, Tip Line, text messaging, apps, etc.) for effectively reaching the maximum number of SNAP participants with nutrition education (completed in FY 2015).

