

## **Project: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Education Program**

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### **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, 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.

### **2017 Activity Summary**

- SNAP-Ed Farmers' Market Food Demonstrations (175)
- SNAP-Ed Newsletters for Participants (3)
- SNAP-Ed Workshop Series (2749)
- SNAP-Ed Single Session Workshops (412)

### ***Total Educational Contacts***

	Youth Contacts	Adult Contacts
Direct	83758	32326
Indirect		75221

## **Narrative Summary and Impacts**

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 64,247 adult and youth participants with direct education, making a total of 239,768 direct nutrition education contacts in FY 2017. A total of 222,121 individuals were reached through indirect education methods (displays, food demonstrations at farmers' markets and Transitional Assistance offices, leave-behind enrichment activities for school staff to use with children, and newsletters).

Evaluation measures showed that SNAP-Ed programming resulted in statistically significant change ( $p < .001$ ) from pre to post with:

- Grade 3-5 and grade 6-8 youth eating vegetables more often
- Grade 3-5 and grade 6-8 youth eating fruit more often
- Grade 3-5 youth being physically active more often
- Grade 6-8 youth drinking high sugar beverages less often
- Grade 6-8 youth spending less time watching TV or movies, playing electronic games, or using a computer for something that is not school work

In addition, statistically significant change ( $p < .05$ ) from pre to post was also found with:

- Grade 6-8 youth being so physically active that their heart beat fast and they breathed hard more often

## **Collaborators**

- **U.S. Department of Agriculture**
- **Massachusetts Department of Agriculture**

