

Project(s): Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Education Program (SNAP-Ed) and Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EF-NEP)

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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.

2018 Activity Summary

- SNAP-Ed Farmers' Market Food Demonstrations (147)
- SNAP-Ed Newsletters for Participants (4)
- SNAP-Ed Workshop Series (2610)
- SNAP-Ed Single Session Workshops (502)
- EF-NEP Workshop Series (379)

Total Educational Contacts

	Youth Contacts	Adult Contacts
Direct	104780	32574
Indirect		66402

Narrative Summary and Impacts

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program's mission is to assist limited-resource families to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and changed behaviors necessary for nutritionally sound diets, and to contribute to their personal development and the improvement of the total family diet, nutritional well-being, and levels of physical activity.

Four professional staff (1.17 FTE) and 14 paraprofessional staff (11.2 FTE) provided nutrition education programming to low-income adults and youth. A total of 1,434 adults and 2,459 youth were reached in FY2018.

Program entry and exit measures with both adults and youth measured change in the five core EFNEP areas: diet quality, food resource management, food safety, physical activity, and food security for both adult and youth participants. Improvements after participating in EFNEP included:

Adult Participants

- 95% Showed a positive change in consumption of at least one food group
- 79% Improved in Food Resource Management
- 94% Improved in Nutrition Practices
- 80% Improved in Food Safety
- 30% Improved in Physical Activity

Youth Participants

- 74% improved in Diet Quality
- 50% improved in Food Safety
- 47% improved in Food Resource Management
- 28% improved in Physical Activity Behaviors

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 70,208 adult and youth participants with direct education, making a total of 238,101 direct nutrition education contacts in FY 2018. A total of 182,844 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 ($p < .01$) 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 (ie less screen time)

Collaborators

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