Food & Nutrition Extension Education Division Poster Abstracts

FNEE1 Urban Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Education (USNAP-Ed) Community Garden Project

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Objective: As part of our Policy, System and Environmental (PSE) efforts, the aim of the Urban Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education (USNAP-Ed) Community Gardening Project through the Urban Unit of Alabama Cooperative Extension System at Alabama A&M University, was to improve access and availability of fresh produce and to build self-efficacy of citizens within limited resource communities to take control of their health and make positive changes.

Target Audience: Limited resource communities.

Theory, Prior Research, and Rationale: According to the 2015 Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS) data, 27.6% of Alabamians reported eating vegetables less than one time a day. Community gardens are associated with increased vegetable consumption.

Description: USNAP-Ed Community Project Garden sites were identified through participation in USNAP-Ed nutrition classes. USNAP-Ed staff provided nutrition lessons and coordinated garden efforts between the program and the sites. Alabama Cooperative Extension System Horticulture staff provided instruction and assistance establishing gardens, explaining gardening concepts, and monitoring garden development. Crops planted included, cucumbers, collards, tomatoes, onions, green beans, zucchini, squash, corn, carrots, lettuce, peppers, and radish. Harvested produce was used within participant homes, or donated to low income residents in the surrounding area.

Evaluation: Six garden sites were established in Madison, Morgan, and Lawrence Counties, with a total of 26 raised bed gardens constructed. A total of 889 pounds of produce was harvested and utilized within the homes of local limited resource families. Sustainability plans were implemented at five sites to continue the use of the garden.

Conclusion: The USNAP-Ed Community Garden Project was well received by the communities and improved access to fresh produce. The project will continue in the next grant year.

Funding: None

FNEE2 Food Availability and Behavior of Limited Income Youth Living in Virginia Prior to Participation in Youth EFNEP

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Objective: The goal of this study was to explore food access and consumption patterns of limited income youth, prior to participating in youth EFNEP.

Study Design: A 55-item written survey, tested for validity and reliability, was administered to all limited income youth (7 to 14 years old) recruited to participate in youth EFNEP over a one-year time frame (n=1,864). The survey consisted of questions on socio-demographic information, food availability at home, and nutrition-related behavior. Food availability and behavior questions were based upon different food groups and foods to emphasize or limit from the US Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Participants were asked to report how frequently they had different food groups available at home per week and how frequently they consumed different food items per day. Descriptive statistics were used to compute frequency of responses by different socio-demographic factors and chi-square analysis to detect differences in proportions in response rate.

Results: Participants reported high availability of milk (75.2%), fruit (69.7%), and vegetables (63.5%) over a 7-day period; meat and beans (41.4%) and dessert (48.3%) were less common. Less than half of participants reported not meeting dietary behavior thresholds for the following food groups: whole grains (19.7%); vegetables (18.2%); and low-fat milk (31.5%). Differences were noted for availability and consumption based on different socio-demographic factors.

Conclusions: This study provides insight into food availability and consumption patterns among limited-income audiences across Virginia. The results highlight the importance of strategic interventions, such as EFNEP, to improve the availability of nutritious foods among limited-income youth.

Funding: None

FNEE3 The Usefulness of the Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT) in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education (SNAP-Ed) in Arizona

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Objective: To determine the usefulness of the WellSAT 2.0 to provide guidance in revising Local Wellness Policies (LWP) in SNAP-Ed schools.

Study Design: Schools participating in the National School Lunch Program are required to have a LWP. The SNAP-Ed in Arizona used the WellSAT 2.0 to assess 42 LWPs from schools serviced by the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension in seven counties: Apache (3), Cochise (9), Greenlee (1), La Paz (1), Maricopa (11), Pima (5), Pinal (6), and Santa Cruz (3).

Outcome Measures and Analysis: The WellSAT 2.0 contained 78 policy items relating to nutrition, physical activity, and environment that were categorized into six

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sections. The tool provided two scores: a comprehensive score indicated whether an item was addressed, while a strength score communicated how well an item was addressed. Both scores ranged from 0-100, with 100 representing the optimum score. Each LWP was scored by at least two trained staff using the WellSAT 2.0 online assessment. Scorecards and recommendations were disseminated to the schools by SNAP-Ed staff that provided targeted technical assistance to encourage LWP revisions.

Results: Forty-two LWPs were assessed; the overall comprehensive scores ranged from 28 to 95 (median: 63) and the overall strength scores ranged from 7 to 82 (median: 36). Ten schools (24%) revised their LWP since results were shared and thirteen (31%) planned to revise their LWP in the following school year.

Conclusions and Implications: The use of the WellSAT 2.0 enabled the SNAP-Ed in Arizona to communicate results and to provide effective technical assistance that encouraged SNAP-Ed school LWP revisions.

Funding: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Education

FNEE4 Passing the Baton: Setting Schools Up for Sustainable SNAP-Ed PSE Programs

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Objective: To support sustainable policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) nutrition interventions with school districts in Washington State.

Target Audience: Two Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) eligible school districts (n=2) with an enrollment of 26,559 students.

Theory, Prior Research, and Rationale: SNAP-Ed has evolved from a traditional nutrition education approach to a combined approach, utilizing nutrition education strategies in tandem with PSE interventions. PSE changes are ensured and sustained by involvement and support from multiple levels in the Socio-Ecological Model. Creating sustainable interventions is crucial for long-term outcomes, increased reach, and maximization of resources.

Description: Partnerships with food service directors and staff from both districts were established. Washington State University (WSU) Extension provided technical assistance to apply for the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), Pilot Project for Procurement, and the Team Nutrition Grant. WSU assisted with the coordination among district staff to implement the grants and delivered training to key staff (n=79) in support of the following PSE interventions: educational resources featuring 37 foods served with the FFVP; Harvest of the Month banners featuring local farm foods; and School-wide taste tests & Smarter Lunchroom interventions. Evidence-based nutrition education classes were also provided at select schools (n=5).

Evaluation: The SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework & Interpretive Guide was used to evaluate interventions. The pro-

grams achieved environmental changes of 120 short-term, 71 medium-term, and 67 long-term metrics from October 2014 to present.

Conclusions and Implications: Strong partnerships are key components in creating long lasting PSE interventions. Combining various sources of funding and programs with SNAP-Ed is essential to maximize resources and expand reach.

Funding: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Education

FNEE5 Stock Healthy, Shop Healthy: If Customers Demand It, Healthy Options Will Come

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Objective: To increase access to healthy foods in underserved urban and rural communities.

Target Audience: Small-scale SNAP vendors in food deserts, including 11 urban corner stores and 11 rural town groceries.

Theory, Prior Research, and Rationale: USDA defines food deserts in relation to proximity to a supermarket, yet small food retailers such as urban corner stores or rural town groceries often operate in food deserts. The microeconomic principles of supply and demand can be used to help increase access to healthy foods in both rural and urban underserved communities.

Description of Program Intervention: Through the Stock Healthy, Shop Healthy Community and Retailer Toolkits, the program has two main components – nutrition education and store support. Nutrition education builds demand through strategies such as nutrition classes in the community and in the partner store, and in-store taste tests. On the supply side, store layout, merchandising, and minor physical modifications introduce and highlight healthy foods in stock or the addition of new items as requested by customers.

Evaluation: Customer feedback regarding healthy foods was incorporated at each store. Baseline, midpoint, and endpoint assessments of participating sites measured the amount of shelf space occupied by healthy inventory in linear inches. Across the twenty-two stores, there was a 24% increase amount of this shelf space after one year in the project.

Conclusions and Implications: Healthy retail programs that address both supply and demand at the same time, such as Stock Healthy, Shop Healthy, are effective at increasing access to healthy foods and building demand for such foods among community members and customers.

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FNEE6 Planning and Reporting Policy, System and Environmental Changes for Alabama SNAP-Ed: An Assessment and Evaluation Tool

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