EFNEP and SNAP-Ed Programs in the Early Child Care Setting: Opportunities to Impact Adults and Youth.

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OBJECTIVE

Describe opportunities to strengthen behavioral outcomes in EFNEP and SNAP-Ed direct education through engagement in policy, systems and environment outreach projects in early childcare settings.

METHODS

Through a lengthy and rigorous application and review process FNP gained approval to provide 6.0 hours of continuing education credits to child care centers employees in exchange for full participation the N.E.A.T. Program. The curriculum as it stood, did not meet the length or core content requirements for EFNEP direct education programs as the core elements of food safety, physical activity and food resource management were not present. The program was modified to add the physical activity and the Plan, Shop, Save lessons from the Eating Smart Being Active curriculum. Elements of food safety were added into each lesson in places where there was a natural fit for the information to be presented. EFNEP and SNAP-Ed front-line staff were registered as instructors in the WV STARS system and training was provided on documentation and reporting requirements. Marketing materials were created for front-line staff to recruit centers in lower income areas. Programs officially launched in 2018.

RESULTS

Percentage Improvement in Core EFNEP Focus Areas

- NEAT Program (2018)
- WV FNP (2018)
- National EFNEP (2018)

Percentage Improvement in Behavioral Outcomes That Relate to SNAP-Ed PSE Focus Areas

- NEAT Program (2018)
- WV FNP (2018)

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

It is to be expected that implementing a curriculum focused on increasing knowledge of the nutritional care and feeding of young children might not result in personal-level behavior change among child care center employees. These data illustrate that FNP (and other EFNEP and SNAP-Ed programs) have an opportunity to increase engagement with child care centers through adoption of existing PSE programs such as Grow This: WV Garden Challenge, Food of the Month, Rethink Your Drink, and Walking Challenges. These programs, combined with direct education can increase opportunities for healthy eating and physical and impact both the environment and individual behaviors of staff and enrolled children. There may also be opportunities to further enroll employees and parents of the children in additional direct education programs using curricula that is more focused on individual behavior change.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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