

# SNAP-Ed Produces Change

Maryland SNAP-Ed, known as the Food Supplement Nutrition Education (FSNE) Program, provides nutrition education to low-income individuals and families – and also trains collaborating partners and teachers to administer FSNE curricula to the target audience.

In the 2014 program year, MD FSNE provided education to participants through multiple curricula emphasizing healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. With the Socioecological Model as a framework, youth and adults were reached in a variety of settings, through interventions that targeted individual, interpersonal, and community-level factors associated with nutrition and health. These multilevel interventions are classified by the following initiative areas, which highlight the purpose and reach of FSNE programming:

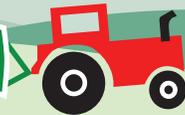
In 2014, MD FSNE reached **25,394 youth & 6,558 adults** with face-to-face nutrition education lessons.

Of the total participants reached, **77% were youth & 23% were adults.**

- Gardening for Nutrition • Early Childhood Interventions • Food Access & Affordability
- School & Community Programs • Nontraditional Education & Outreach • Nutrition Education “Where We Shop”



## Gardening for Nutrition:



FSNE uses gardening for nutrition curricula to teach preschool and school-aged youth where food is grown; the benefits of trying new foods and eating healthy foods; and the science of growing, harvesting, and preparing food.

In the 2014 program year, MD FSNE reached 3,788 youth through gardening-based nutrition education programs. Kindergarten through middle-school aged youth who participate in these programs report an increase in their taste preference for vegetables and in the numbers of new vegetables they taste during the program.

FSNE also trained teachers how to lead gardening for nutrition lessons: 68 teachers were trained through single, 75-minute sessions while 64 teachers were reached through an intensive 30-hour *Youth Gardening for Nutrition Teacher Training* course.

Teachers in the *Youth Gardening for Nutrition Teacher Training* course reported strong plans to increase their frequency of engaging in the following nutrition-related behaviors:

Youth in grades K-2 report significant increases in their preference for 8 vegetables, including: **cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, lettuce, peppers, radishes, & spinach**

After participating in FSNE gardening for nutrition programs, youth in grades K through 7 report 4 locally grown and readily available vegetables as their most preferred: **corn, carrots, broccoli, & lettuce**

**5 out of 10 youth** in grades K-2 tried at least one new vegetable during their time in the program

-  Provide frequent physical activity breaks
-  Grow vegetables with students
-  Encourage students to share healthy stories
-  Incorporate nutrition into the classroom
-  Introduce fruits and vegetables to students



# Early Childhood Interventions

FSNE collaborates with childcare centers, Head Start/Judy Centers, schools, and family daycare centers to improve the nutrition and physical activity of preschool-aged children and their surrounding environments.

In the 2014 program year, FSNE reached over 7,000 preschool-aged children in Head Start or Judy Centers, libraries, and schools through nutrition and gardening focused curricula, including *Color Me Healthy*; *Read for Health*; and *Grow It, Try It, Like It*. These nutrition education programs encourage healthy eating and physical activity through multiple interventions, including music, dance, children's books, fruit and vegetable tastings, and gardening/planting activities.

FSNE also works with childcare providers who care for children between the ages of 3 and 6 through *1-2-3 Feed Me!*, which encourages them to cook and eat with children, introduce new foods to children, and role model healthy eating. After participating in *1-2-3 Feed Me!* training programs, childcare providers plan to significantly improve their feeding practices and role modeling behaviors.

**75%** of childcare providers plan to often or always cook with the children in their care.

**86%** of childcare providers plan to often or always introduce foods a second time to children.

**94%** of childcare providers plan to often or always role model for children in their care that they enjoy eating fruits and vegetables.

## Food Access and Affordability

FSNE implements nutrition education efforts focusing on food preparation training and food resource management skills in order to increase food security and healthy eating among low-income Maryland residents.

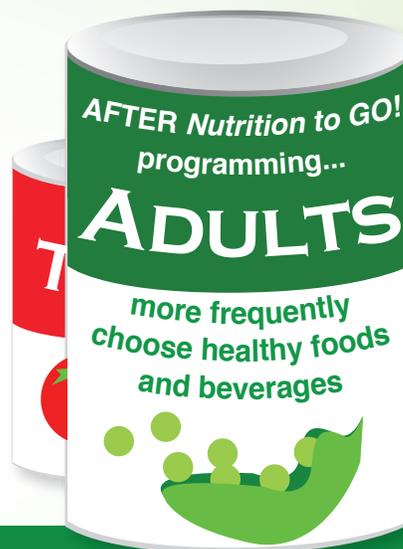
MD FSNE uses the *Healthy Cents* curriculum, which combines nutrition education and food resource management, to help participants make the most of their food resources and to make healthy choices when shopping for food. Adult participants in single sessions of *Healthy Cents* programming report strong plans to increasingly:

- Make single servings from larger quantities of food
- Use a list when food shopping
- Read unit-pricing stickers
- Compare prices when grocery shopping
- Buy store brands
- Use coupons
- Eat before shopping to avoid buying extra food items



FSNE also uses *Nutrition to Go!* educational displays which focus on specific nutrition or physical activity topics. The displays educate participants to make simple changes in their food choices, increase physical activity, or manage limited food resources.

Before program participation, adults rarely thought about or knew the calorie content of the beverages or foods they were consuming; after participating in *Nutrition to Go!* programming, adults intend to often seek out and consider the calorie content of foods and beverages before consuming them.



# School and Community Programs

FSNE uses multi-level interventions to impact change among children, families, and the local community. The primary goals of the nutrition education programs are to increase student and family tasting of new or novel healthy foods, as well as their preference for and consumption of healthy foods.

## Parent Interventions

During the 2014 program year, FSNE reached 6,558 adults through single sessions or series of nutrition education programming, such as *Eat Smart, Live Strong*; *Eating Smart Being Active*; and *Fruits & Veggies: Fabulous Foods!* The majority of adult participants were targeted through their child's school community, although some were reached in other community settings. Parents who participated in series of nutrition education report significant increases in their daily consumption of fruits and vegetables after program participation.

**76%** of adult participants report eating fruits or vegetables as snacks often or every day, a 21% increase from before the program.

The average American adult reports consuming **3 servings** of fruits and vegetables daily. FSNE adult participants report eating slightly more than **4 servings** of fruits and vegetables per day after program participation.



## Youth Interventions

During the 2014 program year, FSNE reached 25,394 youth through nutrition education programs such as *ReFresh*, *Growing Healthy Habits*, *Media Smart Youth*, *Serving Up My Plate*, *Up for the Challenge*, and *Read for Health*, that were administered in classroom/school settings, afterschool clubs/programs, and summer camps. Surveyed youth participants in grades 3 and above consume more fruits and vegetables after participating in FSNE nutrition education programs.

## Family Interventions

FSNE uses text messaging to link existing FSNE youth education provided in the classroom to the home and influence behavior change for the entire family. *Text2BHealthy* (T2BH) targets parents of elementary school children already enrolled in FSNE school-based youth programming with the goal of promoting systemic changes in healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. The 2014 school year represented the third (and most widespread) program year of T2BH, reaching more than 2,400 parents with action-oriented text messages.

During program year 3, there was a **113%** increase in T2BH enrollment from the previous school year!

T2BH parents and their children eat a greater variety of fruits after participating in the program: **59%** of parents & **68%** of children eat more than one kind of fruit per day on most or all days.

**81%** of parents serve fruit to their child as part of their meal on most or all days after participating in T2BH.

**41% of youth**

tried at least one new healthy food during their time in the nutrition education programs, with almost 30% of students having tried at least 2 new foods



**Almost 9 out of 10**

youth ate at least one fruit the day before completing the post-test



**7 out of 10**

youth ate at least one vegetable the day before completing the post-test



# Nontraditional Education and Outreach

FSNE expands its reach to low-income populations beyond the traditional classroom/educational setting.

Low-income audiences can experience barriers to attendance at in-person education events due to transportation, financial, and other resource constraints. FSNE utilizes a variety of diverse educational tools to more effectively meet the needs of low-income families in Maryland.

FSNE distributes print materials, such as fliers and newsletters, as well as electronic educational materials to the target audience.

483,620 total print materials distributed

167,611 total educational text messages & 48,544 total nutrition education email messages sent to participants

1,485 average monthly blog hits

1,018 average monthly unique website page views



## Nutrition Education “Where We Shop”

FSNE works to increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables by providing direct education at the places where low-income Maryland residents shop for or choose their family’s food (Farmers’ Markets, Food Banks/Pantries, and Grocery Stores).

FSNE used *Market to Mealtime* (M2M) with farmers’ markets, food banks, and food pantries to encourage consumers to select and add nutrient-rich fruits and vegetables to their diets. In the 2014 program year, FSNE conducted 91 separate *Market to Mealtime* events, reaching more than 9,400 individuals with display-based education.

**90%** of M2M participants plan to buy or choose the fruits & vegetables they learned about

**90%** of participants plan to use the fruits or vegetables they take home in meals or snacks throughout the week



**50%** of participants take home a new fruit or vegetable that they hadn’t tried before the M2M education



**63%** of participants take home MORE fruits and vegetables than they typically do

In the 2014 program year, FSNE partnered with Share our Strength to conduct 25 guided grocery store tours with over 150 low-income adult participants. *Cooking Matters at the Store* tours teach participants to compare foods for cost and nutrition, enabling them to plan and budget for healthy and affordable meals for their families. In total, FSNE was responsible for conducting 1/3 of all *Cooking Matters at the Store* tours in Maryland.

**68%** of participants plan to read ingredient lists to find whole grain foods.

**66%** of participants plan to compare unit prices to find the best deal.

**59%** of participants plan to compare food labels to make healthy food choices.

This material was funded by USDA’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in cooperation with the Maryland Department of Human Resources and the University of Maryland. The University of Maryland Extension will not discriminate against any person because of race, age, sex, color, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, religion, ancestry or national origin, marital status, genetic information, political affiliation, and gender identity or expression. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact the Maryland Department of Human Resources at 1-800-332-6347 or apply online at [www.marylandsail.org](http://www.marylandsail.org).

