

# Maryland SNAP-Ed

*Producing Changes within Maryland Communities*

## University of Maryland Extension Food Supplement Nutrition Education Program

Maryland SNAP-Ed, known as the Food Supplement Nutrition Education (FSNE) Program, is committed to improving the well-being of local residents by intervening directly within the environments where these individuals live, work, and learn. FSNE aims to positively influence the health knowledge and behaviors of low-income Marylanders through the delivery of multiple, intersecting methods of nutrition education. In addition to working directly with youth and adult participants, FSNE also delivers interventions that target the health policies, practices, and physical environments of delivery sites, thereby improving access to healthy choices.



In FY16 FSNE reached:



22,117  
youth  
participants



2,952  
adult  
participants



1,329  
teacher/collaborator  
participants

In the 2016 program year, FSNE provided education to participants through multiple curricula emphasizing healthy eating and physical activity behaviors. With the Socioecological Model as a framework, 26,398 participants - 22,117 youth and 2,952 adults, often the parents/caregivers of the youth participants - received direct education from FSNE educators and/or trained partners. FSNE also extended the reach of its direct education by making more than 830,000 contacts through educational print materials and text messages.



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## FSNE Impacts the Behaviors of Youth Participants

FSNE reaches youth participants primarily through series of nutrition education lessons that are offered in the classroom or other youth education settings. Nutrition education messages may extend to the cafeteria, through Smarter Lunchrooms programming, or to the schoolyard through school gardening projects. Youth participants in FSNE programming report significant improvements in healthy behaviors, including fruit and vegetable consumption and exposure to new foods.

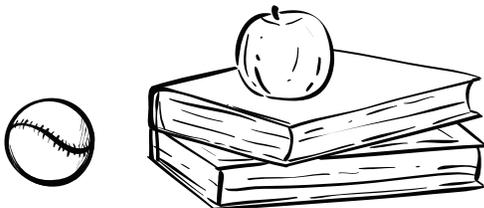
Youth participants also feel significantly more confident in their ability to ask someone in their family to purchase their favorite fruits and vegetables, to select/consume fruits and vegetables when eating away from home, and to prepare their favorite fruits or vegetables at home.



of youth who participate in FSNE lessons report feeling confident in their ability to

**prepare their favorite fruit or vegetable at home,**

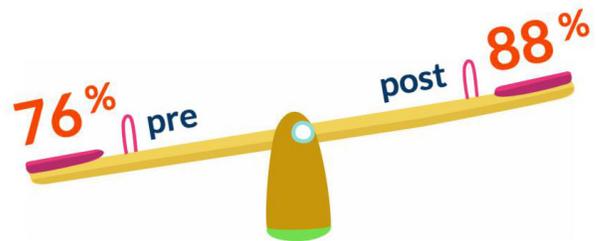
an increase of **7%** from before the program.



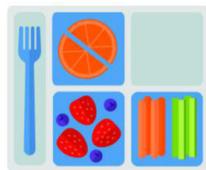
After FSNE programming, youth participants are also increasingly willing to speak positively about healthy foods, engage in physical activity, and try new fruits and vegetables, as reported by their teachers and parents.



**47% more** teachers report that their **students speak positively about fruits and vegetables** after FSNE programming.



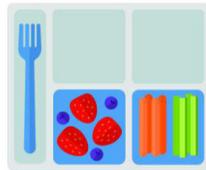
After FSNE programming, more parents report that their **children engage in at least 60 minutes of physical activity on weekdays.**



At the end of the school year, over **3/4** of teachers report that their

**students are willing to try new fruits and vegetables**

as compared to **1/2** of teachers at the pre-test.



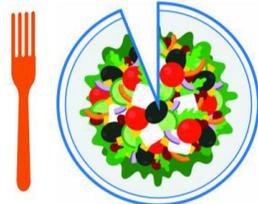
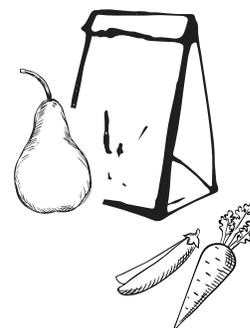
## FSNE Impacts Teachers and the Broader School Environment

Individuals who partner with FSNE to deliver nutrition education to youth report significant improvements in their own healthy behaviors after FSNE programming.

Teachers and other individuals at youth education sites report increasing the frequency with which they advocate for healthy changes in the school, talk about the importance of healthy foods and physical activity with their students, drink water in front of the kids in their care, and role model healthy eating in front of their students.



of teachers at FSNE schools report **role modeling healthy eating** in front of their students, an increase of **17%** from the beginning of the school year.



After FSNE programming, **94% more** teachers report **regularly selecting fruits/vegetables for classroom tastings and activities**

that complement the healthy foods being offered in the cafeteria.

After FSNE programming, teachers also report healthier classroom and school environments, in which healthy foods are used for classroom lessons, signage promotes healthy foods, health information is regularly shared with parents or caregivers, and tasting opportunities are provided to youth.

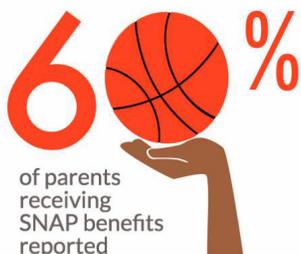
## FSNE Impacts Parents and the Home Environment

FSNE reaches parents/caregivers of both Pre-K and elementary aged youth through a number of educational methods, including: single sessions or series of nutrition education lessons, educational text messages, newsletters, educational displays, grocery store tours, garden involvement, or other novel messaging techniques that facilitate parent/child dialogue about trying new foods. After participating in various FSNE programs, parents report significant increases in healthy behaviors, including role modeling healthy eating and physical activity and eating healthier with their children.

Parents also report increases in their likelihood of selecting healthier foods at the grocery store, utilizing food resource management strategies, and shopping more frequently at the farmers' market.

Teachers at youth education sites report that parents are more engaged in nutrition within the classroom, including providing healthy foods for classroom events, advocating for healthy eating opportunities school-wide, and talking about healthier foods with the teachers or other parents.

After FSNE programming,



of parents receiving SNAP benefits reported

**engaging in physical activity in front of their children,** as compared to **44%** before programming.



## FSNE Impacts the Policies, Practices, and Physical Environments of Local Sites

FSNE influenced or encouraged collaborators to implement a number of changes to their policies, practices, and physical environments in an effort to create access and appeal for healthy choices among low-income Marylanders. FSNE educators reported that a large number of sites made changes that supported healthy eating choices, such as establishing and using an edible garden on site. Some sites also made changes that supported physical activity behaviors, such as implementing policies that restricted screen time throughout the day.

The majority of FSNE sites implemented **multicomponent interventions** targeting:

### healthy eating

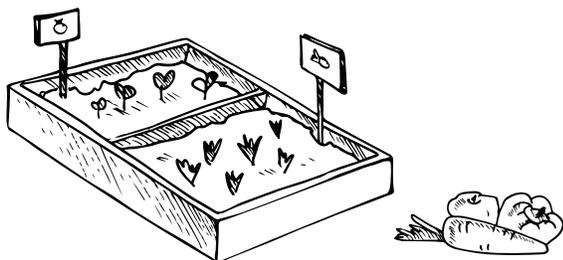


**77%**  
of sites

### physical activity



**54%**  
of sites



FSNE educators also reported the presence of health-promoting individuals, committees, and policies at a number of collaborating sites. Specifically, FSNE educators identified the following supports across the state, which were intended to create access to or appeal for healthy changes among participants at collaborating sites:

**69** local champions or change agents who support improved access to nutrition and physical activity opportunities

**31** active, site-specific wellness councils or committees

**15** county-level health promoting partnerships

**27** sites with a written requirement for integrated nutrition education

**45** sites with policies that require students to spend at least 50% of their time in physical education classes engaged in moderate or vigorous physical activity

**40** sites that were recognized for making healthy changes or promoting healthy environments through local, state or national awards (Green School Award, Alliance for a Healthier Generation, etc.)

## FSNE Produces Lasting Change

FSNE strives to make lasting changes to the health and well-being of individuals and families in Maryland. Ongoing partnerships between local sites and FSNE educators, characterized by multi-level interventions, are key to the successful maintenance and expansion of healthy changes. Many of FSNE's collaborations have been active for years, and 90% will continue or even expand in the coming program year.