

Use of the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework and Expertise of EFNEP Personnel Nationwide to Expand Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change Resources for Community Nutrition Education Programs

**Michigan State University
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Background

Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) change is a relatively new concept for Community Nutrition Education programs such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed), the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), and for agencies that implement these programs. Recognizing that a PSE approach integrated with direct education can foster more sustainable change in communities than direct education alone and that existing resources were limited in their application across nutrition education programs, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension used the SNAP-Ed evaluation framework and reached out to EFNEP personnel nationwide to develop a variety of resources that could be used to help with SNAP-Ed and EFNEP initiatives across 1862 and 1890 land-grant institutions and by other implementing agencies.¹ This work focused especially on EFNEP personnel and programming, since their needs and expertise had not yet been tapped in support of PSE work for the broader nutrition education community. MSU used a complementary approach drawing from both SNAP-Ed and EFNEP to facilitate increased understanding and application of PSE approaches.

This report briefly highlights resources that were developed and are now available. An EFNEP PSE survey was created to establish a foundation for developing materials to benefit community nutrition programs. Examples and resources for PSE efforts in nutrition programs are provided through the EFNEP PSE website and through a list of examples correlating with the SNAP-Ed evaluation framework and the US Dietary Guidelines 2015-2020.

Brief description of process and illustrations of resources developed

EFNEP PSE Survey: A national survey was conducted with EFNEP PSE implementing agencies to assess needs for EFNEP PSE and identify materials to develop which can assist with EFNEP and additional community nutrition programs.

EFNEP PSE Guidelines: Results of the EFNEP PSE survey led to the development of specific guidelines for conducting PSE efforts in EFNEP. These were shared with the National EFNEP office at USDA/NIFA.

¹This project was funded by the Land-Grant University SNAP-Ed Program Development Team, National Office at South Dakota State University, between August 2018 and October 2019. For questions, please contact the author (galdamez@msu.edu or feighn21@msu.edu).

EFNEP PSE Webpage (<https://efneppse.org/>): The Regional Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Change website (<https://psechange.org>) website was expanded to include examples of PSE work among EFNEP programs in a variety of settings. These examples complement those on the SNAP-Ed webpage (<https://snapedpse.org/>) of the PSE change website (<https://psechange.org>). The EFNEP home page contains an overview of applying the socioecological model to PSE along with five examples that have occurred in EFNEP across different settings. The reporting page includes an overview of reporting for EFNEP. The resources page contains a variety of useful links for PSE efforts including examples, case studies, journal articles, and resource kits which can be applied to a variety of community nutrition programs.

PSE Examples: Examples which can be applied to many community nutrition PSE programs were identified. The EFNEP PSE Webpage (<https://efneppse.org/>) houses a variety of recent examples of programs that have occurred across the country. A list of examples that aligned with the SNAP-Ed evaluation indicators were developed in a PowerPoint format that can be found on the EFNEP PSE Webpage. A variety of settings were used to inspire states to think about different settings where PSE can be conducted.

The following pages contain snapshots of resources that were developed.

EFNEP PSE National Survey Highlights

A survey with EFNEP universities was conducted in January 2019. The EFNEP Policy, Systems, and Environmental change (PSE) committee measured institutions knowledge and experience with PSE. This information was used to develop resources and equip states to conduct and report PSE efforts.

Step 1:
Development of
Qualtrics Survey

Step 2: Survey
vetted through
EFNEP PSE
Committee and
NIFA

Step 3: Identified
EFNEP
coordinators and
state leaders
through directory

Step 4: Survey
distributed via
email in January
2019



Response Rate

54% responded partially (n=41)
43% provided complete responses (n=33)
51% were currently conducting PSE (n=21)



Key Results: Needs for EFNEP PSE

Resources and Training

- EFNEP PSE Toolkit including examples, coalition building resources, best practices
- Training materials for EFNEP



Reporting

- Improve WebNEERS PSE reporting allowing for flexibility and reporting across years
- Guidance and examples for reporting and defining terms in WebNEERS
- Reporting form templates

As a Result, the Following are in Development

Reporting Improvements

- New WebNEERS PSE
- Guide and definitions for PSE terminology
- Reporting templates



EFNEP PSE Website

- Examples from the field
- Coalition resources
- Availability of PSE resources at www.efneppse.org



² WebNEERS is the web-based nutrition education evaluation and reporting system developed for EFNEP, which is also used by some SNAP-Ed implementing institutions within the land-grant university system.

EFNEP PSE Guidelines

Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) Integrating Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change Efforts

December 2019

The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) applies a social-ecological framework for improving the nutritional health and well-being of program participants and their families. Implemented through Cooperative Extension¹, EFNEP provides direct education and establishes community partnerships to facilitate personal, family, and community change. Coordination, collaboration, and coalition² work with community partners is integral to the effectiveness of Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) change efforts. Identifying and reporting the effects of PSE change efforts in addition to those of direct education is essential to reflecting the influence of EFNEP in communities and states/territories. EFNEP reporting of PSE change efforts continues to evolve. Currently, such efforts are reported in terms of environmental settings, sectors of influence, and community impacts. PSE setting³ and sector⁴ level efforts may increase EFNEP's reach and facilitate sustained change by program participants.

This document provides guiding principles and answers key questions on PSE change efforts through EFNEP.

Guiding Principles

- PSE change efforts do not replace direct education; rather, they are used to enhance and complement direct education.
- EFNEP direct education is provided by peer educators in the community. Peer educators may also serve as a catalyst to PSE change efforts, but should not have a primary responsibility for PSE change efforts. PSE change efforts must be led and supported by EFNEP supervisors/coordinators and other professional staff with EFNEP connections.
- Coordination, collaboration, and engagement with community partners and stakeholders is essential to the success of PSE change efforts. EFNEP respects and gives attribution to those involved through mutually developed, implemented, and reported efforts.
- EFNEP's national web-based nutrition education, evaluation, and reporting system – WebNEERS – is used to reflect PSE change efforts, including the impacts of partnerships, and other coordinated and collaborative efforts that involve EFNEP.
- As with direct education, EFNEP PSE change efforts should reflect the practical application of evidence-based and valid practices.

Key Questions

What is the goal of PSE change efforts in EFNEP?

The goal of PSE change efforts in EFNEP is to facilitate sustained change for nutritional health and well-being of low-income families with youth within EFNEP communities. These efforts expand EFNEP's reach beyond direct education through work with community, regional, or state coalitions, committees, and initiatives.

What is the role of peer educators (paraprofessional staff) and supervisors/ coordinators (professional staff) regarding PSE change efforts?

Peer educators are responsible for teaching EFNEP participants, as per legislative intent. Professional staff lead PSE change efforts in conjunction with other partners. Peer educators may serve as a conduit for connecting with other partners and with direct education that is underway. Professional staff may use their judgement to involve peer educators in informing coalition work where appropriate, as peer educators may be able to offer additional insight to the needs of communities served to enhance PSE change efforts. Professional staff should remain the main contacts for PSE change efforts. Such efforts should not interfere with or diminish peer educators' focus on reaching and teaching EFNEP participants.

In what settings can PSE change efforts occur?

PSE change efforts can occur at locations where participants eat, live, work, learn, and play. Such approaches should target locations where EFNEP is available with the intent to serve eligible persons. Settings involving the general population could also be considered in support of EFNEP if program leadership represent EFNEP and if actions taken for the general population, resonate with and are helpful to families and individuals eligible for EFNEP.

What are PSE change efforts as they relate to EFNEP?

PSE approaches suitable for EFNEP include those which support changes in settings or sectors (see US Dietary Guidelines - 2015-2020) related to EFNEP core areas of diet quality and physical activity, food resource management, food safety, or food security. They should also be targeted to the EFNEP audience, or relevant and appropriate for the target audience. Such changes may encourage or reinforce behavior changes made by families and individuals that are eligible for EFNEP. PSE change may occur within a single organization (such as a school or school district), or more broadly, across organizations at local, regional, or state/territory levels.

How should PSE change efforts be reported for EFNEP?

PSE change efforts should be reported on an annual basis as part of the annual update. They may cover multiple years, and should reflect the status of the effort (adoption, implementation, and maintenance). Supervisors and coordinators are responsible for submitting PSE change efforts at the regional and institute level of WebNEERS. Up to two PSE narratives will be accepted per institution per year [Please refer to the PSE section of the WebNEERS manual]. PSE change efforts should reflect the shared contribution of multiple partners/coalitions.

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If you still have questions after reviewing this program policy and associated [EFNEP Program Policies](#), please contact the National Program Office:

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[1] Cooperative Extension is the nationwide transformational education system operating through land-grant universities in partnership with federal, state, and local governments. Cooperative Extension educators or agents translate science for the public, engage the public to act, prepare people for a better life, provide rapid response in disasters, develop partnerships, and connect people online. (Source: <https://www.aplu.org/members/commissions/food-environment-and-renewable-resources/board-on-agriculture-assembly/cooperative-extension-section/index.html>).

[2] Coalitions are comprised of those who lead PSE change efforts. For EFNEP, this may include EFNEP professional staff and other community or state/territory staff and volunteers that serve EFNEP communities.

[3] Settings include early care and education programs (e.g., child care, preschool), schools, worksites, recreational facilities, community centers, food retail, food service, and other establishments. These organizational settings determine what foods are offered and what opportunities for physical activity are provided. (Source: U.S. Dietary Guidelines 2015-2020).

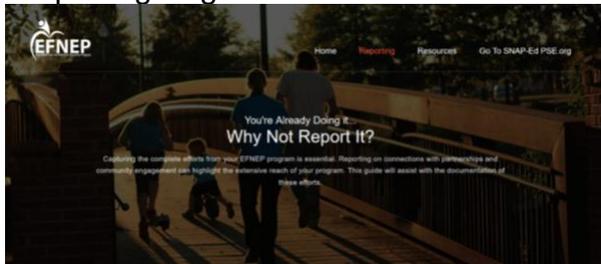
[4] Sectors include systems (e.g., governments, education, health care, and transportation), organizations (e.g., public health, community, and advocacy), and businesses and industries (e.g., planning and development, agriculture, food and beverage, retail, entertainment, marketing, and media). These sectors all have an important role in helping individuals make healthy choices because they either influence the degree to which people have access to healthy food and/or opportunities to be physically active, or they influence social norms and values. (Source: U.S. Dietary Guidelines 2015-2020).

EFNEP PSE Webpage <https://efneppse.org/>

Home Page:



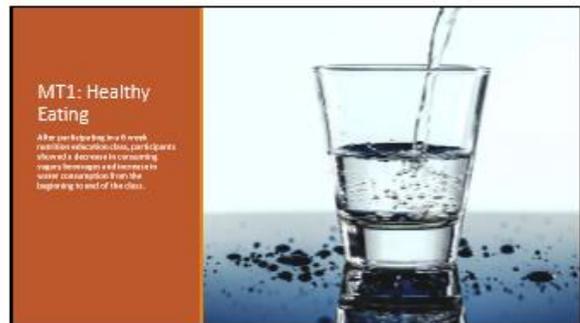
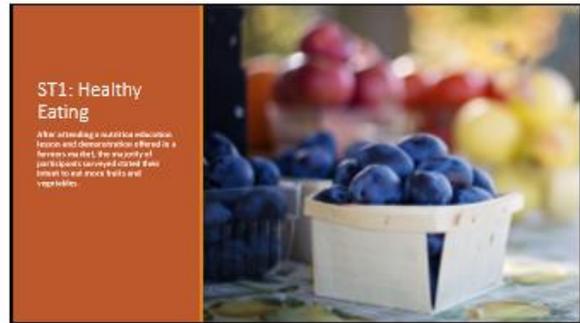
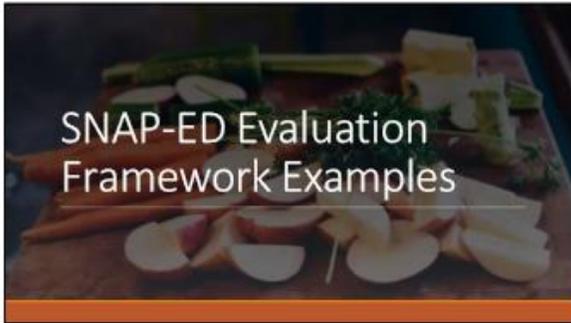
Reporting Page:



Resources Page:



PSE Examples



MT2: Food Resource Management

After attending a 6 week program series, more participants indicated their ability to choose healthy foods for their family while staying on a budget.



MT3: Physical Activity and Reduced Sedentary Behavior

After attending a program series, the majority of participants reported increasing their physical activity.



MT4: Food Safety

After attending a 6 week program series, more participants indicated they no longer consume undercooked poultry.



LT1: Healthy Eating

After attending a nutrition education program series for 6 weeks, participants were motivated to eat better. Many were still consuming more fruits and vegetables than before attending the program.



LT2: Food Resource Management

After attending a program series, a total of 100 participants indicated they will read nutrition facts labels on packaged food.

Amount	Teneur	% Daily Value
1/2 package prepared / 1/2 emballage		
Calories / Calories		
Fat / Lipides 4.5 g*		
Saturates / saturés 2.5 g		
+ Trans / trans 0.2 g		
Cholesterol / Cholestérol 15 mg		
Sodium / Sodium 870 mg		
Carbohydrates / Carbohydrates		

LT3: Physical Activity and Reduced Sedentary Behavior

After attending a program series, 80% of participants were more active and indicated they were watching less television.



LT4: Food Safety

A year after attending a program, many report that they use proper hand-washing techniques before and after cooking.



ST5: Needs and Readiness

A county-wide coalition is determining needs for a community physical activity promotion campaign.

A needs assessment was conducted related to policy, systems, and environmental supports for this campaign.



ST6: Champions

A summer day camp with teens began a cooking education program. This led to parent involvement in a home and outside the program. A parent volunteer selected donations for food from a local grocery store and provided fresh produce donated by other parents. The volunteer focused food by asking for donated produce that was appealing to the participants.



ST7: Organizational Partnerships

An elementary school principal and a professional hair stylist in a preschool center for 3 years of being about adults. This past year, the preschool has asked about ways to introduce fruit and vegetables. The preschool has decided to establish a garden with parent support. The school will measure growing fruits and vegetables during classroom activities. The preschool has ordered a planter to provide hole feeding of the back garden for children.



MT5: Nutrition Supports

A school has received a grant to provide salad bars and nutrition improvements. This included developing a plan that each lunch offered fruits and vegetables are offered on the salad bar, increasing variety of fruit and vegetable items offered to students in a self-serve environment. The salad bars included diverse toppings with fruits and vegetables to draw attention to the new choices.



MT6: Physical Activity and Reduced Sedentary Behaviors

A community coalition raised money for new playground equipment at a park. The park was renovated with a variety of recreational items, including signs for a marked walking path. New equipment for children of all ages was added. Physical therapy trials for adults were also included.



LT5: Nutrition Supports Implementation

A recreation center developed a funding source for food in their snack machine to identify the machine supplier. A policy was implemented to shift on to a more healthful choice and games of chance in the center. To replace this program, community health events, social healthy coaching were included.



LT6: Physical Activity Supports Implementation

A local park board of directors worked to expand their trail system and create a more accessible. A policy was implemented to add that to environmental changes and systems change in the setting. Community-wide marketing was included on the trail to encourage more local TV coverage events, and more people activities.



LT7: Program Recognition

A community board recognized a workplace for their innovative community wellness program. They were recognized with an award recognized in the field by the workplace and the press.



LT8: Media Coverage

A community park and recreation board applied and expanded city website post. Managers included for working on the site, and included a social media strategy that can be done along the trail. The program was displayed on the local television station, radio, and on local media accounts.



LT9: Leveraged Resources

A community center developed a grant to fund a local library to provide environmental changes with health events offered at reading rooms and events. This effort was funded by a grant received from the center. After a year, the library established their own funding for health events, and local media coverage developed to maintain the program.



LT10: Planned Sustainability

A workplace health program in a factory setting was worked on by managers to improve physical activity among employees. After being set up with employee input, the program was implemented the first year with the program's sustainability. The plan included assigning leadership for an employee wellness team, funding allocation for events, and goals over the next 5 years to measure outcomes and identify areas for improvement.



LT11: Unexpected Benefits

A community nutrition program (PSE) that teaches how to use a grocery store provided shelf talkers and signage in a few grocery stores to provide healthy choices. After seeing these efforts, a local non-profit contacted us to see if we could track areas to reach people across all income levels and provide healthy choices, among the community.



ST8: Multi-Sector Partnerships and Planning

A coalition made up of government, across different sectors, reaching low-income communities. The coalition meets quarterly and is working to address community-wide physical activity improvements, including walking paths and outdoor recreational facilities. They worked to raise funds for these initiatives and also raise awareness in the community through events to promote the kick-off of these new facilities.



MT7: Government Policies

A county-level government office developed policies for their own building vending machines. This scaled up to policies in all government buildings, and more private businesses have adopted it as well.



MT8: Agriculture

A community coalition program to allow for purchasing more fresh and nutritious foods for low-income families and diets was established. This was piloted in a few schools and later scaled up to include many participating farmers and diets, with more being recruited for enrollment.



MT9: Education Policies

A statewide school policy was created to require a minimum of 30 minutes of physical education in schools. SNAP-Ed supports a part of this effort, and has demonstrated the importance for implementing this change.



MT10: Community Design and Safety

A community improved lighting in a park, a no-litiated emergency call program. Community policing led efforts in that park were established to enhance care and safety.



MT11: Health Care Clinical-Community Linkages

A low-income health clinic began a nutrition food security status among its patients. They began providing fruit and vegetable prescriptions.



MT12: Social Marketing

A campaign to promote fruits and vegetables at a low-income food resource area was created. They included television ads, banners, rack & roll advertisements, and billboards on expressways prior to the resource area's launch.



MT13: Media Practices

A television channel demonstrated they would no longer allow advertisements marketing and/or the foods sold there during children's programming. This was facilitated through a coalition building agreement to have educational programs.



LT12: Food Systems

A shopping list with produce, including SNAP benefits, leads to low-income areas of the food and food stores to increase access to fruits and vegetables. These are sourced with produce from local growers.



LT13: Government Investments

A food line was opened in a city to reach a new food shopping culture context area. Choices were made from food by standards more applicable to the area.



LT14: Agriculture Sales and Incentives

A low-income food outlet made an effort to purchase local produce at least 10% of the time.



LT15: Educational Attainment

Low income school with a high percentage for the National School Lunch Program yielded higher reading levels among students over a three year period.



LT16: Shared Use Streets and Crime Reduction

A community established a family center for after school programs to encourage students to walk and bike to and from school.



LT17: Health Care Cost Savings

After providing nutrition education programs, a hospital discovered rates of obesity reduced among patients of patients.



LT18: Commercial Marketing of Healthy Foods and Beverages

A family child care nutrition education program encouraged policy changes to promote healthy food options and activity for children. Some examples of these PSE changes include providing healthy and vegetable and activity, a menu of fruit and vegetable options in kid-friendly portions, and allowing of drive to help prepare meals and snacks.



LT19: Community-wide Recognition Programs

A local nonprofit food bank program in a rural area organized efforts to improve food access. A community agency focused on improving fruit and vegetable options in local corner stores and received the award for establishing produce sections in five stores.

