

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed)

*"Making the healthy
choice the easy choice."*

SNAP-Ed Programming

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) is provided for SNAP participants and other low-income individuals through the following programs.

- It's Fun to be Healthy
- Color Me Healthy
- My Plate for My Family
- Organ Wise Guys
- CATCH Kids Club
- Illinois Jr. Chef

Early Childhood Education

Direct Contacts

4,988

Sites

20

From April 1- September 30, 2019, the SNAP-Ed Team had 4,988 direct education contacts at 20 Early Childhood Education sites throughout Franklin, Jackson, Perry, Randolph and Williamson Counties.

Nutrition and physical activity education within early childhood sites is an important component of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education. Programs such as It's Fun to be Healthy or Color Me Healthy offer a series of interactive lessons taught right in the classrooms. These lessons promote healthy eating behaviors, increase preference for fruits and vegetables and encourage physical activity.

SNAP-Ed programming is also an opportunity to encourage childcare workers to practice role modeling so healthy, active and nutritious daily activities can continue beyond days when the SNAP-Ed team is not present.

Our Community Worker is very patient with young children and gives them plenty of time to think of answers and make connections to their prior knowledge. He is effective in his teaching as he shows his knowledge about healthy foods and exercise. The children love when he comes, and he is always engaged in his lessons and activities. He has provided them with the opportunity to taste "new-to-them" fresh fruits and vegetables and some of the children have found new favorites."

- Pre-K Teacher, Southern Region Early Childhood Programs



Early Head Start Collaboration

Through a partnership with Centerstone's Early Head Start Program (EHS), community participants are transported to the Franklin County Extension office once a month for a program presented by the SNAP-Ed staff. Attended by both parents and children of Franklin/Williamson counties, families can learn to cook new healthy recipes while learning ways to eat and shop smarter.

The family messaging program is one way SNAP-Ed is providing nutrition education and obesity prevention intervention services and resources to low-income families in our community. Around fifteen families participate in the program on a monthly basis.

"The Community Workers have found a way to connect with our Early Head Start families and get them excited about cooking and eating healthy. I enjoy hearing how our families are taking the information received in these cooking classes and using it in their own homes."

- Former Health Coordinator/Nurse, Early Head Start Program



Go NAP SACC

Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (GO NAP SACC) is being implemented in our region through a partnership with Jackson County Health Department and the Child Care Resource and Referral at John A. Logan College.

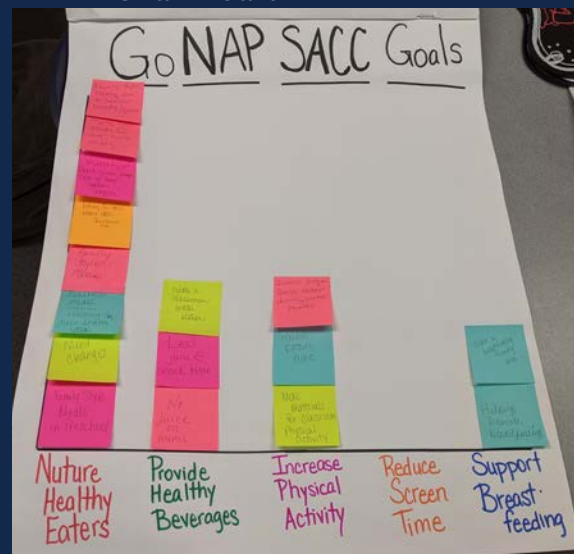


The program is designed to enhance nutrition and physical activity environment, policies and practices in early childcare sites and have a positive impact on childhood obesity. Our SNAP-Ed Educator is currently working with six early childcare sites on the online self-assessment tool. As centers complete each module, they are provided with immediate results that show success and ideas for improvement. The results will allow them to work together to develop and implement an action plan to create a healthier environment.

Current employees at the childcare sites are attending professional development training sessions that allow them to learn the skills to give the children in their center a healthy start. It's also an opportunity for participants to collaborate, share ideas and discuss best practices for each center. So far, the attendance rate for these optional sessions has been 100%.

Best practices addressed include:

- Child Nutrition
- Breastfeeding/Infant Feeding
- Infant/Child Physical Activity
- Outdoor Play/Learning
- Screen Time
- Farm to ECE
- Oral Health



"Kids that are healthier and well taken care of will be more ready to learn."

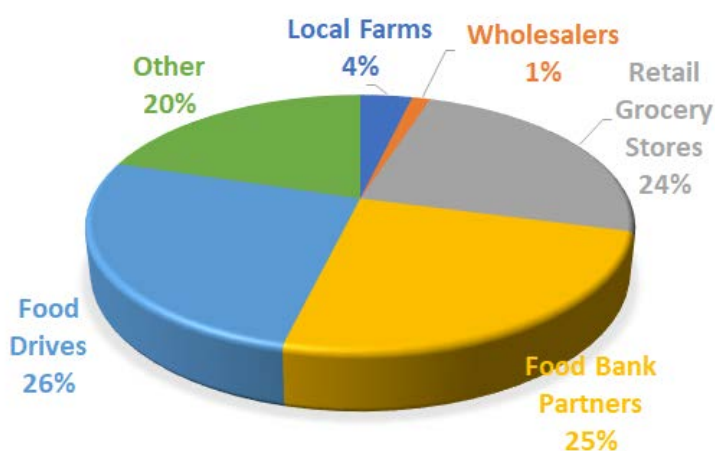


Food pantries play a critical role in helping many families throughout the region meet basic nutrition needs. SNAP-Ed Extension Educator Toni Kay Wright is a key member of the Southern Illinois Food Pantry Network. She and others within this group are coming together to identify ways to reduce hunger and improve the health and well-being of our communities through access to healthy and nutritious food, education, resources and advocacy.

Their vision is to transform the lives of residents that face food insecurity in southern Illinois communities. Through their efforts, they began the Nourish Your Neighbor campaign as well as coupling health screenings and health fairs with mobile food markets and food pantries.

The group meets quarterly to help foster networking among area food pantry managers, share information, connect with community partners and provide assistance to help address the challenges that food pantries face.

SOURCE OF DONATED FOOD

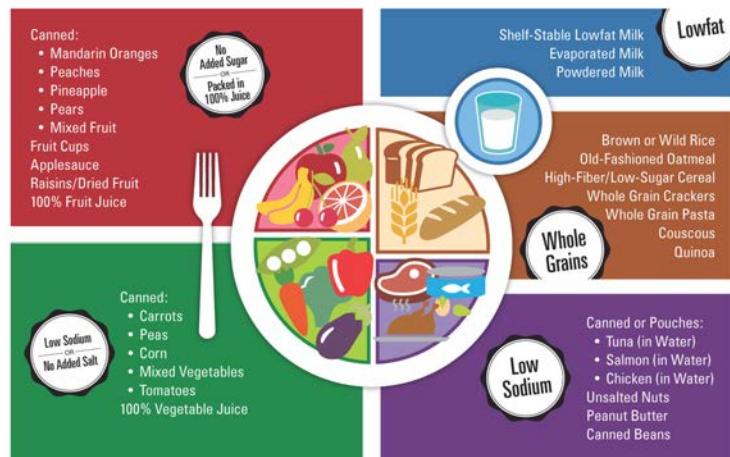


NOURISH YOUR NEIGHBOR

In the state of Illinois, nearly 1.4 million people are struggling with hunger and of them 453,260 are children. Fortunately, there are approximately 95 food pantries located throughout the lower 16 counties of Illinois that make up the Southern Illinois Food Pantry Network.

In order to meet the high demands of food assistance in the area, the food pantries must rely on donations from the community and community partners to keep their shelves stocked. The Sack Hunger Food Donation Study findings revealed that not all of the foods being donated are meeting the nutritional quality recommended by the Feeding America "Detailed Foods to Encourage" Framework. In particular, the study found that sodium levels exceeded recommendations for vegetables, grains and miscellaneous food items. Only 26% of donations are considered healthful with the remaining 74% being high in sodium and/or highly processed.

Through the Nourish you Neighbor initiative, individuals are encouraged to donate healthy foods. Shopping lists and point of decision prompts are available to help potential donors identify healthy, shelf-stable foods that are needed on food pantry shelves.



Community Collaborations



**SNAP-Ed is
meeting
people where
they are.**

As a member of the Healthy Southern Illinois Delta Network (HSIDN) Diabetes Today Resource Team (DTRT), University of Illinois Extension has worked with Southern Illinois Healthcare (SIH) and the St. Louis Area Foodbank to provide free health fairs in conjunction with mobile food markets. Individuals were able to receive a free health screening to check blood pressure, blood sugar, BMI and cholesterol while also learning more about diabetes, heart disease, stroke and other preventable chronic diseases.

In addition to helping address food insecurity through mobile markets, these health fairs are a way to reach uninsured or under insured individuals that may not get regular checkups to know their numbers. After two events, 75% of those screened were recommended to follow-up with a healthcare provider to address abnormal screenings. During one screening, two individuals were sent to the local emergency room due to high blood sugar and high blood pressure.

Illinois Junior Chef

Expanding food preferences while teaching basic cooking skills.

Illinois Junior Chef is a fun, engaging program that allows youth to learn about nutrition, try new healthy recipes and gain kitchen skills. Recipes introduce participants to healthy options as kids get the opportunity to make their own nutritious meals and get excited about healthy foods. Over the summer, our unit's Junior Chef program reached over 170 participants at nine sites including an additional site that will continue the program throughout the year.



"My daughter asked me to buy ingredients so she could make banana oatmeal."



"My son took the class in Sparta and loved it!"