Regional Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Centers of Excellence
National Coordination Center at the University of Kentucky

Pointing the Way to Good Nutrition

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Colorado State University
Dr. Susan Baker

THE LONGITUDINAL RESEARCH PROJECT: Utah State University works in cooperation with the Western Regional Center.
RNECE Initiative
Program Implementation Research

• NCC and Regional Centers began work October 1, 2014
• Year 1 – established communications, working network, and evaluation framework; coordination among Centers with significant progress by four Regional Centers
• Year 2 - PSE Change Center and Longitudinal Research Project began work October 1, 2015
RNECE Initiative Objectives

- **Strengthen the evidence-base** on effective nutrition education and obesity prevention programs for diverse population groups

- **Evaluate the long-term effectiveness** of nutrition education and obesity prevention interventions for disadvantaged and underserved populations and opportunities for new research;

- **Identify and create research collaborations** and synergistic relationships among researchers and EFNEP/SNAP-Ed program directors, universities and other implementers, and state and federal agencies; and

- **Enhance the impact** of state and community nutrition education and obesity prevention efforts by providing the public health-related training and evidence that practitioners need for improving nutrition and health behaviors, environments, and policies in ways that are equitable, efficient, and sustained over time.
Northeast Regional Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Center of Excellence

Jamie Dollahite, Director
Cornell University
RNECE – Northeast Region

- 2 FNS regions – northeast and most of mid-Atlantic
- Stakeholders from 12 states and District of Columbia
- Research advisors
Mission and Goal

**Mission** To promote a culture of health among low-income populations by bringing researchers and program implementers together to engage in sound intervention research congruent with implementation and dissemination science.

**Goal** Expand the evidence base that supports effective nutrition education of diverse low-income program participants delivered in conjunction with policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) approaches that make healthy choices easier in order to prevent obesity.
Key Initiatives

• Signature Research Program

• Nationwide Training

• Systematic Review
Signature Research Program

Research Question

Does the combination of direct nutrition education and PSE changes have greater impact on dietary intake and physical activity than either strategy alone?
Research Projects Summary

• 5 projects, variation in race, ethnicity, and cultural contexts, target audience, and methods of delivery

• 2 implemented in SNAP-Ed, 3 in EFNEP

• 3 urban, 1 suburban, 1 rural in 2 sites with micropolitan areas

• 3 RCTs; 2 quasi-experimental designs

Progress: Baseline data are complete; interventions are underway; mid-year reports submitted
Adopting Healthy Habits in Worksites: Increasing adoption and acceptability of PSEs in agencies serving low-income families

• RNECE-NE and Cornell Cooperative Extension EFNEP

• Effects of combining direct education with PSEs in community agencies and day care centers to support healthy habits for employees and agency participants.

• Direct-Ed Healthy Children, Healthy Families: Parents Making a Difference!

• PSE worksite environment, policy changes
Nutrition Ed, Access and Texting (NEAT): Combining the Hartford Mobile Market with e-Marketing

• Hispanic Health Council, Hartford CT SNAP-Ed

• Effects of combining education with text messaging campaign, mobile produce markets & vouchers on access, purchase, and intake of fruits and vegetables.

• Direct Ed session on MyPlate

• PSEs & social marketing Produce vouchers plus daily text messages on nutrition and mobile markets
Sustaining a Successful Youth-Leader Program as part of a Multi-Level, Multi-Component Food Environment/Behavioral Intervention

• Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Md, SNAP-Ed

• Test model to train teens to implement nutrition education and implement wellness policies at rec centers.

• Direct-Ed curriculum for younger youth developed with U Md, SNAP-Ed

• PSE Youth-leaders participate in wellness policy development in centers. Additional impacts of corner store project.
Transforming Lifestyles: Integrating Direct Nutrition Education with Physical Activity Using the Health Care System Expansion Model

• University of Maryland EFNEP

• Effectiveness of engaging primary health care providers in assessing children’s physical activity levels and providing information and referrals to physical activity resources and EFNEP.

• Direct-Ed *Eating Smart Being Active* and *Cooking Matters for Kids*

• PSE Systems change in health clinics
Empowering Urban Schoolchildren to Increase Fruit and Vegetable Consumption through EFNEP-enhanced PSE Interventions

- University of Rhode Island EFNEP
- Effectiveness of engaging 5th grade students in activities to change school food environment
- Direct-Ed *Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program*
- PSE students engagement with school wellness committee and food service staff to change menu
PSE Approaches – Needs Assessment for Training


• SNAP-Ed Implementing Agency Directors and EFNEP Coordinators

• Instructions
  – complete survey
  – forward to nutrition program managers/ professional community practitioners to complete
PSE Approaches – Needs Assessment for Training

Each respondent rated training needs for themselves/peers and other position for 25 topics under four main categories:

- Introduction to PSEs
- Planning PSEs Approaches
- Planning PSE Approaches
- Evaluating PSE Approaches
PSE Approaches –
Needs Assessment for Training: Respondents

600 respondents from 56 states & territories

Please indicate which program primarily supports your work
PSE Approaches –
Needs Assessment for Training: Respondents

*Please indicate what best describes your role in your EFNEP and/or SNAP-Ed Program*
PSE Approaches – Needs Assessment for Training: Respondents

Please indicate how long you have been working for EFNEP and/or SNAP-Ed

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<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Response</th>
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PSE Approaches – Needs Assessment for Training: Results

• Training topics were almost all rated highly – indicating survey topics reflect training needs

• Western region rated the need for training for both audiences (directors vs managers/practitioners) significantly higher for many topics compared to other regions

• Southeast region rated need for training for both audiences significantly lower for many topics compared to other regions
PSE Approaches –
Needs Assessment for Training: Results

• Directors rated the need for training for directors on topics related to evaluation significantly higher compared to ratings by and for those in other positions.

• There were very few significant differences in how training needs were rated based on program (SNAP-Ed vs EFNEP).

• There were very few significant differences in how training needs were rated based on years of experience.
Systematic Review

To address the question: Does the combination of direct nutrition education with changes to the food and/or physical activity environment have greater effect on obesity-related outcomes than either of the strategies alone?