

**State of Alaska  
Department of Health and Social Services  
Division of Public Assistance  
Family Nutrition Programs**



**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education**

2019 SNAP-Ed Strategy Toolkit

***Strategy 1: Create, enhance and support implementation and evaluation of strong wellness policies and practices in eligible schools and out of school time programs to promote healthy eating and physical activity.***

Schools, and out of school time programs, both play an important role in ensuring youth have access to opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity. Studies show that youth who regularly eat healthy meals and move more throughout the day have better grades and test scores, better school attendance, fewer behavioral issues, and lower risk of chronic disease later in life.

Examples of allowable activities to support Strategy 1 include:

- Asses current school and out of school time provider wellness policies and practice, improve policies where relevant and strengthen adherence to them.
- Improve student, teacher and staff access to nutrition information through menu labeling and classroom curriculum to improve student understanding of nutrition information.
- Developing, implementing and evaluating systems of cafeteria product placement and point-of purchase prompts to encourage healthier food choices.
- Make improvements to the school, and out of school time provider atmosphere, particularly where meals and snacks are served to promote nutrition and physical activity.
- Assess and adjust food marketing in schools/out of school time programs to promote healthy snacking.
- Assess quality of available snacks at schools and out of school time programs and encourage implementation of healthy snack options.
- Provide resources and training on nutrition education to teachers, staff, and out of school care providers.
- Teach staff in schools and out of school time programs how to model health eating behaviors and reinforce healthy habits youth are learning.
- Support student participation in walking school buses, safe routes to schools and other activities to encourage walking and biking to school.
- Assist school districts, schools and teachers in implementing SB 200, the Physical Activity in Schools law that recommends 54 minutes of daily physical activity for students in grades K-8.
- Encouraging school and youth participation in the Healthy Futures challenge.

Toolkits to support the work:

- [Team Nutrition Implementation Tools & Resources](#)
- [Alaska School Wellness Policy Materials](#)
- [A Guide to Smart Snacks in Schools](#)
- [Healthy Futures Challenge](#)
- [Coordinated Approach to Child Health](#)
- [WellSat 2.0 School Wellness Assessment Tool](#)
- [School Physical Activity Policy Assessment](#)
- [PE-Nut: Physical Education & Nutrition Education Working Together](#)

***Strategy 2: Support the development and implementation of Farm to School and Farm to Summer Meal projects, including gardens.***

Farm to School and Farm to Summer Meal projects focus on local food access, experience-based education, farm field trips and school gardens in order to increase access and appeal of fresh, healthy foods. Across the state, school gardens are found to be a strength in increasing access to healthy food.

Examples of allowable activities to support Strategy 2 include:

- Identify local resources and community partnerships available to support Farm to School or Farm to Summer Meal projects.
- Develop, implement, and evaluate school gardens.
- Encourage use of produce grown in school or summer food program gardens in snacks and meals served.
- Create signage and prompts to market local foods/ school garden foods incorporated into meals and snacks.
- Promote intersections between farmer/garden and school curriculum (school assemblies or events/ classroom visits/ food-related class materials, etc.).

Toolkits to support the work:

- [National Farm to School Network](#)
- [The USDA Farm to School Planning Toolkit](#)
- [Procuring Local Foods Webinar Series](#)
- [Got Dirt? Gardening Initiative](#)
- [Summer in the School Garden](#)
- [Schoolyard Garden Initiative](#)

***Strategy 3: Support the implementation and promotion of Summer Food Service Program Sites.***

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) provides free, nutritious meals at approved programs in areas with significant concentrations of low-income children. Programs are provided by schools, private nonprofits and local or tribal governments.

In the 2018 Alaska SNAP-Ed Needs Assessment found that SFSP is underutilized in Alaska. Although the program has doubled the number of sites in the last year, today, only 1 out of 11 children who participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), participate in Summer Food. The needs assessment stated that, “increasing access to healthy food for low-income Alaska youth could be, in part achieved by increasing the number of Summer Food sites in Alaska”.

Examples of allowable activities to support Strategy 3 include:

- Assess need in community for summer food, identify potential sponsors or sites and assist them in getting certified to provide Summer Food.
- Develop signage and promotional materials for target audience and develop and implement an outreach plan to market Summer Food Service Program to local youth
- Increase Engagement at new and existing sites through nutrition, physical activity and farm-to-summer meal-based activities and signage.
- Identify potential barriers to youth participation in summer food sites (transportation, information, social, emotional) and develop solutions to address barriers.

Toolkits to support the work:

- [Getting Teens Involved in Summer Meals](#)
- [Promoting Summer Food Service Program Sites](#)
- [USDA Summer Meals Toolkit](#)
- [Guide to Starting Summer Food Service Program](#)

***Strategy 4: Support the development and implementation of Healthy Retail practices and policies in food pantries, food banks, convenience stores and grocery stores.***

Many low-income people do not have access to grocery stores that stock healthy food options, or cannot afford the options that are available. Snacks and processed foods are often prominently displayed, and the easiest to access in retail environments, even at food pantries. Healthy retail and healthy pantry projects can improve access, availability, affordability and appeal of nutritious foods.

Examples of allowable activities to support Strategy 4 include:

- Assess organizational readiness for healthy retail/healthy donation/healthy shelf projects.
- Identify food retailers, farmer’s markets, food banks, and food pantries to engage in Healthy Retail projects; create and implement an action plan, and evaluate results.
- Identify local food resources to incorporate into Healthy Retail locations (local farmers, local fishing industry, local food producers).
- Implement healthy food donation guidelines and/or programs for food banks and pantries, promote new guidelines to customers and donors.
- Utilize strategic product placement, store lay-out, and point-of-purchase prompts for healthy food and beverages at retail stores and markets.
- Incorporate signage and other environmental strategies to market healthy foods and identify participating locations.
- Create and promote recognition programs for organizations and stores that participate in Healthy Retail practices.

Toolkits to support the work:

- [Stock Healthy, Shop Healthy](#)
- [Current Practices in Healthy Food Retail: Small Stores](#)
- [Washington Healthy Pantry Guide](#)
- [Healthy Corner Stores Guide](#)
- [Healthy Food Pantry Assessment Toolkit](#)
- [Health on the Shelf](#)
- [Healthy Retail Recognition Pilot](#)

***Strategy 5: Expand the number of retail stores and Farmers Markets accepting SNAP EBT and support efforts to increase access and awareness in the target audience.***

SNAP benefits are distributed via an EBT card, and SNAP recipients must shop at locations that can accept these cards. Farmers Market vendors may choose to accept EBT cards, but many do not. In 2016, just 38% of farmers markets accepted EBT. Incentives can increase SNAP recipient usage of Farmers Markets and vendors participation rates.

Examples of allowable activities to support Strategy 5 include:

- Identify and assess the readiness of retailers and farmers markets for EBT, and barriers to utilization.
- Provide training to retailers and farmers markets on EBT acceptance, set up and transactions.
- Identify barriers (economic, social, infrastructural, cultural, emotional) faced by target audience in using EBT in farmers markets and develop strategies to address them.
- Improve signage at new and existing sites to promote vendor acceptance of EBT at Farmers Markets.
- Develop, implement and promote community-based “Double Up Food Bucks” programs to increase purchasing power for SNAP recipients in farmers markets.
- Promote farmers markets that accept EBT to target audience.

Toolkits to support the work:

- [SNAP Store Retail Training Guide](#)
- [Farmer’s Market Coalition SNAP Guide](#)
- [Accepting SNAP Benefits at Your Farmers Market or Market Booth](#)
- [WIC Vendor Training](#)