

Programs, Policies, Systems, and Environmental Strategies

Programs: Services targeted to individuals or groups to change knowledge or behaviors, typically has a beginning and an end.

Policy: A written statement of an organizational position, decision, or course of action.

Policies include laws, rules, regulations, ordinances, and procedures designed to guide behavior.

Examples:

- Local ordinance allowing residents to plant community gardens in vacant lots
- School policy allowing use of facilities for recreation during non-school hours.

Systems: unwritten, ongoing, organization decisions or changes that result in new activities reaching large proportions of people the organization serves.

Systems changes include changes to the way an organization conducts business.

These changes impact all aspects of an organization or institution and endure time, leadership changes, etc.

Types of systems:

- Welfare offices
- Schools
- Parks and recreation
- Transportation
- Food distribution

Environmental Change: Includes the built or physical environments which are visual/observable, but may include economic, social, normative or message environments.

- **Environmental interventions** include changes to the physical, social, or economic environments.
 - **Physical:** Opening a farm stand at a local welfare office, or posting signage at vending machines identifying healthy foods.
 - **Social:** Changing attitudes among teachers about disallowing candy in the classroom, or improving parenting practices and social supports to limit their children’s time watching television or playing video games.
 - **Economic:** Offering financial incentives to consumers who purchase fresh fruits and vegetables. (*Note:* SNAP funds cannot pay for financial incentives)

Organizational Policies and Environmental Settings

SNAP-Ed Approach Two: Multi-Level interventions

Changes in written policies, organizational practices, and the observable (physical or ‘built’), social, economic and communications environments may include the adoption and implementation of a new or enhanced organizational practice, rules, or procedures that make healthy choices easier and more desirable. Within a social-ecological framework, organizational practice changes and environmental approaches include multiple, complementary activities within the organization or system. Often referred to as ‘whole setting’ or ‘multi-level’ interventions, multi-component activities may include nutrition education classes, marketing and promotion, food service policies, wellness councils, point-of-choice prompts to action, access to recreational facilities, and financial incentives that make healthy choices more affordable. Generally, there should be at least layers of interventions to be effective.

In the *SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework*, indicators LT9 and LT10, defined multi-level interventions with one of more policy or environmental changes combined with at least one of the following: 1) evidence-based education, 2) marketing, 3) parent/community involvement, or 4) staff training on continuous program and policy implementation

Community and Public Health Approaches

SNAP-Ed Approach Three

To improve nutrition at the population level by reforming food systems, increasing access to healthy foods in low-income areas, and promoting safe and livable communities, multiple sectors must work together. At the *Sectors of Influence* level of the social-ecological model, activities may address interventions at broad geographic areas such as a state, tribe, region, county,

city, or town, or another organizational division such as a school district, company 'district' or 'region', or a 'chapter' or 'affiliate' of a voluntary organization that have the potential for broader reach and societal impact.¹

¹ Ammerman, A., et. al. Community based approaches to obesity prevention: the role of environmental and policy change. In: S. Kumanyika and RC Brownson. Handbook of Obesity Prevention: A Resource for Health Professionals. 2010. Springer: New York.

Identifying Programs and PSEs

Situation	Program in Response	PSEs in Response
My daily sodium intake is too high.		
Residents are not playing in the local park.		
Women who work at a textiles plant do not have time to pump breast milk.		
I wish I could exercise during my lunch break.		
Farmers markets are for rich people. Why would I shop there?		
The local school children don't drink from the water fountain.		
My children don't like the food from the pantry.		
I don't have time for cooking classes, but I really want to learn.		
Six people were hit by cars at the nearby intersection last year.		

Paying for PSEs

Allowable	Unallowable
Policy, Systems, and Environmental Changes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs associated with the implementation and maintenance of PSE efforts within the scope of SNAP-Ed • Consultation with partner organizations on promoting organizational practice changes that support healthy food and beverages • Analyzing and preparing data reports and sharing information on the expected benefits of PSE changes • Consultation with food retailers, farmers, food distributors, and farmers market managers on increasing access to and promotion of whole grains, fruits and vegetables, and low-fat dairy • Conducting environmental scans or assessments of the food and activity environments where food and activity decisions and choices are made • Community forums or meetings with SNAP-Ed recipients or service providers on healthy eating and active living • Point-of-purchase or point-of-decision signage and other behavioral cues to action that promote healthy eating or physical activity choices • Resource kits with strategies for adopting, implementing, maintaining, and evaluating policy, systems, and environmental changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs associated with establishment and maintenance of environmental or policy changes outside of the scope of SNAP-Ed, such as infrastructure, equipment, space, land, or construction • Costs associated with capital improvements to retail stores, sidewalks, trails, bicycle paths, or dining facilities • Costs associated with refrigeration units in grocery or convenience stores • Financial incentives to community partners or retailers to support environmental or policy changes • Salaries for retail store staff, farmers market managers, or food service workers for service operations • License or permit fees for farmers markets or food retailers