Energizing SNAP-Ed: Using Physical Activity to Inspire Diet and Lifestyle Changes

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http://www.extension.umn.edu/Nutrition/energizers-for-simply-good-eating.html

Introduction

"Obesity is such that this generation of children could be the first basically in the history of the United States to live less healthful and shorter lives than their parents," said Dr. David S. Ludwig, director of the obesity program at Children's Hospital Boston. [1]

An estimated 97 million adults in the United States are overweight or obese.

[1]The New York Times, March 17, 2005

Modeling the program after *Energizers Classroom-based Physical Activities* developed by East Carolina University, University of Minnesota Extension SNAP-Ed program is putting education in motion with over 50 activities that reinforce nutrition and health concepts through physical activities for youth, teens, adults and seniors.

The *"Air Writing"* Energizer is popular with all ages and can be adapted for low-mobility audiences.

Program

•Community Nutrition Educators (CNEs) adapted, with permission from North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NC DPI), Energizers to reflect nutrition messages from the USDA's 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

•CNEs piloted Energizers with a variety of SNAP-Ed audiences.

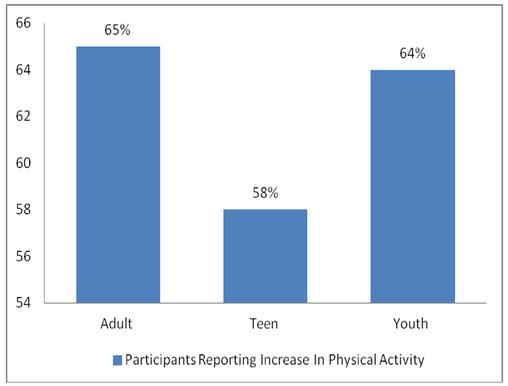
•Based on feedback, 53 nutrition Energizers were finalized for use by paraprofessional CNEs to bolster existing SNAP-Ed curriculum.

•Each Energizer is available as an electronic document that can be downloaded from the University of Minnesota Extension website individually or as a set of 53. Energizers for Simply Good Eating require little or no preparation or equipment and can be adapted to fit the time available during a nutrition lesson – anywhere from 2 to 10 minutes.

"*Pass the Salmonella, Please*" is an Energizer that works with all ages to reinforce food safety messages. The CNE coats a rubber chicken with a gel to simulate germs, participants pass the chicken around to music, then examine their hands under a black light to demonstrate how bacteria are spread in the kitchen.

Evaluation results

SNAP-Ed Participants Reporting Increase in Physical Activity



Energizers for Simply Good Eating have been shown to help increase participants' physical activity in the Minnesota SNAP-Ed program. Online training will be developed to enable dissemination across the nation. Training will consist of a train-the-trainer module for state and regional leaders and a module for trainers to use with paraprofessional community nutrition educators.