

community voices about

# THE IMPACT OF SNAP-ED

**SNAP-Ed helps Americans eat better, move more, and live healthier lives.**

SNAP-Ed brings hands-on nutrition education and public health strategies to classrooms, farmers markets, corner stores, and other community spaces—reaching people of all ages. Kids learn through lessons, taste tests, garden activities, and visits from local farmers. SNAP-Ed programs also work alongside local community partners to increase access to nutritious food, opportunities for physical activity, and community well-being.

“My favorite part is seeing the smiles on folks’ faces and supporting habits that are beneficial to their health... We have families that come every weekend with their children [to access] more fresh food.”

- Tamara, Warren Co. Farmers Market Manager

## INVESTMENT WITH RETURN

These programs work. Participants in our SNAP-Ed nutrition education programs are more likely to meet recommendations for healthy eating behaviors after attending classes.

Additionally, SNAP-Ed programs strategically align with federal programs to maximize reach, expand services, and eliminate duplication. These programs save millions in health care costs by preventing disease and increasing people's ability to live and work well. A recent state-level study also showed for every \$1 spent, SNAP-Ed returns at least \$5.36 in future health and economic benefits, including educational attainment, lifetime earnings, and life expectancy.

Funding  
SNAP-Ed  
programming is  
critical to the  
health of families  
and communities  
across North  
Carolina.



**NC SNAP-ED**



**FFORC**  
Food - Fitness - Opportunity  
Research Collaborative



**CAROLINA  
HUNGER  
INITIATIVE**



**UNC**

**CENTER FOR HEALTH  
PROMOTION AND  
DISEASE PREVENTION**

addressing food insecurity through

# NUTRITION EDUCATION

**Healthy choices begin with education—for stronger families and communities.**

Nutrition education empowers children to make informed choices, understand the importance of healthy eating, and develop life-long habits that support their physical and cognitive development. This can help to improve student health and long-term well-being.



“My favorite recipe has been the veggie wraps. I made the veggie wraps with my mom... My aunt said I need to start cooking a lot more so I can make better food.”

- Graduate from Cooking Matters for Kids

In person and online nutrition education programs share evidence-based information about healthy, affordable foods that families can prepare and eat together at home. It equips families with skills to prepare healthy meals and helps bridge the gap for families who may struggle to access nutritious food.

**Caregivers who participated in nutrition education courses were asked:**  
**“How will the information learned in this class help your family?”**

“Excellent easy information and easy to apply to daily life. Very impressed with program, I feel empowered to simply add more fruits and veggies into my families.”

- Participant, Cherokee County

“It will help to feed my family and my grandchildren healthier.”

- Participant, Onslow County

“It will help us make healthier choices and I feel more confident in my meal planning skills.”

- Participant, Harnett County



# improving health and wellbeing through COMMUNITY GARDENS

## Community gardens are powerful tools for health.

They increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables—especially for individuals and families facing food insecurity—and lead to higher produce consumption overall.



“As a result of this partnership [the community garden], we are seeing kids are eating healthier because they're going to the garden and saying, "Let's do a tomato sandwich." Or you know, "Let's do some... some cucumbers and vinegar.”

- Community Garden Manager, Diversity Nurtures Achievement, Warsaw, Duplin County

Community gardens can also spark the adoption of other healthy habits, reduce the risk of chronic disease, and contribute to lasting improvements in physical, mental, and emotional well-being. They offer meaningful connection, purpose, and healing—especially for kids, families, older adults, and Veterans.

“Through gardening, we can, we can deal with the diabetes, we can deal with obesity. through working manually, you're gon' stay tone. You're gon' keep your weight down, now we can eat healthy. That's, that's central.”

- Community Garden Manager, Little Bud Thorbs, Kinston, Lenoir County

“... I lost weight because I eat less meat and I eat more vegetables [since starting to participate in the garden] and that was beneficial to my health. Believe it or not, my blood pressure went down.”

- Community Garden Manager, Garland, Sampson county

“[These gardens] are a healing space, because some veterans do have problems with post-traumatic stress syndrome... they go to their doctors and they're on the medications, but it's something about being out there in the garden, touching the ground, touching the earth, and just getting centered working in it.”

- Community Garden Manager, Coharie Tribe, Clinton, Sampson County

Community gardens also **strengthen local agriculture and food systems** by reconnecting communities to where food comes from, supporting local farmers, and building skills that sustain regional food resilience.

*increasing safety and access to*

# ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

**A community's physical environment plays a powerful role in shaping safety, health, and well-being.**

SNAP-Ed supports community-based designed streets and shared spaces that are safe, welcoming, and accessible for all—whether people are walking, biking, driving, or using public transit. These thoughtful designs not only discourage crime but also encourage physical activity, strengthen social connection, and support better health outcomes.

**“We make change in our neighborhood, even if we have a small voice. I want to set an example for the next group of interns.”**

- High School Youth in Action Intern, Hillsborough, NC

**“It helped me learn more about my community and its history. This program also helps me get outside more—it really does help me as a person in my health and gets me moving.”**

- High School Youth in Action Intern, Hillsborough, NC

The Youth in Action internship provides high school students in Hillsborough, NC opportunities to lead impactful initiatives in their local community where they identify barriers to active living and then take steps to learn about and address them.

**“The Fairview Youth in Action program really helped me understand what it takes to create a community and keep it safe... My favorite part was seeing the plans we made go into action.”**

- High School Youth in Action Intern, Hillsborough, NC

