

Title: Implementing the Active School Neighborhood Checklist in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education (SNAP-Ed) Schools

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Background: As a part of a multi-level obesity-prevention approach, the SNAP-Ed encourages walking and biking (w/b) so that youth can achieve the recommended sixty minutes of daily physical activity. To assess the walkability, bikeability, and safety of the SNAP-Ed schools, the University of Arizona Nutrition Network (UANN) implemented the Active School Neighborhood Checklist (ASNC) in 10 elementary schools in Pima County.

Methods: The ASNC contains 57 questions divided into eight sections related to supportive policies, built environment, and infrastructure. Total scores of 0-41 were considered poor, scores 42-83 were moderate, and scores 84-113 were good.

The UANN visually surveyed a one-mile radius of each school for built-environment factors. Other questions were answered by, consulting with school officials, city and county planners, public health representatives, and Safe Routes to School (SRTS) coordinators.

Results: Schools' total scores ranged from poor to moderate (17-47). Nine of the schools surveyed scored poorly (<31); one school scored moderately (47). All schools surveyed had many physical barriers (high-speed traffic, multiple lanes, etc.). All schools scored highly (14-16 out of a possible 20 points) in the supportive policies section.

The ASNC assessment identified to the UANN that two schools had sufficient infrastructure, built environment assets and supportive programs to encourage w/b to school via the creation and dissemination of w/b plans. The SRTS program was contracted by the UANN to create the w/b plans.

Conclusions: The ASNC tool provided an overview of the w/b assets and challenges of the SNAP-Ed schools. The results identified appropriate schools for w/b plans.