

Title: Developing an Integrated Program Design for SNAP-Ed Programming & Evaluation

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Background: As Arizona's largest SNAP-Ed (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education) implementing agency, the University of Arizona Nutrition Network (UANN) conducts and evaluates healthy eating and active living (HEAL) education and policy, systems, and environment (PSE) outreach statewide.

Objective: Evidence suggests that education, coupled with PSEs and aligned with the Socio-Ecological Model (SEM) increases the likelihood that communities will adopt and sustain HEAL behaviors. The UANN sought to address a comprehensive approach to obesity prevention program design by integrating the SEM, relevant behavior change theory and best practices in the field across planning, implementation, and evaluation stages.

Methods: The UANN developed a unified program design that addresses comprehensive public health approaches in alignment with its foundational Transtheoretical Model for behavior change and the SEM.

Results: An integrated program design elucidates the UANN's behavior change model, a root cause map aligned with the SEM, and a logic model illustrating how the UANN works across PSE levels coupled with education at the individual and interpersonal levels.

Conclusions: The UANN's development process illustrates how integrated program design across education and PSEs and coupled with the SEM and behavior change theory can strengthen SNAP-Ed program implementation and evaluation. An integrated program design increases the likelihood that obesity prevention programs can achieve behavior and policy changes while also ensuring changes are effectively captured through program evaluation.