Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change Guide

AZ HEALTH ZONE

Acknowledgments

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Purpose

A Note From the AZ Health Zone State Implementation Team

This guide is a resource for AZ Health Zone staff and partners to better understand and achieve Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) change. Each section focuses on the importance of PSE work and showcases different PSE interventions with examples.

The guide also includes considerations for incorporating our program principles into PSE work. Our three foundational principles are trauma-informed approaches, community engagement, and health equity. We aim to update this guide, every three years, and highlight additional work happening in Arizona communities.

The 20 interventions described in this guide are some of the options organizations may choose for their PSE work. However, organizations are by no means limited to only the interventions found here. Rather, we chose to write about some of the more common PSE projects within AZ Health Zone. As always, the AZ Health Zone state team is available for additional support.
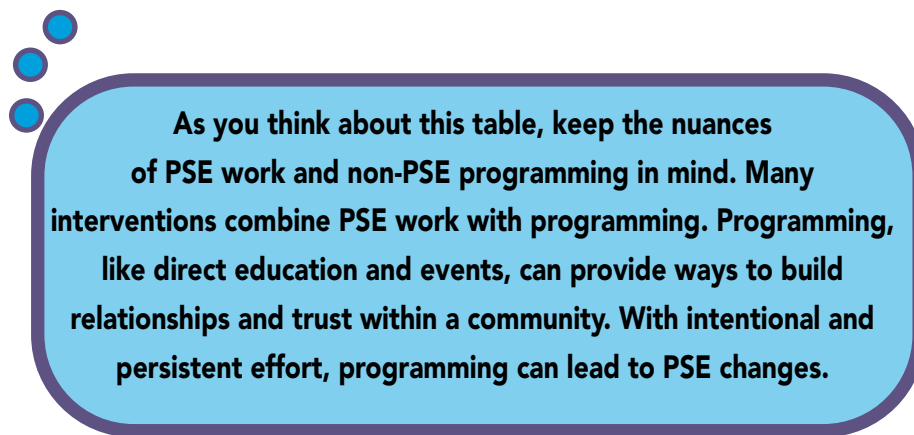
Introduction

What is PSE Work?

Policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) interventions make changes beyond the individual level to improve health outcomes. Policies are formal written statements created to reach specific goals. Policies occur at site, city, county, state, and national levels. Systems are the practices, processes, procedures, and structures within and between organizations. Systems change often occurs alongside policy change. Environmental change involves transforming physical, economic, and/or social contexts in observable ways. Table 1 highlights five important characteristics of PSE work contrasted with characteristics of programming without PSEs.

The AZ Health Zone program does PSE work within three focus areas. The Active Living and Food Systems focus areas create change in adult and multigenerational settings. The Childhood focus areas (Early Care and Education, Youth and Adolescent Systems) work in settings designed for ages 18 years and younger.

- Active Living PSE interventions encourage people to integrate physical movement into everyday routines. Life-enhancing movement is possible regardless of an individual's health condition, ability, or interest. The goal is to increase access to safe, affordable, and social opportunities to move the body throughout the day.

- Food Systems PSE interventions support the production, distribution, and availability of food. Food systems are the interacting parts, processes, and people involved in feeding populations. The goal is to improve food security by increasing access to and consumption of nutrient-dense foods.

- Childhood interventions support writing effective policies, sustaining equitable systems, and creating enriching environments. The goal is to promote optimal and lifelong child well-being in early care and education (ECE), school, and out-of-school time settings.

Table 1. A description of PSE change characteristics and examples as well as programming characteristics and examples (without PSE change).

PSE Characteristics	Non-PSE Programming
1. Community/population-level Screening for food insecurity in healthcare settings.	1. Only individual level Helping an individual locate nearby food pantries.
2. Sustaining A change in policy to install permanent traffic calming infrastructure and plant shade trees along walking paths.	2. Non-sustaining A two-month long indoor walking club during the summer.
3. Long-term Incorporating local produce into a school's ongoing food procurement contracts.	3. One-time or short-term A taste test in a school cafeteria featuring locally-grown ingredients.
4. Part of an ongoing plan A child care organization providing semi-annual funding opportunities for kitchen equipment and outdoor play area maintenance.	4. Not part of an ongoing plan A group offering a single round of mini-grants for new playground equipment.
5. Long-term behavior change over time Children have increased levels of vegetable consumption due to ongoing improvements in the school cafeteria alongside free breakfasts and lunches available to all students.	5. Short-term behavior change Students have increased levels of fruit consumption for a month after school-wide direct education, but consumption levels return to baseline in the next school year.

As you think about this table, keep the nuances of PSE work and non-PSE programming in mind. Many interventions combine PSE work with programming. Programming, like direct education and events, can provide ways to build relationships and trust within a community. With intentional and persistent effort, programming can lead to PSE changes.

Adapted from the Arizona PSE Playbook written by Arizona State University and Arizona Department of Health Services (2023) and The Food Trust (2012).

Levels of Impact for PSE Work

Given the characteristics above, not all PSE interventions have the same impact or effect. For example, environmental changes can be impactful but often require coinciding systems and policies changes to reach their full potential. The impact of PSE work occurs on a spectrum (Figure 1). AZ Health Zone defines the levels of impacts for PSE work as getting started, making changes, and sustaining impact. Work in the **getting started** category refers to minor PSE changes and supporting actions. **Making changes** involves significant PSE changes at the site or community level. Finally, **sustaining impact** includes PSE changes to maintain the impact of interventions for improved health.

Each PSE intervention in this guide is labeled **"P," "S,"** or **"E,"** or any combination thereof with an explanation of the change type(s). Additionally, each intervention is labeled as **getting started**, **making changes**, and/or **sustaining impact** to identify the general level of impact. It is important to remember the nuance of AZ Health Zone interventions as you read this guide. An intervention's level of impact may change depending on how it is implemented.

Figure 1. Levels of impact spectrum for PSE work.

Getting Started
Minor PSE changes and supporting actions

Making Changes
Significant PSE changes at the site or community level

Sustaining Impact
PSE changes to maintain the impact of interventions for improved health

Less impact → **Most impact**
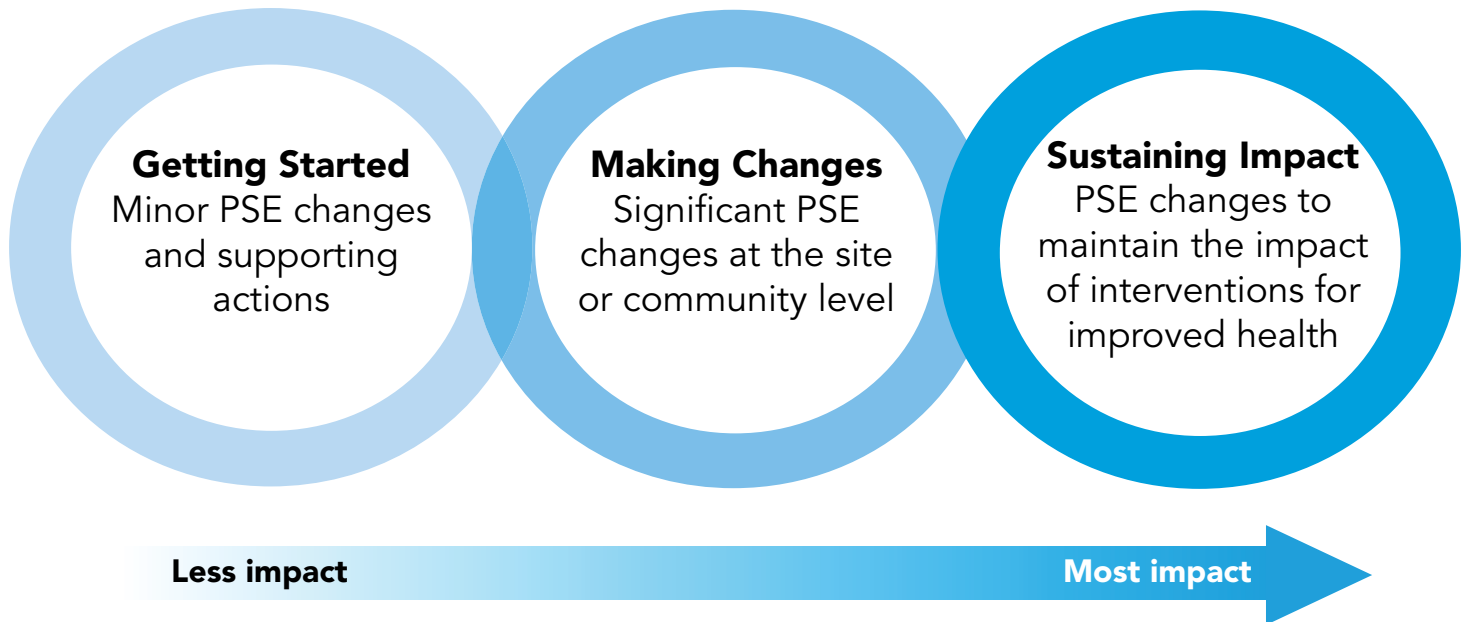
Frameworks for Understanding PSE Change

There are a multitude of factors that impact a person's ability to lead a healthy life. While individual knowledge regarding nutrition and physical activity does play a role in a healthful lifestyle, social and ecological determinants affect the opportunities someone may or may not have to apply their individual knowledge.

The Social Determinants of Health (Figure 2) describe the factors that influence health. The Social Ecological Model (Figure 3) is a framework for prevention that displays the various levels where impact can occur. SNAP-Ed embraces a layered approach in creating change by targeting multiple levels of intervention (sectors, settings, cultural norms, environments and policies) and pairing it with direct education to increase the probability for behavior change.

AZ Health Zone utilizes the Prevention Institute's Spectrum of Prevention (Figure 4) "as a guide to identify layered policy, system, environmental efforts and audiences that move beyond individual education and toward a more comprehensive approach to increase the likelihood of impacting individuals and communities in a holistic manner. The levels are complementary and should be utilized together to provide deeper, more impactful behavior change results than may be achieved by any single effort or initiative" (AZ Health Zone FFY2024 Guidance and Policy Manual).

Figure 2. Social Determinants of Health diagram from Healthy People 2030.

Social Determinants of Health

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Healthy People 2030

Figure 3. Social-Ecological Model for Food and Physical Activity Decisions diagram from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Social-Ecological Model for Food and Physical Activity

SOCIAL & CULTURAL NORMS & VALUES
- Belief systems
- Traditions
- Heritage
- Religion
- Priorities
- Lifestyle
- Body Image

SECTORS

Systems
- Government
- Education
- Health Care
- Transportation

Organizations
- Public Health
- Community
- Advocacy

Business & Industries
- Planning & Development
- Agriculture
- Food & Beverage
- Manufacturing
- Retail
- Entertainment
- Marketing
- Media

SETTINGS
- Homes
- Early Care & Education
- Schools
- Worksites
- Recreational Facilities
- Food Service & Retail Establishments
- Other Community Settings

INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

Demographics
- Age
- Sex
- Socioeconomic Status
- Race/Ethnicity
- Disability

Other Personal Factors
- Psychosocial
- Knowledge & Skills
- Gene-Environment Interactions
- Food Preferences

FOOD & BEVERAGE INTAKE   **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

= HEALTH OUTCOMES

Figure 4. The Spectrum of Prevention diagram from the Prevention Institute.

The Spectrum of Prevention

Interventions moving up the spectrum can have broader and deeper health impacts

Influencing Policy and Legislation

Changing Organizational Practices

Fostering Coalitions & Networks

Educating Providers

Promoting Community Education

Strengthening Individual Knowledge & Skills
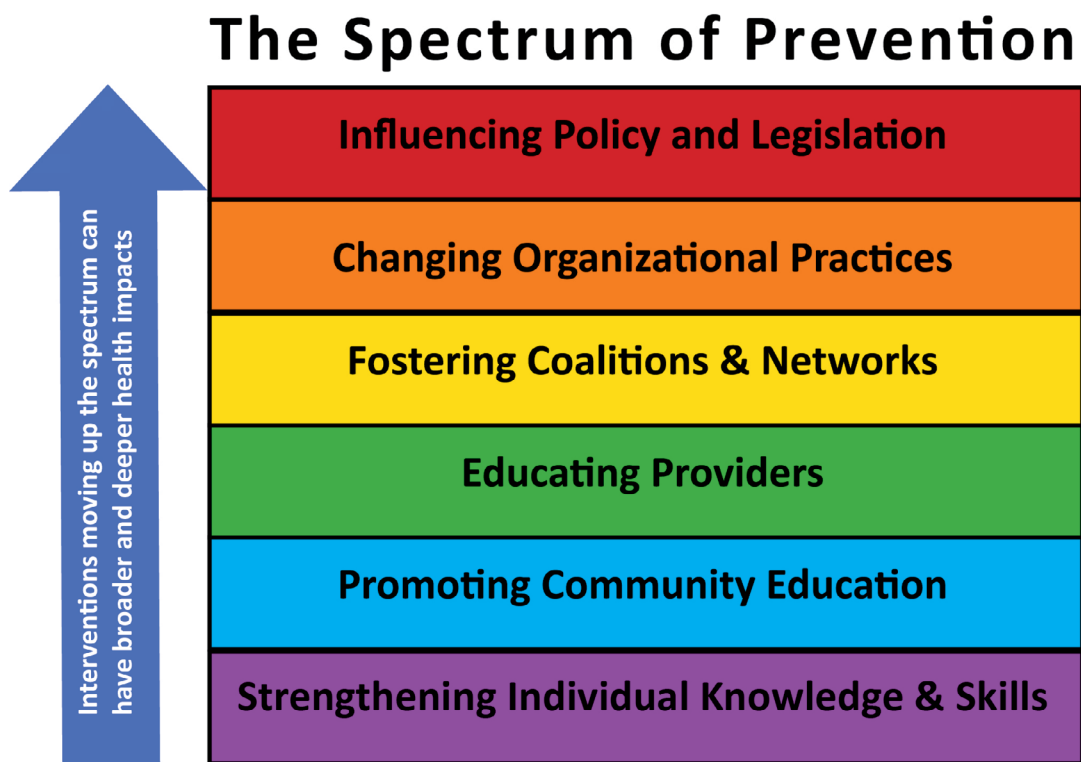
How to Implement PSE Work

Respect, Collaboration and Flexibility

The implementation of policy, systems, and environmental changes depends on a variety of considerations. You must first understand and respect the wants, needs, and resources of the sites and broader community you are serving. Building trust and authentic relationships is the foundation for successful change. Understanding the systems and policies that dictate the work of site partners and progress in the community is crucial to identifying barriers and solutions.

Awareness of how the site and/or community prioritizes health and their readiness to make changes at various levels is important. While some sites may want direct education as the sole intervention, having conversations about ways in which the impact of direct education can be deepened through PSE work is essential.

Collaboration with sites in your communities will require awareness and respect of the local culture, values, norms and history of the systems that influence the community and sites. This information can be gathered through meetings, conversations, surveys, focus groups and research. Additionally, working with the broader community creates opportunity for policy, system or environmental changes that can occur on a district, community, city or county level.

Within a community, policies occur at multiple levels and may have direct or indirect impacts on each other or the surrounding systems. For example, federal program guidance can be impacted by state or local agency regulations or site policies - meaning policies at most levels can have an upstream or downstream impact. All of these levels of policy, systems and environmental work should be considered as opportunities for change. See Appendix B: Tips For PSE Conversations for more information on how to initiate discussions.

After there is thorough comprehension of the systems, policies, environment, and readiness of the site or community, the next focus should be a collaborative approach to meeting the needs of those involved. Collaboration is important because the most success occurs when there is buy-in between the site, its stakeholders, and community. The more buy-in that occurs, the stronger chance there is for sustainable change. To create sustainable changes, you will likely have to amend the system in which you are working or create a new system. This might involve:

- Altering workplace culture with professional development and technical assistance or expanding capacity.

- Identifying leadership for the new system (advisory committees, boards, point people).

- Creating additional channels of support with personnel (volunteers, interns, mentorships, classes).

- Reviewing, changing and adding policies that impact this work.

- Securing funding (grants, stipends, project funds).

- Evaluating the impact of the project or change, but also the efficiency of the system, and making improvements when necessary.

The above list is not exhaustive, and you may not need to take all of the above actions into consideration. It's important to remember that you are not doing all this work alone. Though change can be challenging and uncomfortable, working together makes the efforts worthwhile in the long run. The more stakeholders you can bring together, including other SNAP-Ed eligible residents and community organizations, the more supported and collaborative these efforts will be.

As PSE interventions are implemented, it's important to check-in with partners, residents, and stakeholders to receive feedback about the impacts occurring. Take the time to celebrate progress, but also analyze where there's room for improvement or where new opportunities have arisen. Progress in PSE work is not always linear. There may be times when efforts are paused due to competing priorities or capacity within your organization changing. Additionally, you and your partners may decide to pivot priorities based on what can be more easily implemented, more impactful, or better aligned with feedback from residents.

Remaining flexible as a partner during seasons of change can build trust and deepen relationships which should stay a priority because it will contribute to long term success. The Arizona PSE Playbook written by Arizona State University and the Arizona Department of Health Services includes further information about how to implement PSEs, including seven steps for PSE works and how to write goals and objectives. In the appendices, we include two tables from the Arizona PSE Playbook we find particularly helpful. 'Steps for PSE Work' is in Appendix C and 'SMARTIE Goals and Objectives Development Questions' is in Appendix D.

Considerations for Community Readiness and Cultural Relevance

When initiating a new partnership with a site, its stakeholders, or community, there are important conversations to have internally with your team and with your new partners before proposing PSE changes, interventions, and implementation. Consider the following:

Community Readiness

- Have you engaged the community? How did you engage? What did you learn?

- Are your PSE priorities aligned with the capabilities and priorities of the community or site?

- Is this site or community open to changes - what kind and how many?

- Is this the change the site and community want?

- What are their resources, connections, and limitations?

- Are they ready for what's being proposed?

Cultural Relevance

- What are the norms, values and beliefs of this community? How do they view and prioritize health? What are their cultural practices and how can we honor them?

PSE Changes Through an Indigenous Lens

Implementing PSE changes in tribal communities requires careful cultural considerations. Respect for traditions, collaboration with tribal leaders, and understanding their values and norms are important. Additionally, the involvement of community members, tribal elders, tribal healers, and tribal government in the decision making process ensures that the PSE changes align with the cultural context. Regarding policy change, it is important to consider incorporating traditional practices into health or education policies, ensuring they respect cultural beliefs. When implementing system changes, involve local leaders, elders, community members, and tribal governments to incorporate their insights and promote community engagement. Environmental changes should be sensitive to the community's connection to the land, preserving sacred sites, and promoting sustainable practices rooted in tribal traditions.

In Arizona, tribal nations hold sovereign status, meaning they possess inherent powers of self-governance and maintain distinct legal and political identities. Understanding and respecting this sovereignty is paramount when engaging with tribal communities, particularly with governmental programs like AZ Health Zone. Given the historical context of trauma inflicted upon Indigenous peoples, building relationships with these communities requires time, patience, and sensitivity. Historical injustices have deeply impacted trust between tribal nations and the government, making it essential to approach collaborations with humility and empathy.

Recognizing and honoring tribal cultures, traditions, and beliefs is crucial in fostering trust. When implementing PSE changes within tribal lands, it is imperative to involve tribal leadership and community members in decision-making processes, ensuring that interventions are culturally appropriate and respectful of tribal sovereignty. Only through genuine partnership and mutual respect can meaningful and sustainable improvements in health outcomes of nutrition and physical activity be achieved within tribal communities in Arizona. Incorporate the following cultural considerations into policy, systems, and environmental changes.

For Policy Changes

- Ensure policies respect and reflect the cultural values, traditions and beliefs of the tribal community.

- Avoid imposition of external norms; seek input from tribal leaders and community members to tailor policies accordingly. Consult elders to frame concepts in a way that aligns with tribal frameworks of health and wellness.

- Explore ways to integrate traditional knowledge into education policies, making curriculum and interventions indicated by the policy more reflective of the community's culture.

- Foster community engagement by involving tribal community members in the policymaking process.

- Develop policies that support and promote the consumption of culturally significant and nutritious food.

- Communicate policy changes in languages understood by the community ensuring clarity and comprehension.

For System Changes

- Develop education systems that integrate tribal history, languages, and cultural practices.

- Support initiatives that promote culturally relevant teaching methods and materials.

- Acknowledge and respect tribal governance structures when implementing changes.

- Engage and seek guidance from tribal leaders and community members in discussion and decision-making processes related to system changes.

For Environmental Changes

- Implement environmental changes that prioritize the protection and preservation of sacred sites.

- Align environmental changes with traditional land use practices to ensure sustainability.

- Design public spaces and recreational areas in a way that reflects and respects tribal communities.

- Encourage and support sustainable environmental practices rooted in tribal traditions.

- Establish partnerships with environmental organizations that understand and respect the cultural importance of the local environment.

- Introduce community-led initiatives for sustainable farming, incorporating traditional crop varieties and cultivation methods.

For additional considerations when working with tribal communities, please visit Appendix E.

Interventions

The rest of the guide showcases common PSE interventions for AZ Health Zone. The diagrams below divide interventions into two categories based on the primary audience. The first diagram shows adult and multigenerational PSE interventions (Figure 5). The second diagram shows interventions for childhood PSE work (Figure 6). In the Venn diagrams, interventions are sorted by whether they include policy, systems, and/or environmental changes. As you continue reading, use the labels below each intervention name to quickly scan for important information (Figure 7).

Figure 5. A Venn diagram listing active living and food systems interventions by the types of PSE change.

Active Living and Food Systems Interventions

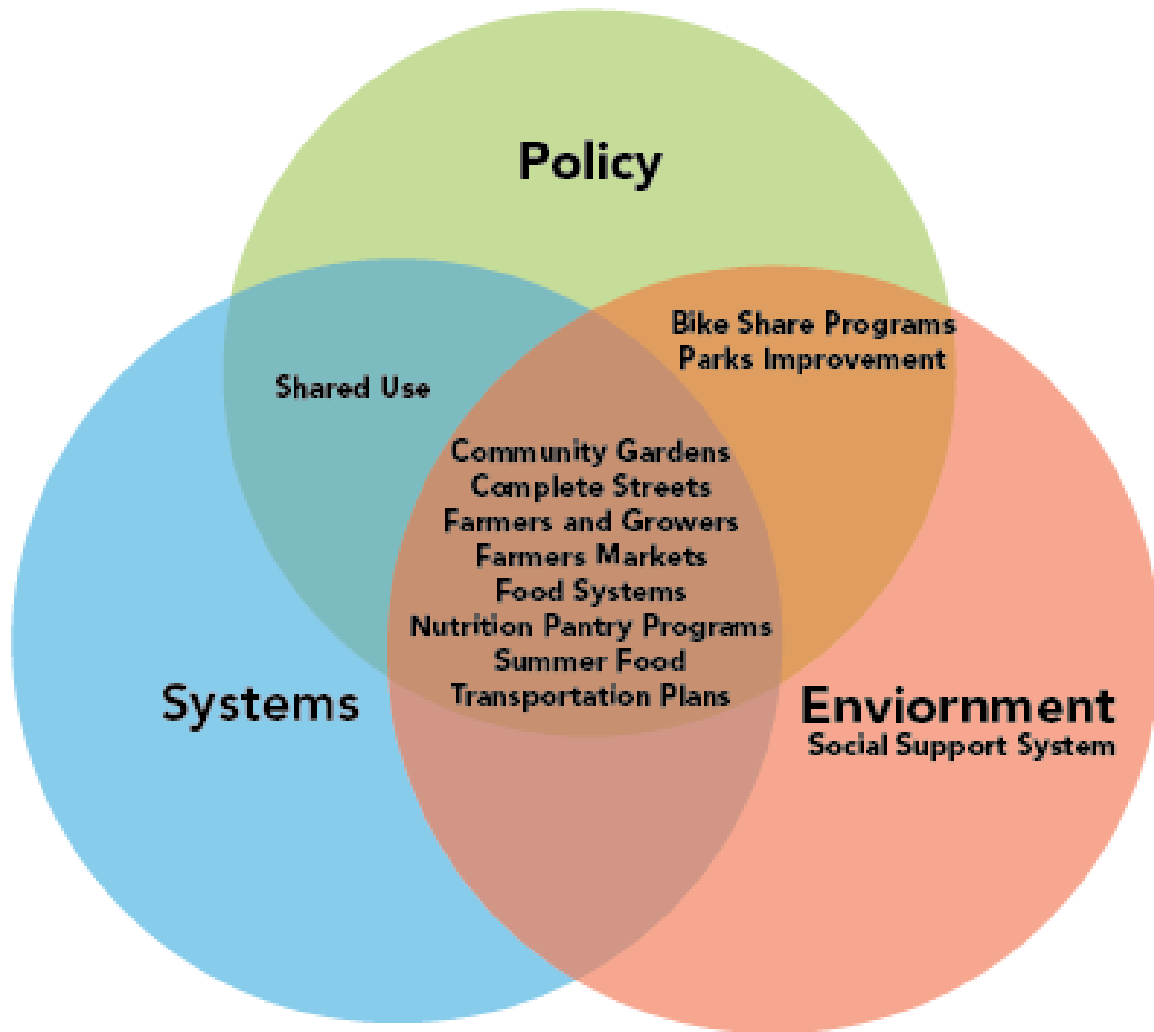

Policy

Systems

Enviornment
Social Support System

Shared Use

Bike Share Programs
Parks Improvement

Community Gardens
Complete Streets
Farmers and Growers
Farmers Markets
Food Systems
Nutrition Pantry Programs
Summer Food
Transportation Plans

Figure 6. A Venn diagram listing childhood interventions by the types of PSE change.

Childhood Interventions

Policy

Active Transportation
Physical Activity
Integration

Empower
Farm to Childhood
Go NAPSACC
Local Wellness Policies
Smarter Lunchrooms

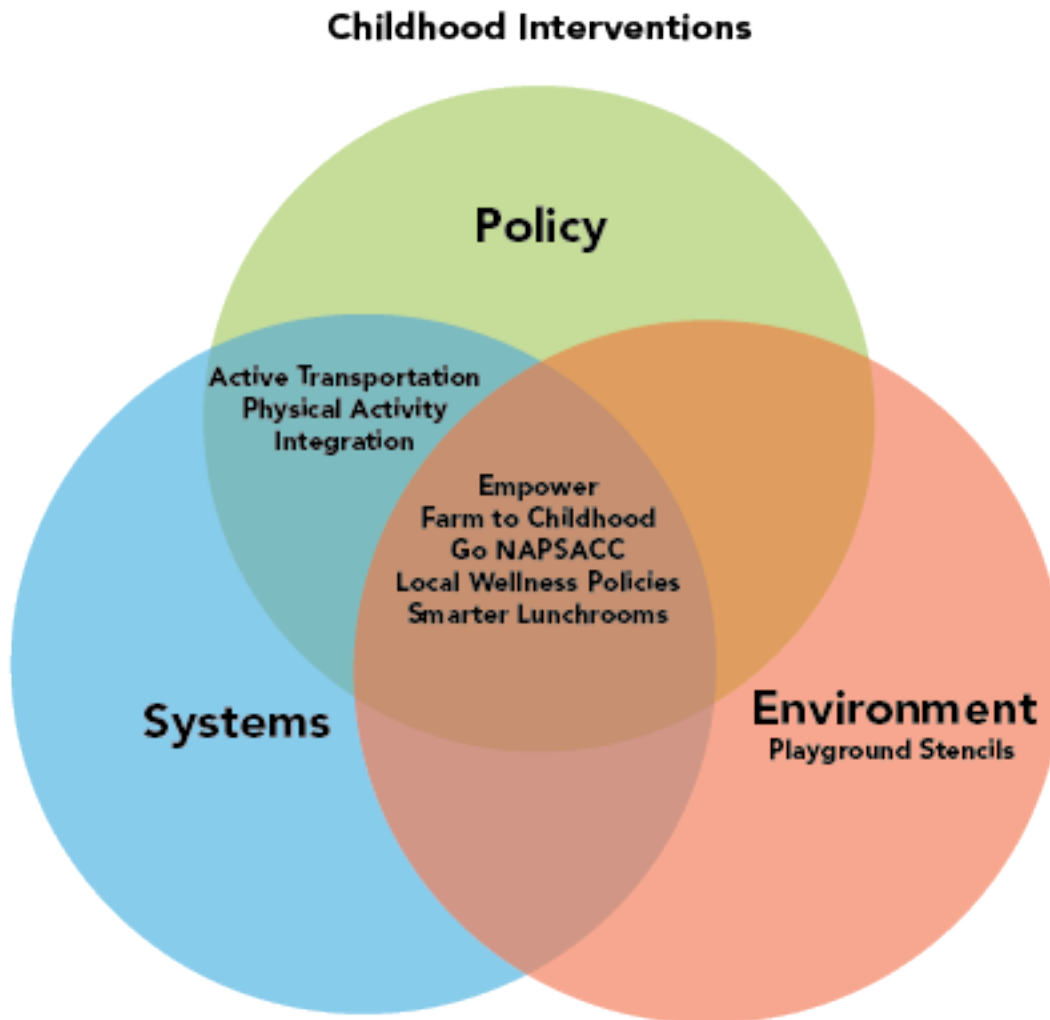Systems

Environment
Playground Stencils

Figure 7. A key explaining three labels assigned to each intervention: PSE change types, impact levels, and Spectrum of Prevention levels.

Shows what **type of changes** the intervention creates – **P**olicy, **S**ystems and/or **E**nvironmental

Intervention Name

P – S - E | Getting Started - Making Changes - Sustaining Impact

Shows the impact level(s) of the intervention

Spectrum of Prevention: Strengthening Individual Knowledge and Skills, Educating Providers, Promoting Community Education, Changing Organizational Practices, Fostering Coalitions and Networks, Influencing Policy and Legislation

Shows which of the six **Spectrum of Prevention level(s)** the intervention uses

Active Transportation

S - P | Getting Started - Making Changes - Sustaining Impact

Spectrum of Prevention: Promoting Community Education, Changing Organizational Practices, Influencing Policy and Legislation, Fostering Coalitions and Networks

Active transportation interventions include Safe Routes to School, Walking School Bus, and Walk to School Days. Safe Routes to School is a **systems** change that can also be a **policy** change. Safe Routes is a program to support students walking and bicycling to school, or to other frequently utilized spaces in their community. Examples of changes made by schools include modifying arrival and departure policies, creating remote drop-off locations, utilizing crossing guards, and more.

Walking School Bus is also a **systems** change and **policy** change that involves a group of children walking to school with one or more adults. It can also be implemented with bicycles. Families take turns supervising children on their walk to school and make their own schedules. This can easily grow to bring entire neighborhoods, school staff, school administration, community leaders, and law enforcement together for impactful changes.

Active transportation interventions like Safe Routes and the Walking School Bus happen at varying frequencies, from once a year to daily.

- **Getting started** looks like implementing safe routes as an event or as a pop up demonstration project.

- **Making changes** happens when the school integrates safe routes for walking and biking into their regular routines and schedule. This would be supported with use of crossing guards, altered school start and end times, new bus stops, and support from other community organizations on a daily, or almost daily basis.

- **Sustaining impact** is when a school writes the intervention into policy and implements it as part of every school day. Efforts can be expanded beyond the school and district by tying into town, city, county, or regional planning. The more partners involved in coordination, the more impactful the event is.

Supporting actions include providing direct education on nutrition and physical activity to support student knowledge; coordinating and attending school health or community health events; providing physical activity events; and supporting other aspects of staff development and environmental changes to promote physical activity.

Relationships	Cultural Considerations and Adaptations
For success, work with school site leadership, staff, family, and community members. Additionally, work with physical activity businesses like local running and cycling stores, or other community sites that a safe route can lead to, and transportation planning organization and departments.	Designing safe routes to schools with cultural considerations requires community involvement. Engage tribal leaders and other community members. Incorporate cultural landmarks and consider cultural safety measures in tribal communities.

"[We] collaborated with community partners… on another successful 'International Walk to School Day' event… **To promote the event's sustainability, schools were encouraged to take a larger role in planning the event**. Transportation, including coordinating bussing and setting up a remote drop-off site was handled by each school… **With seven schools hosting an event, CCHHS met the goal of increasing the number of schools participating**. During the next few months, CCHHS staff will continue to **promote adding an 'International Walk to School Day' event to the local wellness policy**, so all elementary schools are encouraged to participate."

Coconino County Health and Human Services
(Read Story #1 in Appendix G for more.)

Bike Share Programs

S - E | Getting Started - Making Changes - Sustaining Impact

Spectrum of Prevention: Educating Providers, Changing Organizational Practices, Influencing Policy and Legislation, Fostering Coalitions and Networks

A bike share program makes bicycles available in a community so residents can rent a bike for a certain distance. Some programs also feature electric bicycles. By providing convenient access to bikes at various locations, these programs promote active transportation and increase convenient and affordable transportation options. Bike shares can help people get to everyday locations (work and school), resources (parks, community centers, grocery stores, and libraries), and existing public transit networks. Bike share programs impact **systems** and **environments** by providing an alternative mode of transportation. They can potentially shape infrastructure investments and future community planning.

- Bike share programs are in the getting started phase by existing.

- Make changes by working with specific community partners to provide discounted or regular services to improve social support networks and active transportation.

- Sustaining impact occurs when bike share programs are written into policy. It also occurs when bike share programs support other transportation and built environment initiatives.

Supporting actions include direct education and active living events.

Relationships	Cultural Considerations and Adaptations
Organizations need relationships with community members who can give insight on the best places for bikes. City officials help make sure you have the proper documentation and permits. Contact bike share companies to see if they offer pilot programs.	For bike share programs within diverse communities, cultural considerations are crucial. Promote awareness of cultural norms and involve the community in the design and promotion of the program. Doing so aims to align bike share programs with cultural preferences and values.

Community Gardens

E - S - P | Getting Started - Making Changes - Sustaining Impact

Spectrum of Prevention: Fostering Coalitions and Networks, Educating Providers, Promoting Community Education, Changing Organizational Practices, Influencing Policy and Legislation

Community gardens create **environmental** and **systems** changes. The end result of a community garden is an environmental change. Systems changes are equally important because of the planning, coordination, and communication involved. Opportunities for site-level **policy** changes exist throughout the community garden process. Examples include formalizing written garden agreements, division of tasks, and operating procedures. Opportunities for community-level **policy** changes include garden-friendly zoning ordinances and general plans.

- **Getting started** includes learning about any past or current community gardens in the area. You may find partners who are already planning a new garden or reviving one that is inactive. If your team has gardening knowledge, consider offering support to leaders of existing gardens. You could also assist existing gardens with participation by recruiting residents to sign up for a plot or attend a garden work day.

- **Making changes** involves significantly improving an existing garden or establishing a new one. Ideas for existing gardens include fundraising for structural additions, creating scholarship programs, and making a community leadership plan. If you are establishing a new garden, convening a group of people to be garden champions or leaders is essential. Incorporate community engagement into each aspect of garden planning and implementation. Aspects include finding land, accessing water, making a budget, securing funding, establishing responsibilities, creating guidelines, recruiting participants, assigning plots, maintaining upkeep, and sustaining participation.

- **Sustain impact** by engaging in community-level policy work or convening coalitions and networks. An example of policy change is advocating for turning vacant city lots into community agriculture projects. Consider going door-to-door to survey residents living near potential lots. Then, share the results of the survey with city council members or other decision-makers. An example of convening coalitions is creating a community garden leader network. Such a network brings together garden champions together for problem solving and mutual support. Potential topics could be sustaining participation or accessing long-term land use agreements.

Supporting actions include providing direct education at a garden, tabling at a garden event, and offering taste tests or food demonstrations at a site with produce from their garden.

Relationships	Cultural Considerations and Adaptations
Developing relationships with community members, senior centers and housing site directors and staff, certified master gardeners, chapter houses (as relevant), food policy councils, city and town agencies such as parks and recreation or planning and zoning entities, and local businesses.	Your team can create welcoming gardens for all by understanding cultural norms and social barriers. Gardeners in Vancouver identified reasons why some populations were not participating. "While not necessarily intentional, community gardens may not feel inclusive and welcoming as a result of differences across social barriers... Dialogues with community leaders and garden coordinators revealed that unless there is intent behind building inclusion, bridging soft and technical barriers, and providing programming around culture, new immigrants, seniors, and those with accessibility challenges are unlikely to participate fully in community gardens" (Inclusive Community Gardens, City of Vancouver).

"We held a planning meeting to discuss implementing the Seed to Supper curriculum… The classes will be held at the chapter house in order **to support both home gardeners and to encourage the community and chapter officials to renew the community garden** that is already established at the chapter office.

-UA Cooperative Extension, Navajo County
(Read Story #2 in Appendix F for more.)

"[The New Horizons Community Garden] committee met to assess the garden's progress and plan for the next season… [We] **presented the need for the garden to remain open to the public free of charge or with minimal fees** to provide an avenue for everyone in the population to have access to growing their food if they could not do so at home… The committee's goal[s are] to **set up the ground rules for use, post new signage letting the public know when and how they can utilize the garden, identify a garden manager, and set up a volunteer system by November**.

-UA Cooperative Extension, Mohave County
(Read Story #3 in Appendix F for more.)

Complete Streets Policies

P - S - E | Getting Started - Making Changes - Sustaining Impacts

Spectrum of Prevention: Changing Organizational Practices, Fostering Coalitions and Networks, Influencing Policy and Legislation

Complete Streets incorporates Smart Growth Principles to plan, design, and operate streets. The goal is to enable safe use and support mobility for all users regardless of age, mobility, and mode of transportation. Complete Streets is a **policy** which can be set at a regional or local level. This often looks like local governments or transportation agencies adopting formal policies. The policies mandate that all transportation projects consider the needs of all users. Complete Streets policies lead to **systems** changes by developing integrated, multimodal transportation networks. Such networks enhance connectivity and accessibility. A change in policy and systems transforms the physical **environment** of streets. Changes include new bike lanes, special bus lanes, safe crosswalks, median islands, and curb extensions.

- Working with a coalition or network and residents to assess the current transportation infrastructure and identifying spaces for improvement to better accommodate park users is considered **getting started**. Various tools to assess mobility infrastructure, like walkability assessments, can guide these efforts.

- **Making changes** occurs from collaborating with diverse partners, developing a Complete Streets policy proposal, experiments with quick-builds and demonstration projects. These help explore how new ideas for street designs improve safety and accessibility and may lead to more sustainable initiatives, such as Slow Streets. Making changes culminates in adopting and implementing a Complete Streets policy at the regional or local level.

- Implementation of Complete Streets policies and initial projects works is considered **sustaining impacts**. Working with partners such as Arizone Department of Transportation (ADOT), Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and Council of Governments (COG), prioritizing Complete Streets principles in future transportation planning efforts, and allocating resources for continued implementation will also create sustainability of this work. Develop strategies for maintenance and upkeep to ensure infrastructure improvements remain effective and sustainable over time.

Supporting actions include direct education, relationship building, and community health events.

Relationships	Cultural Considerations and Adaptations
Build relationships with the city council, ADOT district, Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and Council of Governments (COG). The local MPOs are responsible for adopting plans for transit services, transit facilities, intermodal connections, pedestrian walkways, bicycle resources, and other supports. Engage with residents from underserved communities who are most impacted by transportation issues.	Act with care if there are any historic works or streets in areas where a Complete Streets project may be implemented. It is best to be sure the community agrees with the changes or is informed that nothing will be impacted or damaged. While developing a Complete Streets project, discuss any cultural considerations with community members, especially those from tribal communities.

"[Our] staff helped build capacity within the Town of Tusayan council by discussing complete streets with a council member. **Being unfamiliar with complete streets, the council member expressed an openness in learning more and agreed to review policies from comparable communities**… Through this simple conversation, CCHHS staff was able to share the basics of a complete streets policy and how the town of Tusayan could benefit."

-Coconino County Health and Human Services Department
(Read Story #4 in Appendix F for more.)

"Pima County's Slow Streets Project [is] a quarterly demonstration project that prioritizes low-income areas [in Tucson]… The program temporarily closes certain streets to all but local traffic, giving Tucsonans more space to safely walk, bike, and run…The project consists of [many steps leading to] decisions on permanent traffic calming solutions less than $20,000 [and] **installation of permanent traffic calming solutions**."

-UA Cooperative Extension, Nutritional Sciences (CENS)
(Read Story #5 in Appendix F for more.)

Image credit: Tucson.com

The Empower Program

P - S - E | Getting Started - Making Changes - Sustaining Impact

Spectrum of Prevention: Strengthening Individual Knowledge and Skills, Educating Providers, Changing Organizational Practices, Influencing Policy and Legislation

Empower is a voluntary statewide intervention embedded in the early care and education (ECE) **system**. It encourages ECE providers to have written policies for each of the ten health standards, then implement best practices at their sites to shape environments that support child development and quality care. It is currently a requirement for participation in Quality First with First Things First, and as part of the DES contracts for facilities to receive Child Care Development Funds.

Empower has ten health and nutrition standards and accompanying components. The ten standards cover a range of topics impacting young children's health and safety while in the provider's care. Providers complete annual self-assessments to identify needs and opportunities for quality improvement. When providers implement a standard, they write a policy, train their staff, improve practices, and educate parents. Therefore, Empower is an intervention for policy, system, and environmental changes at the site level.

- **Getting started** with Empower includes providers being aware/acknowledging the use of or posting the Empower Standards. Site(s) can then use the self assessment tool to see what practices and policies can be implemented to improve the environment and system of care for children.

- **Making changes** includes identifying and selecting components of each standard for improvement. Practices would then be put into place to make sure there is consistency, this would include staff development requirements to take Empower LMS courses in the registry. Providers would also be encouraged to join a learning collaborative led by local agencies to share resources and discuss challenges with others doing similar work in their communities.

- **Sustaining impacts** occur when the components chosen would be written into the providers/ site policy and the practices are implemented as part of normal operations including communicating with families about each policy and standard annually.

Supporting actions include training providers; coordinating with other programs and TA providers to ensure implementation of all ten standards and avoid duplication of services; engaging families in policy writing and implementation; facilitating learning collaboratives; attending and hosting community health events; and providing taste tests and cooking classes that model positive mealtime experiences.

Relationships	Cultural Considerations and Adaptations
To ensure the success of Empower, build and sustain relationships with directors, staff and families of ECE centers, family childcare sites, and group homes. Engage Workforce Registry Liaisons, Local, State and Regional ECE partners (CCHCs, First Things First Regional Partnership Councils), State and local nutrition and physical activity programs, and ECE coalitions and advocacy organizations.	When implementing programs, it is crucial to consider cultural sensitivity. The following suggestions can help begin a more effective and respectful approach. Tailor programs to align with the cultural context. Collaborate with tribal leaders, community members, and elders. Ensure the program incorporates indigenous knowledge and practices. Language accessibility is key. Provide program materials in multiple languages to reach a broader audience.

"To support Estrellita Child Care's Empower goals for physical activity (PA), SNAP-Ed Yuma facilitated a two-part training on physical activity with center staff… **The center's site policy on PA was reviewed and as a result, recommendations were made to modify the policy to reflect the center's current practices, which include the changes made since receiving the PA training and technical assistance**. Due to family education being a component of Empower's PA standard, **the center also set a family engagement goal. The director requested support to coordinate a family engagement event. SNAP-Ed helped develop a short presentation for parents to explain how the center was implementing structured PA**."

-Yuma County Public Health Services District
(Read Story #6 in Appendix F for more.)

Farm to Childhood

E - S - P | Getting Started - Making Changes - Sustaining Impact

Spectrum of Prevention: Strengthening Individual Knowledge and Skills, Educating Providers, Changing Organizational Practices, Fostering Coalitions and Networks, Influencing Policy and Legislation

Farm to childhood interventions have the potential for policy, system, and environmental changes. Efforts include establishing, maintaining and sustaining indoor and outdoor gardens and local procurement efforts. A site can have a written **policy** describing the garden efforts and intended outcomes. **System** changes include adding gardening education to lesson plans, training staff on supplemental curricula, increasing the amount and frequency of fruits and vegetables served to children, purchasing seeds or produce from local farmers, and using harvested produce to feed children during the day and families outside of care hours. Gardens innately change the **environment** of a childhood site. A garden improves air quality, provides enriching learning opportunities, adds to the site's aesthetic, promotes movement of varying intensity, and creates access to nutrient-dense foods.

- **Getting started** includes gardening classes, taste testing garden produce, meeting farmers, and home gardening projects.

- **Making changes** focuses on systematic components of gardening. Changes include creating garden advisory committees, providing stipends for garden leaders, certifying your school garden to utilize produce in the cafeteria, and utilizing farm to fork or other local procurement methods.

- **Sustaining impact** occurs when local wellness policies include garden efforts and have support from administration, when sites regularly sustain integration of produce in meals from school gardens or local farmers. Sites may use produce for school meals, school farmers markets, or school food pantries. Additionally, procuring produce for school meals from local farmers is a profound **systems** change. Creating a self sustaining cycle with your garden that includes raising funds from produce and composting is an ideal model.

Supporting actions include direct education, taste tests, food demonstrations, and coordinating or attending school and community health events.

Relationships	Cultural Considerations and Adaptations
Relationships needed for ECE efforts include center/family child care/group home directors, staff, and families; the Arizona Farm to School Network; and the Farm to ECE Work Group. The relationships necessary for school efforts include the superintendent, principal, and school staff including teachers, custodians, and food service, and the Arizona Farm to School Network. To improve impact, involving students and parents/caretakers is encouraged. So is working with Master Gardeners, 4-H, nearby community gardens, and local farmers.	Establishing a childhood garden requires careful consideration of cultural aspects. Cultivating indigenous plants, chosen for their cultural significance, establishes a connection between the garden and traditional practices. Collaborating with tribal elders, community members, and local experts ensures the garden aligns with traditional agricultural methods. Teaching lessons on traditional planting, harvesting, and cultivation techniques provides families and children with valuable cultural knowledge.

"For the DE in Duncan Public Schools, each grade has had the opportunity to have at least one gardening activity experience. I do my best to **make the activity supplement or match up with the lessons in the curriculum** being implemented for each grade… **The students filled out a survey early in the semester to indicate what things they'd like to learn about gardening this year**."

-UA Cooperative Extension, Greenlee County
(Read [Story #7](#) in Appendix F for more.)

"[We] supported a tribal Head Start program with environmental changes that included a garden expansion, improved nutrition and feeding practices, and overall alignment with Empower standards. **[We] aided in adding a cultural context to the garden** by assisting with the installation of native language artwork, signs, and labels in the native Yoeme language, Spanish, and English. CEPC also provided technical assistance in choosing the location and layout of the expansion of the garden, including the addition of a traditional "milpa" (in-ground garden)... [We also] coordinated with community partners such as the Pima County Seed Libraries to provide seeds directly for the families served at the center… **[We] provided technical assistance for an outdoor classroom** and a multi-faucet hand-washing station to ensure hygiene and food safety of gardening activities. **The additional educational environment has strengthened the garden's multi-purpose emphasis**."

-UA Cooperative Extension, Pima County (CEPC)
(Read [Story #8](#) in Appendix F for more.)

"At Liberty Elementary, there is a school garden with some beds being used at capacity and others not used at all. After meeting with the Physical Education coach … **[we] offered assistance with the already operating garden beds [and] provided seeds for vegetables and the Vegetable Planting Calendar for Maricopa County**… Liberty Elementary is also **interested in exploring the possibility of using vegetables from the garden in the cafeteria**, therefore we provided resources like School Garden Program Guidelines (from ADHS) and shared an example of the work VH Lassen Elementary (in South Phoenix) has done with the produce of their school garden. Liberty Elementary realizes that they do not produce enough fruits and vegetables to start the process but will continue to explore the possibility."

-UA Cooperative Extension, Maricopa County

"We used community meetings and strong partnerships to connect the Palominas School District with Echoing Hope Ranch to **establish the first Farm to School initiative in the community**. The AZ Health Zone facilitated meetings of Palominas nutrition services staff and AmeriCorps at Echoing Hope, and we assisted in developing a Farm to School project in which the district would purchase locally grown, fresh produce from Echoing Hope to integrate into school meals. With the assistance of the Building Healthy Communities program and Arizona Department of Education, **we provided Palominas and Echoing Hope with contract models, regulations, and guidelines for purchasing and serving local foods**. Palominas nutrition services now has an established contract with the Echoing Hope Ranch and serves youth fresh, local produce every Friday – they call it 'Farm Fresh Fridays.'"

-UA Cooperative Extension, Cochise County

Farmers, Growers, and Food Producers

S - P - E | Making Changes - Sustaining Impact

Spectrum of Prevention: Fostering Coalitions and Networks, Changing Organizational Practices, Influencing Policy and Legislation

AZ Health Zone supports local food producers with accessing market opportunities in SNAP-Ed eligible communities. This type of support often leads to **systems** changes like a farm stand accepting SNAP benefits. Your team can advocate for **policy** changes that help Arizona farmers and food businesses develop local food supply chains. Examples of **environmental** changes are stores selling local produce and farmers acquiring land.

- **Make changes** by assisting a local farm with becoming authorized to accept SNAP benefits at their farm stand, hosting a SNAP Sign-Up event with USDA FNS for food producers to learn about accepting SNAP and get help with their applications, or supporting a small grower in starting to sell their produce at a farmers market on your site list.

- **Sustaining impact** looks like convening and facilitating meetings for local farmers to explore ways of improving Arizonans' food security or supporting producers to incorporate SNAP-Ed eligible sites into their business models.

Supporting actions include tabling at community events and providing food demonstrations.

Relationships	Cultural Considerations and Adaptations
Of course, relationships with local farmers, growers, and food producers are first in this area. If you don't already know growers in the area, check with the county extension office about events for small farmers or 'specialty crop' producers. Pinnacle Prevention and Local First Arizona are two organizations to become familiar with. Events like the Arizona Food and Farm Forum and the Arizona Food Summit can put you in touch with other groups and individuals with similar goals. Also, look for grower cooperatives in the region and other groups doing agriculture education.	Farmers and food producers in Arizona come from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. In urban areas, groups like the International Rescue Committee support refugee farmers. Make programming more accessible by budgeting for translators and interpreters. According to the 2012 USDA Census of Agriculture, "Native American operators run more than half of all farms across Arizona. These farms cover almost 21 million acres of land, which is nearly 80% of all land in farms for Arizona" (The Changing Faces in Arizona's Food System). Learn about current issues faced by food producers such as land access, water rights, and drought conditions. Recognize how history has shaped who owns, operates, and works on farms. The USDA researches and administers programs for socially disadvantaged, beginning, limited-resource, and female farmers and ranchers (USDA ERS).

"[We have] been actively engaged in support of Ndee Bikiyaa, The People's Farm, to support their agribusiness efforts within the community. Two workshops were held at the farm… **The first was related to the use of social media to increase community awareness of the available farmers/growers, the farm, and the farm stand as a local source of produce. The second workshop was related to soil and irrigation**. [We] coordinated both events, provided technical assistance during the events, and provided related resources and materials to the attendees… In addition, we were invited to help with the planning of the Harvest Festival [and including] neighboring tribal practices. [We] will **help to coordinate with our colleagues from the Hopi and Navajo tribes and help the planning committee to work out logistics related to the event**."

-UA Cooperative Extension, Navajo County
(Read Story #9 in Appendix F for more.)

"[We] hosted a series of two urban agriculture workshops geared toward growers looking to sell to the public. **The first workshop "Bringing Your Produce to Market," taught participants what they need to know before heading to the farmers market**. We partnered with Pinnacle Prevention to share about Farmer's Market Nutrition Program, Double Up Food Bucks, and accepting Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) transactions… **The second workshop served as an introduction to food safety and post-harvest management**. As we start to encourage local growers to partner with schools to promote Farm to School Practices, it is important for farmers to consider food safety practices. The workshop was held at our UA MCCE office at a post-harvest demonstration area."

-UA Cooperative Extension, Maricopa County
(Read Story #10 in Appendix F for more.)

Farmers Markets

P - S - E | Getting Started - Making Changes - Sustaining Impact

Spectrum of Prevention: Educating Providers, Changing Organizational Practices Promoting Community Education

Farmers market interventions focus on supporting partners to increase benefit redemption at markets. Farmers markets choose to participate in various nutrition assistance benefit programs. Benefit programs include the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Double Up Food Bucks Arizona, and the Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP). Farmers markets choosing to participate take many steps to accept the benefits.

First, a market applies to become authorized to accept the benefit (a **policy** change). Next, the market changes their **systems** to incorporate the benefit as a form of payment. Systems may relate to vendor management, accounting, information booths, volunteer training, and marketing. The market also needs to acquire the necessary infrastructure and materials to process the new payment type. **Environmental** examples include point of sale machines, mobile devices, laptops, wi-fi, coupons, tokens, receipts, and vendor logs. Consider supporting a market at any or all of these stages of change. After a market is successfully accepting benefits, your team may continue to provide support. Continued support often includes outreach and promotion of markets participating in SNAP, Double Up, and/or FMNP.

- **Getting started** looks like doing promotion to increase redemption of SNAP, Double Up, or FMNP at a farmers market. Consider training staff at nearby sites, like senior centers and DES offices, to promote the farmer market(s) and the accepted benefits.

- **Making changes** often looks like supporting a market with the steps to accept SNAP, Double Up, or FMNP. Another example is helping partners establish a new farmers market in a community. More intensive promotion efforts can create significant change as well. Consider sending farmers market mailers to SNAP-eligible zip codes or creating a robust media campaign.

- **Sustaining impact** looks like creating long-term solutions to address barriers. One example is training and coordinating farmers market navigators to assist new SNAP customers in your region. Another is starting a SFMNP 'proxy program' where volunteers go to farmers markets to shop for seniors who aren't able to get there.

Supporting actions include tabling at a farmers market and providing taste tests or food demonstrations. Note: AZ Health Zone plays a supporting role in increasing benefit redemption. To avoid duplication of other federal programs, we do not issue or redeem benefits.

Relationships	Cultural Considerations and Adaptations
The most important relationships are with market managers, vendors, volunteers, and customers. A contact at USDA FNS is helpful when working with markets who want to start accepting SNAP. Similarly, contacts at Pinnacle Prevention can assist if you are recruiting markets to participate in Double Up or FMNP. For SNAP and Double Up promotion, it's helpful to know someone at local DES offices. For FMNP promotion, it's good to know the staff at nearby food pantries distributing CSFP boxes and someone at local WIC clinics.	Contribute to a more welcoming market by working towards a simple method for customers to use benefits. Make sure market vendors and volunteers can provide assistance, too. It's important to have translated materials, especially to explain how benefits are redeemed and what products they can be used to buy. Consider surveying SNAP and FMNP customers about food and dietary preferences. Then, share this information with market managers, vendors, and potential vendors. Some markets have arts and crafts, music, food trucks, and activities. In this case, look for artists and businesses from cultural backgrounds representative of the SNAP population in the area.

"[We] successfully partnered with three home visitation programs, one family agency, and one rural healthcare system **by providing education about the local farmers markets, how and when to use WIC FMNP, SNAP- EBT, and Double Up Bucks**. These presentations led to rich discussions about access, awareness, and affordability… [We have] also been partnering with the local WIC office [and connecting] regularly **to discuss outreach efforts, community feedback, and promote the live food demonstration** [we do] using Farmers Market ingredients. [We]communicate regularly via phone and email with the local WIC director **to ensure there are clear understandings about the benefits and identified needs/challenges**."

-UA Cooperative Extension, Cochise County
(Read Story #11 in Appendix F for more.)

"Through informal conversations with Tucson House residents, 80 percent of whom are seniors, staff at Tucson C.A.R.E.S. and the AZ Health Zone CENS learned that transportation was a significant barrier to their participation in the FMNP. The AZ Health Zone CENS and Tucson C.A.R.E.S. **developed a pilot FMNP proxy program that provided volunteer proxies for seniors who wanted to participate in the FMNP but who didn't have the ability to get to the farmers market**. With a signed consent form from the FMNP participant, the proxy collected their FMNP coupons, valued at $50, from the farmers' market information booth and used them to purchase Arizona-grown produce. Then, the proxy delivered that produce to the participant. The pilot program provided proxies to eight seniors at Tucson House and delivered $50 worth of Arizona-grown produce to them over the course of two weeks."

-UA Cooperative Extension, Nutritional Sciences (CENS)
(Read Story #12 in Appendix F for more.)

Food Stores

E - S - P | Getting Started - Making Changes - Sustaining Impacts

Spectrum of Prevention: Changing Organizational Practices, Educating Providers, Promoting Community Education, Fostering Coalitions and Networks, Influencing Policy and Legislation

Food retail interventions occur at various types of stores. Store types include convenience, corner, and country stores, grocery stores, and supermarkets. **Environmental** changes increase the availability, appeal, and promotion of nutrient-dense food products. Systems changes often make the environmental changes possible. Examples include vendor selections, product stocking plans, and marketing decisions. Site-level policy changes also support and sustain environmental store changes. Some examples are updating standard operating procedures or revising store layout documents. There are also opportunities for community-level **policy** changes related to food stores.

- **Get started** by consulting with store managers to identify one or two easy changes to make. Table at stores to gather customer feedback about potential new items. Then, work with the store to add at least one new product to their inventory. Add a produce basket near one of the checkout lanes. Place a card rack with healthy recipes near whole grain options.

- **Make changes** by helping the store increase availability, appeal, and promotion of healthier foods. Availability is a store's inventory of nourishing food products. An example of availability support is assisting a store owner with sourcing more whole grain items. Appeal is the positioning and placement of food products. An example of an appeal support is making a plan to move healthy choices to the front of the store or near the checkout. Promotion is the marketing inside stores that encourages healthy purchasing. An example of a promotion support is installing point of purchase prompts or other signage. Food retail work is most successful when a combination of availability, appeal and promotion changes occur.

- **Sustain impact** by working across many store sites. One example is starting a professional network for store owners and managers making changes at their businesses. Another is launching a healthy retail certification program in a city or town. Consider advocating for policies incentivizing stores for adapting their business practices. Work with a chain retailer who can make changes across multiple store locations.

Supporting actions include teaching direct education at a store or nearby sites; distributing materials to stores; providing in-store taste tests, food demos, and cooking classes; and promoting your organization's classes and projects at stores.

Relationships	Cultural Considerations and Adaptations
Key relationships in healthy retail work are with store owners, managers, staff, and customers. Building relationships with upper management is fundamental to success at larger chain stores. Suppliers, distributors, adjacent business owners, and influential community members can support as well. If you don't have a background in the grocery or business, start by reaching out to college business programs and retailers associations. You can learn basics about business models and vocabulary.	Learn who the most common shoppers are at specific stores and where the families you want to reach shop for their food. For various reasons, people don't necessarily buy most of their groceries at the store closest to where they live. In rural and remote areas, it's common to travel outside of the community on a regular basis to shop for food. Understanding the development of food stores in a community over time can also provide helpful insights to your work. Take extra time and effort to build your team's cultural literacy and historical knowledge. Expect complexities in navigating customer perceptions, neighborhood dynamics, food marketing, and vendor relationships. Culturally-appropriate community engagement ensures changes are wanted and accepted by customers. As a result, interventions are more likely to be profitable, and therefore, sustainable for the store.

"The store selected an employee to lead [the Healthy Check-Out Lane] project and is responsible for maintaining the lane with healthy food choices. This lane is now sustainable and CEGC offers technical assistance on an as-needed basis."

- UA Cooperative Extension, Graham County
(Read Story #13 in Appendix F for more.)

"The [store] owners stated that they have goals to refresh the exterior of their store with new paint, signage, front door and illuminated sign (damaged).... We ordered a new Healthy Starts Here rainproof corrugated sign (Swahili/English) and contacted Pinnacle Prevention to order a new Double Up sign to replace the one that was faded… In addition, new shelving was provided for the display of fruits and vegetables near the checkout area.

- Maricopa County Department of Public Health
(Read Story #14 in Appendix F for more.)

Go NAPSACC

P - S - E | Getting Started - Making Changes - Sustaining Impact

Spectrum of Prevention: Strengthening Individual Knowledge and Skills, Educating Providers, Changing Organizational Practices, Influencing Policy and Legislation

Go NAPSACC (Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care) is a tool for early care and education (ECE) providers and educators. The goal is to improve the health of children ages birth to five years old. It includes changing **systems** through the integration of new practices, **updating policies**, and ultimately improving the early care **environments**. Improvements can be identified through assessments and applied by following the seven module tool with corresponding resources, tips, materials, training, reports, and a self-assessment.

- **Getting started** with Go NAPSACC might look like a provider enrolling, selecting a module, and completing the self-assessment to find areas for improvement.

- **Making changes** is when a provider utilizes the action planning tool with the support of a TA consultant and takes action to change or implement improvements. Providers would also be encouraged to join a learning collaborative led by local agencies to share resources and discuss challenges with others doing similar work in their communities.

- **Sustaining impacts** occur when the provider has reassessed the progress after implementation and the five step improvement cycle is complete for the module. These practices can then be written into policy and regularly reassessed to maintain compliance. The provider can initiate the next module and self assessment, and would sustain this process until all modules have been completed.

Supporting actions include coordinating with other program and TA providers to ensure support with all modules and avoid duplication of services; engaging families in policy writing and implementation; facilitating learning collaboratives; hosting community health events; providing taste tests; and starting active living initiatives.

Relationships	Cultural Considerations and Adaptations
To ensure the success of Go NAPSACC, build and sustain relationships with directors, staff and families of ECE centers, family childcare sites, and group homes. Engage Workforce Registry Liaisons, Local, State and Regional ECE partners (CCHCs, First Things First Regional Partnership Councils), State and local nutrition and physical activity programs, and ECE coalitions and advocacy organizations.	When implementing programs, it is crucial to consider cultural sensitivity. The following suggestions can help begin a more effective and respectful approach. Tailor programs to align with the cultural context. Collaborate with tribal leaders, community members, and elders. Ensure the program incorporates indigenous knowledge and practices. Language accessibility is key. Provide program materials in multiple languages to reach a broader audience.

"[Our] project focused on developing quality ECE programming and children's health as a foundation for life-long success through learning collaboratives and the use of GO NAPSACC… **The [two] centers completed pre assessments, set and accomplished goals, and showed improvements had been made through the results of post assessments. SNAP-Ed and CCHC staff conducted the training, coordinated check-ins with centers between training to provide technical assistance, and support the implemented changes**. SNAP-Ed supported achievement of the following goals… 1) Teachers incorporate planned nutrition education into their classroom routines 1 time per week or more… 2) Toddlers are provided 90 minutes or more for indoor and outdoor physical activity each day… 3) Teachers and staff receive professional development on infant feeding and nutrition 2 times per year or more."

-Maricopa County Department of Public Health
(Read)

Local Wellness Policies and Wellness Committees

P - S - E | Getting Started - Making Changes - Sustaining Impact

Spectrum of Prevention: Fostering Coalitions and Networks, Influencing Policy and Legislation, Changing Organizational Practices

A local wellness policy (LWP) is a formal document required by USDA for schools enrolled in the National School Lunch or Breakfast program. The policy must cover topics including food service operations, smart snacks, competitive foods, health education, recess, and more, but is not comprehensive of all health and wellness initiatives. Due to these requirements, local wellness policy is a **policy** change that impacts **systems** and **environments**.

A Wellness Committee is the governing body of the Local Wellness Committee and other health and wellness initiatives. The wellness committee or SHAC (School Health Advisory Council) occurs at the district level, though school sites may have their own committees to assist in ensuring policy implementation.

- **Getting started** with LWP and SHAC work includes communicating with the food service director or superintendent to locate the LWP, learn about when it was last revised, when it's next triennial assessment from the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) is due, and if there is an active SHAC. These answers lead to an initial assessment of the written policy called the WellSAT3.0, and the creation or support of an existing SHAC.

- **Making changes** includes updates to the LWP based on the results of the WellSAT3.0 or other assessments that were utilized, or any implementation initiatives that come from the SHAC. Additionally, making sure the policies in the LWP are being implemented at multiple or all sites in the district is highly important.

- **Sustaining impacts** includes presenting the updated LWP to the School Board for adoption. Other activities in this category are secondary revisions for a cycle or improvement, create SHACs at individual site levels to propel the work of the LWP and create other site-specific policies and wellness initiatives, and of course, include a lot of collaboration from students, caretakers, and community partners at all levels.

Supporting actions include providing direct education on nutrition and physical activity to support health initiatives; coordinating and attending school health or community health events; and providing taste tests and cooking classes.

Relationships	Cultural Considerations and Adaptations
At minimum, relationships for LWP work include the superintendent and food service manager. If the district has the capacity, they can expand their policy work into a wellness committee/SHAC. The wellness committee should include school administration, food service, teachers, vendors, and contractors. It should also include students and parents/caretakers. This work can expand into the community by including residents in the district and local organizations interested in school health.	When developing local wellness policies, incorporate cultural considerations to respect and align with the community's values. This may involve integrating traditional foods and incorporating traditional physical activities. Collaborate closely with the tribal community to ensure culture sensitivity in all aspects of the LWP.

"After sharing the WellSAT 3.0 results and recommendations, the council has been working through guidance and comparing the local wellness policy against best practices. Discussions have included topics the district excels at and opportunities for growth from student and parent input. **[We] facilitated great discussion between administration, students, and parents/ caretakers [and] shared best practices and policy verbiage to include in the updated policy**. The council comprises a variety of individuals representing multiple community sectors, including the school principal, food service director, Parent Teacher Association (PTA) weekend backpack food coordinator, parents, teachers, students, and public health. [We have] collaborated with the school **to promote and encourage participation in the council by sharing details during PTA, Grand Canyon Wellness Coalition, and Tusayan Community Awareness meetings and distributing flyers during community** events like the Grand Canyon School PTA Book and Health Fair."

-Coconino County Health and Human Services Department
(Read Story #16 in Appendix F for more.)

At Gadsden District, [we] conducted six sessions of approved AZ Health Zone curriculum to three 2nd grade classrooms and three 4th grade classrooms at Ed Pastor, and four sessions of approved AZ Health Zone curriculum to one combo 3rd/4th grade classroom at AZ Desert. **These curricula complement our work with Gadsden on their LWP and implementation of district-wide school gardens and nutrition initiatives**. Students are learning about plant growth and nutrition through hands-on gardening, food prep/cooking and tasting activities.

-Yuma County Public Health Services District

Nutrition Pantry Program

E - P - S | Getting Started - Making Changes

Spectrum of Prevention: Changing Organizational Practices, Promoting Community Education, Educating Providers

The Nutrition Pantry Program (NPP) is a trauma-informed intervention designed by Leah's Pantry. NPP supports food pantries and food distributions with **environmental**, **policy**, and **systems** changes. Local agency staff complete the 'NPP for Implementers Training' to become certified implementers. Then, they work with food pantry staff to put NPP in place at their sites. NPP begins with building relationships and conducting an assessment including gathering client feedback. NPP implementers work with food pantries on a custom work plan for their desired PSE changes. Pantries can graduate from the program. They also have the option to certify their site at the bronze, silver, or gold-level.

- Complete the NPP training (provided by AZ Health Zone) and become a certified NPP Implementer. Recruit an interested pantry to **get started** by building their awareness of the NPP model and their interest in PSE changes. Next, plan to gather client feedback and assess the food pantry's current operations.

- **Making changes** starts with the AZ Health Zone and pantry staff co-developing a work plan for desired changes. A comprehensive NPP toolkit is available to spark a variety of PSE change ideas. An NPP library of resources provides details on how to make them happen. The work plan is a living document. Revise it at any time based on lessons learned, staff capacity, and current priorities. The PSE changes in NPP work plans fall into seven focus areas.

Supporting actions include providing direct education to pantry clients, distributing materials at pantry sites, and offering taste tests, food demos, and cooking classes.

NPP Focus Areas

- **Client Feedback**
- **Community Connections**
- **Nutrition Education**
- **Environment**
- **Inventory and Waste Reduction**
- **Cultural and Dietary Accommodations**
- **Policies and Procedures**

Relationships	Cultural Considerations and Adaptations
Develop relationships with food pantry directors, staff, volunteers, and clients. The NPP Implementers training emphasizes building trusting relationships before starting NPP work. Leah's Pantry hosts quarterly calls and other opportunities for certified NPP implementers. Getting to know someone at Leah's Pantry can also help your efforts. Lastly, contacts at the regional food bank in the area and the Arizona Food Bank Network are valuable. Food bank staff can advise throughout the NPP process. Potential examples include educating your team about food banking and identifying interested pantries. They can also help with technical questions and systems challenges like sourcing.	NPP prioritizes people's experiences, backgrounds, strengths, challenges, needs, and wants. This person-centered model encourages customization. Tailor work plans to the unique populations, cultures, and social factors at each food pantry. Also, check out the NPP Cultural and Dietary Accommodations focus area. It is defined as "people of all backgrounds having access to food and information fitting their preferences and health needs." Some examples are providing translated materials, culturally-relevant foods, and uncomplicated ways to serve people with special diets (Leah's Pantry, NPP Leading Practices by Focus Area).

"CCHHS staff provided nutrition training during the [volunteer appreciation] event to **build capacity amongst board members and volunteers, including facilitating the 'Meaning of Food in Life Questionnaire**' as presented in the Leah's Pantry Nutrition Pantry Program. This questionnaire was new to participants and gave a new way to explore their relationship with food and what that might look like for participants. This led to a **rich discussion of how we can effectively serve our pantry participants with compassion and empathy while meeting their nutritional needs**."

- Coconino County Health and Human Services
(Read Story #17 in Appendix F for more.)

"[The food bank team] is concentrating on **completing some of the simpler tasks while continuing to make progress on pieces that support larger changes**. Desert Mission staff formed a Nutrition Pantry Program committee… The Desert Mission nutrition team and staff from the food bank are making sure this is a collaborative project and are holding each other accountable… **The creation of the subcommittee is helping to overcome challenges and develop excitement and buy-in as a team**."

- Desert Mission Food Bank, Maricopa County Department of Public Health
(Read Story #18 in Appendix F for more.)

Park Improvements and Usability

S - E | Getting Started - Making Changes - Sustaining Impact

Spectrum of Prevention: Educating Providers, Changing Organizational Practices

AZ Health Zone increases physical activity by supporting safe and equitable access to parks. Parks provide spaces to be physically active, foster connections, and host social support groups. Park improvements include collaboration between residents, partners, parks departments, and public land agencies. Social support networks can provide input on park improvements and lead larger initiatives like Park Rx. Park Prescription Programs (Park Rx) are initiatives with health and social service organizations to prescribe outdoor physical activity to improve well-being. Hosting social support networks at parks provides a foundation for ongoing work. **Environmental** changes are made with the improvement of park infrastructure, safety, and accessibility. By shifting prescribing practices, Park Rx introduces **systems** changes in healthcare settings.

- **Get started** by engaging with residents to identify strengths and needed improvements to a park. Then, bring this feedback to the local parks and recreation department. For example, Physical Activity Resource Assessments (PARA) allow park users to gauge the current conditions of a park. PARA results can then guide next steps for improvements.

- **Make changes** by securing funding and implementing improvements to infrastructure, safety, and accessibility. Park improvements include shade structures over playgrounds, increased lighting, and accessible ground coverings. Additionally, create and provide community advocacy training to support PARA changes.

- **Sustain impact** by engaging park users, the parks and recreation department, and other stakeholders in broader built environment goals. Examples include identifying barriers to walking or biking to the park or reducing speed limits on streets adjacent to the park. Sustaining impact also includes making changes to more parks and physical activity resources in the area.

Supporting actions include direct education, taste tests, food demonstrations, and active living programming, and community health events.

Relationships	Cultural Considerations and Adaptations
Building relationships with residents is pre-work to the improvement of parks and trails. Those relationships tell us about the needs and wants for the community. Parks and recreation staff members can help with identifying the right grants for the desired improvements. Grant coordinators can assist with how to apply for them. There are also trails plans for AZ State Parks with priorities that may help with getting trails developed and enhanced.	Implementing park improvements with cultural considerations is vital for ensuring effectiveness and inclusivity. It is crucial to tailor Park Rx to reflect diverse cultural preferences and traditions within a community. This involves engaging community leaders and members to contribute their insights. Language accessibility is key. Provide program materials in many languages to reach a broader audience. Initiatives should be designed to align with cultural practices and integrate indigenous knowledge.

"The Park Rx of Mountain View has inspired more community-led activities, extending into a community garden group and tree planting. The physical activity programs occur regularly [at the park] **in coordination with community-based activity leaders**… The program is finding more **connections to health care providers to recruit more residents** in need of no-cost physical activity programming."

-Maricopa County Department of Public Health Administration
(Read Story #19 in Appendix F for more.)

"We collaborated with the church to i**nstall signs and reflectors in a new walking path**. During the installation, church representatives, AZ Health Zone staff, and the [County] Supervisor discussed adding a drinking fountain to the park. The Supervisor provided the church with grant opportunities for funding, and earlier this month **the drinking fountain was installed**."

-UA Cooperative Extension, Pinal County
(Read Story #20 in Appendix F for more.)

"[A highly active member of the Maryvale community] championed a clean-up event that gave residents the opportunity to provide feedback, connect with local politicians, and learn about the PARA. Soon after, **a community-engaged PARA offered residents the chance to envision park improvements** alongside a local councilwoman who co-completed the assessment. **Subsequent park renovations, already slated for 2023, addressed some community concerns** and created momentum for future advocacy work."

-UA Cooperative Extension, Maricopa County
(Read Story #21 in Appendix F for more.)

Physical Activity Integration

S - P | Getting Started - Making Changes

Spectrum of Prevention: Strengthening Individual Knowledge and Skills, Changing Organization Practices, Influencing Policy and Legislation

Brain breaks and energizers are a **systems** change intervention. AZ Health Zone staff provide professional development to school staff on the importance of physical activity and ways to incorporate it into classroom activities. The goal is to allow children to "give their brain a break" by moving their body which improves cognitive function and enhances behavioral and academic outcomes. Brain breaks are also a **policy** change if written into local wellness or state policy.

Physical activity clubs implemented before or after school, on a daily or weekly basis are a **systems** change that creates physical activity opportunities and can be written into **policy**. They also provide opportunities for community coordination.

- Providing professional development on brain breaks and energizers is **getting started**. Teachers may implement these practices in the classroom.

- If the use of physical activity has been written into policy and/or classroom expectations and is implemented in the classroom regularly, then it is considered **making changes**. Implementing physical activity clubs, when there were not any prior, on a regular basis is also considered making changes and should be written into the local wellness policy and budgeted for annually.

Supporting actions include providing direct education on nutrition and physical activity to support student knowledge; coordinating and attending school health or community health events; providing physical activity events; and supporting other aspects of staff development and environmental changes to promote physical activity.

Relationships	Cultural Considerations and Adaptations
Relationships needed for brain breaks and energizers are with school staff, principals, and superintendents. Physical activity clubs benefit from administrator, staff, parent, and student involvement. Also, consider involvement from community organizations interested in physical activity.	Brain breaks should be designed with considerations from different cultural aspects. One way to do this is opting for inclusive and culturally-sensitive activities.

"At Amphitheater High School, **two teachers attended an in-person facilitation of the TTT(train-the-trainer) titled Brain Energizers** aimed at incorporating physical activity into breaks and content-focused activities in the classroom… Amphitheater High School offers **unified basketball and cheer teams, which provide inclusive opportunities for students with and without intellectual disabilities to participate in safe and structured physical activity** together… [We were] invited to attend a Special Olympics basketball tournament at the school and hosted an information booth about MyPlate food groups which students, caregivers, and student aides visited during breaks between games."

-UA Cooperative Extension, Nutritional Sciences CENS
(Read Story #22 in Appendix F for more.)

Playground Stencils

E | Getting Started

Spectrum of Prevention: Strengthening Individual Knowledge and Skills, Educating Providers, Changing Organizational Practices

AZ Health Zone Playground Stencils create an **environmental** change to encourage physical activity. School and ECE sites can use the AZ Health Zone stencils to improve the atmosphere of their playground and encourage kids to be active. The painted stencils outline games, numbers and letters.

- Playground stencils are a **getting started** intervention as they are easily implemented in a single site or organization-wide regardless of budget, space, or time limitations. Work with your site to set up a day and time to apply the stencils to the designated area. See if a local store will donate paint, or if the site has funds for paint. Apply the stencils as a fun activity for youth!

Supporting actions include coordinating or helping to host a field day or physical activity (PA) event to introduce and promote the painted playground activities; conducting community engagement activities to request parent input; and integrating nutrition activities like taste-tests, infused water, and smoothie bike demonstrations.

Relationships	Cultural Considerations and Adaptations
At minimum, the relationships required for stencils are with site staff and children/students. Consider including parents/caretakers and community partners as well. Community partners can benefit the project by donating necessary items and supplies. They can also bring the stencil intervention to other areas in the community.	When designing stencils, incorporate symbols, colors or motifs specific to the tribe's traditions and values. Respecting the cultural identity of the community in the design creates a welcoming and inclusive space for children, youth, and families.

"We were able to offer them the use of the AZ Health Zone stencils for free so they could use their grant funds elsewhere… [We] reached out to local hardware stores in the area to **request donations for the project and [were] able to secure all paint and supplies necessary** to get started."

-Mohave County Department of Public Health
(Read Story #23 in Appendix F for more.)

Regional and Municipal Transportation Plans

P - S - E | Getting Started - Making Changes - Sustaining Impact

Spectrum of Prevention: Changing Organizational Practices, Fostering Coalitions and Networks, Influencing Policy and Legislation

Transportation planning shapes formal proposals for needed infrastructure. Various disciplines come together in a collaborative and participatory process. Such as a process creates an opportunity for your team to amplify community voices. By sharing their ideas, residents can ensure plans highlight their active transportation needs. Changes in transportation plans involve **policy** decisions like new regulations or funding mechanisms. Transportation plan changes may also be incorporated into broader urban planning policies. Altering transportation plans may require modifying existing transportation **systems** or developing new ones. Lastly, plan changes may translate into safer and more accessible transportation **environments**. Better environments improve travel for people going to everyday locations in their communities. The process of changing transportation plans looks different depending on various factors. Here are some possibilities:

- Join a coalition and collect community feedback that can be provided to connect with the regional Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), or Council of Government (COG) as part of **getting started**. Consult and collaborate with residents to inquire about their needs and wants in a transportation plan. Providing advocacy training to community members will help integrate community voice into future transportation plans. For example, residents can provide feedback and photos of infrastructure hazards to ADOT on their website.

- **Making changes** includes developing a proposal and adopting it in the transportation plan. When possible, be sure to develop proposals with the various partners described above and as part of a coalition.

- **Sustaining impact** occurs after the proposed transportation plan ideas start being implemented. Continue working with partners such as ADOT, MPO, or COG to consider other built environment projects. This can include the Complete Streets principles or bike share programs.

Supporting actions include direct education, community health events, and advocacy training for community members.

Relationships	Cultural Considerations and Adaptations
Relationships with the regional DOT, MPO, local government, and transit operators are needed. People impacted by the infrastructure are also ideal to build relationships with. They have lived experience with transportation in their community. Another important relationship is with local businesses in the area you are trying to change. They see community members everyday, and improved plans could help their customers and employees. Take local businesses' concerns into account when meeting with MPOs.	Start by acknowledging the diverse needs and preferences within various communities. One example is the differences between urban, suburban, rural, remote, and wilderness areas. Involve community members in planning, and ensure accessibility for everyone. This is especially important when working with tribal communities. Additionally, be mindful of common cultural practices. Consider the environmental impact of transportation projects in alignment with tribal cultural values.

"[Our community partner, Chispa Arizona,] hosted a meeting for the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), offering information and taking community comments on the goals of the regional transportation plan update known as MAG Momentum. This plan determines regional transportation funding allocations and priorities for 20+ years. Attendees included community members such as leaders of the Si Se Puede Neighborhood Association (SSPNA). **Prior to the meeting, our SNAP-Ed staff provided SSPNA leaders with a MAG orientation and how it tied into the SSPNA's community transportation goals. With this preparation, the SSPNA could confidently navigate the MAG meeting topics and their goals**."

-Maricopa County Department of Public Health

Shared Use

P - S | Making Changes - Sustaining Impact

Spectrum of Prevention: Strengthening Individual Knowledge and Skills, Promoting Community Education, Educating Providers, Changing Organizational Practices, Fostering Coalitions and Networks

Shared use is a written agreement between one or more entities. Entities can include government agencies, private organizations, and nonprofit organizations. Shared use agreements aim to open or broaden access to recreational resources for community use. As a result, they also maximize the use of existing recreational resources. A common example of shared use is a high school track and field being open for public use after school hours. Shared use can also create physical activity opportunities at parks, gardens, walking trails, and pools. Even faith-based facilities, meeting rooms, and performance spaces can be shared. Adoption of a shared use agreement shifts or introduces a **policy** such as facilities use policies or open use policies. Systems changes, like adjusting facility roles and responsibilities, bolster shared use policies.

- **Making changes** includes a site adopting a shared use agreement to share recreational space and resources. For example, your team convenes school district stakeholders, parents, students, and community residents. This group of people explores mutually beneficial relationships around a shared use agreement. Then, they collaboratively develop the agreement and adopt the policy change.

- **Sustaining impact** looks like local-level policy changes. By working with a coalition and government entities, such as the MPO or COG, community planning documents can include shared use. Shared use agreements can also open the opportunity for larger PSE initiatives to promote active living. Which initiatives would depend on the needs of community residents. Some examples are a bikeshare program or social support networks.

Supporting activities include training on advocacy and physical activity for site partners, community members, and local businesses to create a shared understanding of the importance of shared spaces.

Relationships	Cultural Considerations and Adaptations
Build relationships with Boys and Girls Clubs, community centers, and schools. Think about organizations with greenspaces, gyms, and other physical activity resources, and overall creating a diverse stakeholder group including property owners, community users, and business owners.	Implementation of PSE changes requires careful cultural considerations. Respect for traditions and collaboration with tribal leaders is important. Understanding and respecting their values and norms is also key. To ensure PSE changes align with the cultural context, involve many different people in making decisions. For example, include community members, tribal elders, tribal healers, and tribal government.

"[Sí Se Puede Neighborhood Association (SSPNA)] built a strong relationship with the superintendent of the Fowler Elementary School District as well as with two principals at nearby elementary schools. **The two schools made their facilities available to host trainings at these trusted sites**. SNAP-Ed funding made it possible for SSPNA to send a representative to a Photovoice training."

-Maricopa County Department of Public Health
(Read Story #24 in Appendix F for more.)

Smarter Lunchrooms Movement

E - S - P | Getting Started - Making Changes - Sustaining Impact

Spectrum of Prevention: Strengthening Individual Knowledge and Skills, Changing Organization Practices, Influencing Policy and Legislation

The Smarter Lunchrooms Movement (SLM) is primarily an **environmental** and **systems** intervention aimed at nudging children to make nutritious choices at lunch, while improving the number of reimbursable meals at lunch. The intervention includes a scorecard guiding the assessment of a cafeteria or lunchroom in a school. After completing the scorecard, partners reference a list of recommendations. Then, local agencies support lunchroom staff with choosing environmental and social marketing changes. Writing the completion of the Smarter Lunchrooms Movement into the school or district wellness creates a **policy** change.

- After receiving approval from the food service manager, assess the lunchroom during the lunch period as a way of **getting started**. Review the results of the scorecard with cafeteria staff and plan which improvements to make.

- **Making changes** occurs when the proposed improvements are implemented. The improvements that are made, the bigger the impact you make. Include students, caretakers, and other staff in discussions around improvements or in improvement projects, and the re-assessment of the lunchroom post improvement.

- **Sustaining impact** happens when SLM is written into a school district's local wellness policy and completed regularly. Consider training students, parents, caretakers, and staff to complete the scorecard and improvement cycle on their own. Encourage them to work together to find innovative solutions for the lunchroom environment.

Supporting actions include providing direct education at the school to learn about fruits, vegetables, and nutrition. Taste tests can be implemented as well as cooking demonstrations and classes. SLM also provides an opportunity for professional development to cafeteria staff. The professional development deepens understanding of behavioral economics and lunchroom changes.

Relationships	Cultural Considerations and Adaptations
For success, work on building relationships with the school and district food service managers and staff, principals, superintendents, wellness committee members and coordinators, teachers, custodians, parents, caretakers, and students.	To respect and align with the community's values, it is crucial to incorporate cultural considerations into SLM . One essential aspect is traditional foods. Featuring locally-sourced traditional foods in meals honors cultural preferences and promotes healthier options. Ensure alignment with cultural values and dietary practices by collaborating with parents, staff, and community members.

"Madison School District assesses all schools within the district with the Smarter Lunchroom Movement scorecard. **This is part of the local wellness policy for the district**, so they require every school to be assessed and show improvement by the end of the year. Of the 8 schools assessed at the beginning of this year 5 were in the gold status and 3 in the silver status. Results and recommendations from the State Evaluation Team (SET) team were shared with the food service director and cafeteria managers. **Even when a school is already in the gold status, they will make at least 1 to 2 changes this year to improve their lunchroom environment and therefore scorecard**. Throughout the school year, [we work] in collaboration with the food service director and cafeteria managers at the SNAP-Ed eligible schools to develop guidance for the school cafeterias… We will reassess schools again in May with the Smarter Lunchroom Movement scorecard."

-Maricopa County Department of Public Health
(Read Story #25 in Appendix F for more.)

Smarter Lunchrooms has a Gold, Silver, and Bronze rating system. The system helps AZ Health Zone and school staff understand how well a lunchroom is operating.

"**To make foods more appealing and boost food sales for complete reimbursable meals, the food service staff worked with [us] to create menu books that the teachers could share with students in the morning**… Menu boards were added in the lunchrooms displaying a photo of the foods with the catchy name. AZ Health Zone-CEMC provided [the school] with A-frames to display the daily menu and include photos of the foods. **In the middle/high school lunchroom, [the school] improved the variety of fruits offered and the display of the fruits**… The food service director started ordering varieties of fruits while the food service staff improved the fruit displays. The fruit displays now include pretty display bowls placed at the beginning of the service line. Serving utensils now match the food items accordingly so that the serving size is larger for items like fruits and vegetables and smaller for condiments. The food service staff added tablecloths to the entry tables and A-frames to display the entrée of the day."

-UA Cooperative Extension, Mohave County
(Read Story #26 in Appendix F for more.)

Social Support Networks

E | Getting Started - Making Changes

Spectrum of Prevention: Strengthening Individual Knowledge and Skills, Educating Providers, Fostering Coalitions and Networks

Social support networks provide a space for people to start, maintain, or increase physical activity. These supports can include walking groups or forming physical activity clubs. Successful networks provide connection, encouragement, and resources. Local agencies establish social support networks through sustainable partnerships with community organizations. Ongoing collaborations help sustain the networks. Social support networks can also empower individuals to act upon needed **environmental** changes. Changes like improvements to sidewalks, bike lanes, or parks increase access to physical activity.

- **Getting started** includes connecting with a local partner, such as a senior center or housing complex. First, gauge residents' interest in a social support network like a weekly walking or yoga club. Next, work with your partner to build long-term support and programming. Then, people in social support networks can engage in broader active living efforts mentioned above. This may also create an opportunity to complete a physical activity resource assessment (PARA).

- To **make changes**, support networks and partners to write the use of social support groups into their policies and budgets for ongoing sustainability. Ensure no and low cost opportunities for those who need the resources most. Provide training on community advocacy and leadership skills.

Supporting actions include direct education, relationship building, and active living events.

Relationships	Cultural Considerations and Adaptations
Social support networks serve a group of people, friends, family, and peers. They can be a resource for emotional and practical support. The key relationships for social support networks lie within the community members themselves. For growth and sustainability, relationships with and between the group participants are crucial. Local organizations can also aid social support networks. For example, a school could promote a network at a community event or offer space for a network to gather.	A successful social support network is developed through the eyes and voices of the community members it will serve. Incorporating their norms and values will help sustain a long-term support network. Make sure to adapt to language and other cultural practices within communities.

"We facilitated 4 sessions of the [senior] walking club [and] have actually **doubled our participation** this month. We believe this has been **due to the networking and promotion efforts** that have been implemented. [We] also taught the 4-session, Eat Smart, Live Strong curriculum at the [Casa Grande] Community Recreation Center, [and] some of these participants have also joined the walking club."

-UA Cooperative Extension, Pinal County
(Read Story #27 in Appendix F for more.)

Summer Food

S - E - P | Getting Started - Making Changes - Sustaining Impact

Spectrum of Prevention: Promoting Community Education, Educating Providers, Changing Organizational Practices, Fostering Coalitions and Networks, Influencing Policy and Legislation

Summer food work supports Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sites and sponsors. The overarching goal is to increase participation in SFSP. Working with existing sites on promotion and operations creates **systems** change. Working to establish new sites creates **environmental** change. **Policy** change is less common but possible. Examples include helping sites revise written documents and engaging in community-level advocacy.

- **Getting started** often begins by connecting with sponsors and providing promotional materials. Hosting kick-off events can raise awareness about summer food locations.

- Building relationships can lead to assisting the SFSP sponsor in using the Summer Food GIS Outreach Planner to identify underserved areas to start to **make changes**. This will lead to new potential sites. Think about places where kids and teens already go in the summer like community pools, parks, gyms, and libraries.

  - △ Assist with fundraising for mobile meal distribution to increase the number of sites. One mobile meal method is serving meals on school buses at neighborhood bus stops.

  - △ Create a community-wide media campaign to raise awareness of summer meals. Consider various media outlets like radio stations, newspapers, mailers, and billboards.

- **Sustain impact** by working with many stakeholders on community-level changes. Coalitions can support sponsors and state agencies with making significant organizational improvements and also educate & advocate about ways to increase summer food security. At the site level, encouraging sites to write policies on topics like outreach, meal quality, service length and meal frequency.

Supporting actions include providing direct education, distributing materials, and offering taste tests at summer food sites.

Relationships	Cultural Considerations and Adaptations
Develop relationships with school nutrition directors and staff, food bank staff, and other SFSP sponsors in your area. For administrative and technical questions, develop contacts at the AZ Department of Education. Connect with AZ Health Zone colleagues through the SFSP Work Group and Parent/Brand Ambassadors project. Knowing district personnel and school board members can help advocacy efforts. Reach out to press contacts such reporters, radio hosts, and journalists. Also, consider newsletter authors and admins of popular Facebook groups or other social media accounts.	Families may struggle with finding accurate information about SFSP sites and accepting help. Feeding America writes, "Summer meal programs can be hard to find, and many families don't know they're available. The best way to help is by sharing information with your neighbors about how they can get free meals during the summer if they are in need. If your family visited summer meal programs, share your story and tell people it's okay to need help sometimes." To meet families' food preferences, work on improving meal quality and variety. Use popular and trusted communication methods to reach people effectively.

"Our staff member in Payson **provided four banners which were hung on the fences at all four Payson Unified School District's schools where parents could clearly see them while picking up their kids** promoting the free summer lunch program [The school] received multiple phone calls regarding Free Meals thanks to the banners."

-Gila County Public Health Department

With the six parents from the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Parent Advisory Committee, [our] Coordinator facilitated a new project pilot called Brand Ambassadors…The **parents completed different activities in their communities such as event tabling, hanging up posters and banners at local businesses and community spaces and distributing flyers in person and on social media**. The group of moms also met once a month from May-August to debrief and discuss their promotion activities."

- UA Cooperative Extension, Maricopa County
(Read Story #28 in Appendix F for more.)

Appendices

Contents

Appendix A: Definitions

Explore definitions and concepts further in the AZ Health Zone Guidance and Policy Manual.

Health Equity: "Provides everyone a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health, such as poverty, discrimination, language barriers, and their consequences including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments and health care." (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation).

Trauma-Informed Awareness: "Encourages a systems approach to understanding the many factors that may influence an individual's readiness and/or ability to change their behaviors… thereby strengthening efforts to create the conditions that are necessary to support healthy communities, families, and children." ([FY23 AZ Health Zone Guidance and Policy Manual](#)).

Community Engagement: "A set of purposeful efforts that include consulting with, involving and/or collaborating with residents residing in a SNAP-Ed eligible community to incorporate their priorities, needs, and visions into the AZ Health Zone local agency, site and/or partner program activities and goals" (FFY23 AZ Health Zone Guidance and Policy training.) AZ Health Zone considers the following levels of the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation to be community engagement:

> **Consult:** "To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions."
>
> **Involve:** "To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered."
>
> **Collaborate:** "To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution."

The following definitions are adapted from Community Commons.

Policy Change: Policies are formal written statements created and adopted by organizations, agencies, and stakeholders and are intended to achieve specific health goals. Policy change is a tool used by communities across the country to improve population health by advancing initiatives that can affect the behaviors of entire populations more efficiently than other tools.

Systems Change: Involves transforming and redesigning the practices and structures within organizations, institutions, or networks to promote better health outcomes. Systems change addresses problems on a fundamental level and often works hand-in-hand with policy change.

Environmental Change: Involves transforming the economic, social, or physical contexts in the lived, physical environments that affect health outcomes. Environmental change strategies are often used in conjunction with other policy and system strategies to improve population health.

Direct Education: Direct education (DE) is the use of approved, evidence-based nutrition and gardening education lessons that actively engages participants through live facilitation and/or interactive multimedia. At AZ Health Zone, direct education efforts are combined with PSEs in the three focus areas (active living, childhood, and food systems) to provide a multi-level approach to health engagement. DE can be conducted in person or virtually, concentrating the learning process around participants with a person-centered approach.

Appendix B: Tips for PSE Conversations

Learning about the policies, systems, and environments of each community and site you work with can feel like a big lift if you don't know the right questions to ask. This guide provides some ideas for questions. Use them to gain a deeper understanding of the views of your communities and the operations of your sites.

Understanding Your Community - Questions to Ask

1. How does the town, city or county government operate? Is the site in an unincorporated area?
2. What are the demographics of the area? What languages are spoken? Are there neighborhood associations?
3. Look at the asset-mapping for the area and community. What needs to be updated?
4. Look into the history of the town, city or county. Are there laws or zoning that has affected work in the community?
5. Pay attention to local news and current events. What's on people's minds?
6. What is the history of the partner organization? Visit their website and read the mission/vision statement and "About Us" pages.
7. Have there been major cultural or historical events that affect the community? Explore more about a community's history through reputable resources, including documented news, published literature, and stories told by community members with lived experience.

Learning About Policies - Questions to Ask

1. Are you familiar with the policies that impact this site and your work? Can you tell me more about them?
2. What levels of policy do you work with/impact your work (federal, state, county, city, district, national, regional, administrative, local wellness policies, etc.)?
3. What's your understanding of the policies that affect health and wellness at this site?
4. Can these policies be changed or can new ones be added? Who is in charge of that?
5. What governing bodies dictate the policies that affect your work?
6. What is the process to change or add policy?
7. Have you reviewed or assessed workplace policy recently?
8. Are your policies inclusive of the local culture and norms?
9. Are these policies equitable?
10. Are community members or patrons consulted regularly on policies/changes?
11. Do you publicly share policy updates?
12. Are there policy changes you would like to make?
13. Are there any programs you would like to write into policy?
14. Are there policies you need to or would like to terminate?
15. Are you open to discussions regarding new policies or initiatives that may need policy work?
16. How can cultural sensitivity be integrated into policy-making for effective collaboration with tribal communities?

17. Are there examples of successful policy implementation that have positively impacted tribal communities?
18. How do tribal leaders and community members participate in policy-making processes?
19. How can policies be designed to promote self-determination and sovereignty for tribal communities?
20. How do tribal communities engage with federal and state policies?

Learning About Systems - Questions to Ask

1. How many layers of leadership are here?
2. Who are the decision makers?
3. Do leaders and decision makers often engage you/your team for feedback?
4. Are community members or patrons consulted regularly on decision making?
5. Is leadership receptive to community/stakeholder feedback?
6. Do you think this system is equitable?
7. Is this system inclusive of vulnerable groups and considerate of cultural norms, beliefs, and historical experiences?
8. What aspects of this system work? What aspects of this system do not work?
9. How does this system prioritize health?
10. How does your team prioritize health?
11. What can improve this system (capacity, finances, resources, policy, environment, etc.)?
12. In what ways are tribal leaders and community members involved in decision making?
13. How are tribal communities' governments structured?

Learning About Environments - Questions to Ask

1. What about the environment promotes health?
2. How does this site currently affect the community?
3. How would you like this site to impact the community?
4. What are things about this site physically or socially that you would like to improve?
5. Why do you think these improvements haven't been made yet?
6. Who is in charge of this aspect/area?
7. What about this environment physically or socially do you feel is a barrier to health?
8. What do we need to implement change here (funding, training, personnel, equipment, etc.)?
9. Have you consulted stakeholders or communities regarding this site?
10. Are you open to stakeholders or community providing feedback or being consulted through the decision making process?
11. How does the tribal community perceive and interact with the environment?
12. Are they specific policies or practices in place to protect and preserve the environmental resources vital to the tribal community?
13. What partnerships or collaboration exist between tribal communities and external entities for environmental initiatives?
14. How does the tribal community approach environmental education and awareness both within the community and external stakeholders?

Appendix C: Arizona PSE Playbook's 'Steps for PSE Work'

Steps for PSE Work table from ["Arizona PSE Playbook: Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change in Arizona Communities 2023"](#) created by Arizona State University's College Research and Evaluation Services Team and Knowledge Enterprise for the Arizona Department of Health Services Arizona Health Improvement Plan (AzHIP).

Steps for PSE Work	Examples of What to do to Accomplish Each Step
1. Engage: Build partnerships and engage the community.	• Connect with area organizations engaging in similar or adjacent work to see what works and what doesn't. • Consider what cross-sector collaborations could be beneficial and make connections. • Maintain partnerships. Continue to engage the community through consistent communication. • Keep partners engaged by helping to meet their needs within your efforts.
2. Scan: Perform environmental scans.	• Identify service gaps in the community. • Identify the external factors impacting local contexts (e.g., social, economic, and/or political factors).
3. Assess: Using available data, determine what health issues can be addressed through PSE work.	• Consult a recent county needs assessments for data on health issues or other recent, objective sources of data. Conduct a needs assessment if needed. • Develop SMARTIE objectives and goals. • Start designing the outcome, process, and impact evaluations. Be sure to include qualitative and quantitative data collection.

4. Review: Assess feasibility of projects with area partners to define PSE change activities.	• Meet with stakeholders (especially community members) to identify costs, resources, and barriers in the local context. • Identify possible courses of action. • Identify what needs to be done to meet SMARTIE goals and objectives.
5. Promote: Promote awareness, communicate, and educate.	• Advertise the program/intervention. • Communicate the importance of the program/intervention to all stakeholders. • Conduct outreach to lessen resistance and build support.
6. Implement: Take action.	• Implement PSE activities in ways that are connected to the developed and agreed upon SMARTIE goals and objectives. • Collect data on PSE activities for the outcome and impact evaluation. Begin the process evaluation.
7. Evaluate: Measure your success.	• Capture data on the outcomes and changes in knowledge, attitudes, skills, beliefs, and behaviors that are connected to the PSE actions. Link data to the SMARTIE goals and objectives. • Use data to inform program improvement. • Share data with stakeholders and possible funders.

Adapted from GW Cancer Center, Policy, Systems and Environmental Change.

Appendix D: Arizona PSE Playbook's 'SMARTIE Goals and Objectives'

SMARTIE Goals and Objectives Development Questions from "Arizona PSE Playbook: Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change in Arizona Communities 2023" created by Arizona State University's College Research and Evaluation Services Team and Knowledge Enterprise for the Arizona Department of Health Services Arizona Health Improvement Plan (AzHIP).

Table 3. SMARTIE Goals and Objectives Development Questions

Specific	• What will be achieved? By when? • Who will be impacted? How? By when? By how much?
Measurable	• What data will be used to measure the milestones and goals? • How will tracking be accomplished?
Achievable	• Can you accomplish the objective with the resources, assets, and capabilities of the program and community?
Relevant	• Is the objective relevant with the organization's and/or community's broader goals? • Is the objective meaningful to the community being served? • Is the objective meaningful to community partners?
Time-Bound	• What is the timeframe or deadline for achieving the objective? • What are the timepoints at which you will review progress toward the objective?
Inclusive	• How are marginalized and disproportionately impacted populations included in processes, activities, and decision-making? • How will you incorporate feedback and input from the populations included and from community partners?
Equitable	• How are systematic injustices or inequities being addressed? • How does the objective address the varied needs and circumstances of different populations in the community?

Adapted from The Management Center (2021), Doran (1981), and University of California (2017).

Defining Success with SMARTIE Goals and Objectives

Well-defined objectives provide an actionable plan and a means to evaluate program activities, outcomes, and impacts. Programs often have multiple objectives. In order to assess the effectiveness and success of PSE work, we recommend identifying SMARTIE (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, relevant, Time-bound, Inclusive and Equitable) goals and objectives (Doran, 1981, The Management Center, 2021) and routinely monitoring and evaluating impacts. Table 3 lays out questions that are useful for creating SMARTIE goals and objectives.

Appendix E: Considerations for Working with Tribal Communities

Consult

- Direction of programming for tailoring: Tailor communication methods for tribal communities by aligning with cultural relevance and traditions to ensure meaningful engagement and informed-decision making.

- Community needs and strengths: Identify community needs and strengths in tribal communities to facilitate Policy, System and Environmental (PSE) changes.

Support

- Community projects and initiatives: Provide assistance and support to tribal communities involved in existing or ongoing community projects and initiatives.

- Technical assistance: Offer technical assistance to tribal communities and local implementing agencies directly engaged with tribal communities.

- Participant reach: Expand participant reach in tribal communities through effective programming strategies.

Relate

- Culturally-responsive materials and resources: Create culturally responsive materials and resources, ensuring cultural appropriateness and considerations of traditional practices, beliefs, and values from elders and community members.

- Integration of unique perspectives and history: Integrate unique perspectives and awareness of historical trauma into programming using a trauma-informed approach.

Collaborate

- Reporting and assessment: Collaborate with tribal communities, respecting and incorporating diverse methods rooted in indigenous cultures for reporting and assessments. This entails honoring traditional storytelling, artistic expression, and journey mapping to identify community needs and collect essential data for development. Prioritize seeking permission and approval from the community, ensuring transparent communication about the purpose and use of the gathered information.

- Programming improvements and development: Engage tribal communities in collaborative efforts for continuous programming improvements, seeking their feedback and support.

Appendix F: Resources and Tools

Resources and Tools

There are a multitude of resources to assist you learning about PSE work, including interactive tools and other PSE guides. Please keep in mind that many resources may not have a SNAP-Ed or AZ Health Zone specific lens. Along with PSE resources, you can find other AZ Health Zone resources below.

- [eCornell PSE Course](#)

- [SNAP-Ed PSE Toolkit](#)

- [SNAP-Ed PSE Interactive Map](#)

- [Systems Approaches to Healthy Communities](#)
    - A PSE course from the University of Minnesota Extension.
    - Email azhealthzone@azdhs.gov to enroll in this course.

- [The Spectrum of Prevention](#)

- [Arizona PSE Playbook](#)

- [ChangeLab Solutions Interactive Health Inequity Tool](#)

- AZ Health Zone Guidance and Policy Manual
    - Find the most current version on the [AZ Health Zone Website](#).
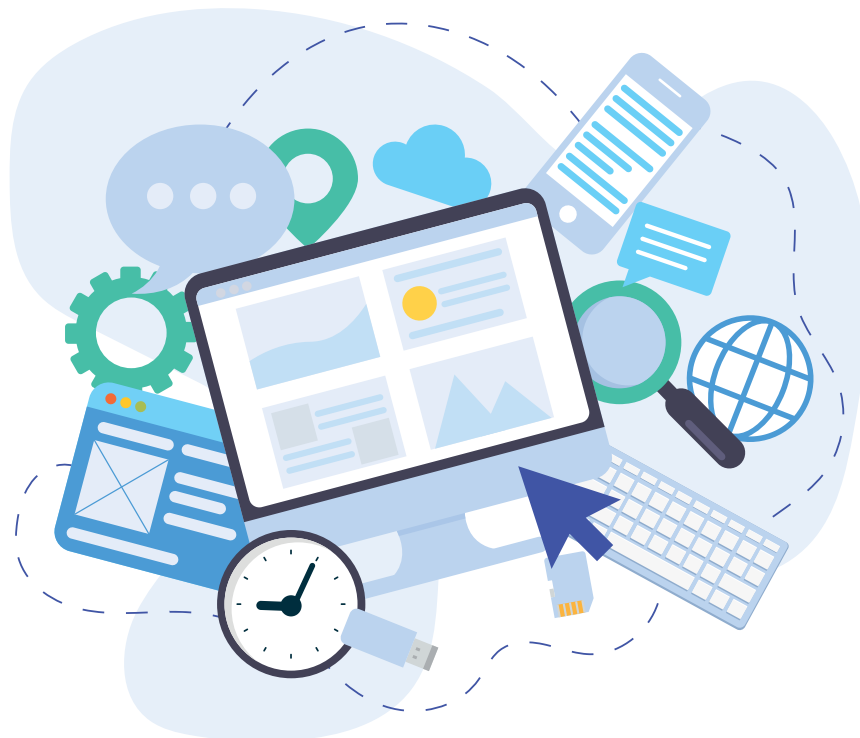
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Appendix G: Stories from AZ Health Zone Local Agencies

Story #1 - Active Transportation - Coconino County Health and Human Services

Supporting the Comprehensive School Physical Activity Programs (CSPAP) work, Coconino County Health and Human Services (CCHHS) staff collaborated with community partners, including Northern Arizona University (NAU) Women's Basketball Team, NAU fraternity, Flagstaff Police Department, teachers, administration, CCHHS Injury Prevention program and other health promotion staff on another successful 'International Walk to School Day' event. In the past, CCHHS programs would organize five schools and everything from marketing, managing transportation and meal service. To promote the event's sustainability, schools were encouraged to take a larger role in planning the event. Transportation, including coordinating bussing and setting up a remote drop-off site was handled by each school. Only Kinsey Elementary's principal took the initiative to coordinate a drop-off site for students at the Mark Grace Baseball Field, encouraging students to walk almost a 1-mile route to school. While this method doesn't amount to the usual number of students walking, it allows CCHHS staff to talk with staff, families, and students, thanking them for walking or biking to school. In addition, food service kept regularly scheduled breakfast since the event occurred before school started. With seven schools hosting an event, CCHHS met the goal of increasing the number of schools participating. During the next few months, CCHHS staff will continue to promote adding an 'International Walk to School Day' event to the local wellness policy, so all elementary schools are encouraged to participate.

Story #2 - Community Gardens - UA Cooperative Extension, Navajo County

In March AZ Health Zone-CENC was approached by a community liaison of the Greasewood Chapter, the community is pursuing home and community gardening to increase food access within the Greasewood community. We held a planning meeting to discuss implementing the Seed to Supper curriculum at the chapter, classes are planned to take place in April. The classes will be held at the chapter in order to support both home gardeners and to encourage the community and chapter officials to renew the community garden that is already established at the chapter office.

Story #3 - Community Gardens - UA Cooperative Extension, Mohave County

AZ Health Zone-CEMC continued to support community garden efforts with the New Horizons Community Garden throughout the reporting cycle. AZ Health Zone-CEMC staff attended monthly garden meetings and workdays and provided materials such as soil, seeds, and crop information. As reported in the previous reporting period, one goal of the garden committee was to increase awareness and community involvement in the garden. AZ Health Zone-CEMC collaborated with the Lake Havasu Master Gardeners and New Horizons to create and promote a Junior Master Gardener series for youth to help promote the garden and bring awareness of the garden, see Cross-Cutting Direct Education section.

In September, the garden committee met to assess the garden's progress and plan for the next season. During the meeting, the committee decided that the garden would need to be more structured and incorporate a system that would allow the community to utilize the garden without hesitation. The committee members noted that the general community was unaware of the garden. When the general population was aware of the garden, they were unsure if they could utilize it since there was a gate around it and very few signs were posted letting people know what to do. The committee decided that this year, the priority would be to set guidelines for the use of the garden on the entrance along with signage stating when it was open to the public.

Another topic of discussion was whether or not to charge a fee for using the beds. AZ Health Zone-CEMC presented the need for the garden to remain open to the public free of charge or with minimal fees to provide an avenue for everyone in the population to have access to growing their food if they could not do so at home. The committee recognized the importance of keeping the garden as a free resource for the community and decided that the garden would remain free and open to the public.

The committee's goal is to set up the ground rules for use, post new signage letting the public know when and how they can utilize the garden, identify a garden manager, and set up a volunteer system by November. The committee plans to host a community-wide event to re-open the garden in November and will focus heavily on promotion and marketing before the event.

Story #4 - Complete Streets Policies - Coconino County Health and Human Services Department

During the Town of Tusayan community garden workday, CCHHS staff helped build capacity within the Town of Tusayan council by discussing complete streets with a council member. Being unfamiliar with complete streets, the council member expressed an openness in learning more and agreed to review policies from comparable communities. CCHHS staff continues working to get a meeting scheduled. The opportunity to speak informally one on one with a council member about complete streets during the community garden workday was a win. Through this simple conversation, CCHHS staff was able to share the basics of a complete streets policy and how the town of Tusayan could benefit.

Story #5 - Complete Streets Policies - UA Cooperative Extension, Nutritional Sciences

Pima County's Slow Streets Project. This Tucson-based project was initiated during the pandemic and formalized into a quarterly demonstration project that prioritized low-income areas. Sites were chosen by metrics such as traffic data, crash reports, and vehicle ownership.

The Slow Streets program temporarily closes certain streets to all but local traffic, giving Tucsonans more space to safely walk, bike, and run.

The project consists of: 1. A mobile bike repair event, prior to starting 2. Pre-installation traffic counts of the street 3. Slow Street Installations (traffic cones, barricades, signs) 4. During- and post-installation traffic counts 5. Community engagement re: Slow Street perceptions 6. Review of community feedback and other data 7. Decisions on permanent traffic calming solutions <$20K 8. Installation of permanent traffic calming solutions.

Story #6 - Empower - Yuma County Public Health Services District

To support Estrellita Child Care's Empower goals for physical activity (PA), SNAP-Ed Yuma facilitated a two-part training on physical activity with center staff. The first session included a review of Empower's Physical Activity Standard. This allowed staff to increase their awareness and understanding of the standard's components, its practical application, and its integration as part of the center's policy. Part one of the training also included an immersive training of a physical activity toolkit enriched with activity demonstrations. For part two, teachers participated in peer-to-peer instruction and practiced leading the activities. After the conclusion of the training, SNAP-Ed met with the center director and assistant director to help create a calendar of teacher-led PA incorporating the activities from the toolkit. A three-week activity calendar was created and with flexibility to allow the teachers to include their own favorite activities.

The center's site policy on PA was reviewed and as a result, recommendations were made to modify the policy to reflect the center's current practices, which include the changes made since receiving the PA training and technical assistance. Due to family education being a component of Empower's PA standard, the center also set a family engagement goal. The director requested support to coordinate a family engagement event. SNAP-Ed helped develop a short presentation for parents to explain how the center was implementing structured PA. Additionally, the center was supported in building an agenda of activities for three consecutive engagement days at the center. Each day featured a different classroom and a teacher who modeled, for parents, a physical activity game they could do at home. Then, parents observed their children play an adult-led PA game. At the end of each session, a short survey was provided to get feedback from parents and to inquire about interest in participating in a focus group. There was interest from some parents and SNAP-Ed followed up accordingly.

Story #7 - Farm to Childhood - UA Cooperative Extension, Greenlee County

For the DE in Duncan Public Schools, each grade has had the opportunity to have at least one gardening activity experience. I do my best to make the activity supplement or match up with the lessons in the curriculum being implemented for each grade. Listed below are each of the grades that I visit and what curriculum is being used, with highlights of gardening activities and how they relate to the curriculum lessons.

The students filled out a survey early in the semester to indicate what things they'd like to learn about gardening this year. This allowed for flexibility to design lessons that would prepare students intending to take Ag classes in Jr. High and a last hurrah for some to have fun with plants before entering 6th grade. When the marigolds were ready for transplanting into 4" pots, groups of 2-3 students at a time (the other students worked on vegetable and fruit identification quizzes while waiting) received a short lesson on roots and why loosening them up before transplanting them was beneficial to the plant's success for surviving transplant shock. Each student was able to take two marigold plants home.

Story #8 - Farm to Childhood - UA Cooperative Extension, Pima County (CEPC)

SNAP-Ed CEPC supported a tribal Head Start program with environmental changes that included a garden expansion, improved nutrition and feeding practices, and overall alignment with Empower standards. CEPC aided in adding a cultural context to the garden by assisting with the installation of native language artwork, signs, and labels in the native Yoeme language, Spanish, and English. CEPC also provided technical assistance in choosing the location and layout of the expansion of the garden, including the addition of a traditional "milpa" (in-ground garden). In an effort to continue the increased interest of families in gardening and gardening activities, CEPC provided families with the Ten Steps to a Successful Vegetable Garden and Low Desert Planting and Harvest Calendar handouts as well as coordinated with community partners such as the Pima County Seed Libraries to provide seeds directly for the families served at the center and Pima Master Gardeners for garden education handouts. SNAP-Ed CEPC also supported the center's gardening education efforts. CEPC has provided technical assistance for an outdoor classroom and a multi-faucet hand-washing station to ensure hygiene and food safety of gardening activities. The additional educational environment has strengthened the garden's multi-purpose emphasis, including encouraging more families to participate in events, providing a space for gardening, nutrition education, and physical activity education to the children, and serving as a trauma aware space for behavior self-regulation. School administrators desired to make a deliberate effort to engage families in programming and SNAP-Ed CEPC was the only partner from outside of the tribal territory to be invited to participate in a back-to-school event attended by a large majority of family members and children.

SNAP-Ed CEPC engaged with families through a guided plant-a-seed activity that encouraged home gardening, showcased the many purposes of the ECE garden, and ECE programming information for the school year. With the continued development of this relationship, and the support from SNAP-Ed CEPC, the ECE director began participating in the Go NAPSACC program, to further improve the policies and environment of the center.

Story #9 - Farmers, Growers, and Food Producers - UA Cooperative Extension, Navajo County

AZ Health Zone-CENC has also been actively engaged in support of Ndee Bikiyaa, The People's Farm, to support their agribusiness efforts within the community. Two workshops were held at the farm during this reporting period, the first was related to the use of social media to increase community awareness of the available farmers/growers, the farm, and the farm stand as a local source of produce. The second workshop was related to soil and irrigation. AZ Health Zone-CENC coordinated both events, provided technical assistance during the events and provided related resources and materials to the attendees.

AZ Health Zone-CENC is currently engaged in planning a follow-up workshop to engage in hands-on irrigation demonstrations to help the farm increase their output this year. In addition, we were invited to help with the planning of the Harvest Festival which will be held in September. This event will allow for community members to visit the farm, participate in demonstrations and contests, and obtain resources related to gardening. A major component of the festival is to have demonstrations, tastings, and activities that highlight tribal cultural practices which includes food preservation, cooking techniques, and crafts. The festival also wants to include neighboring tribal practices. AZ Health Zone-CENC will help to coordinate with our colleagues from the Hopi and Navajo tribes and help the planning committee to work out logistics related to the event.

Story #10 - Farmers, Growers, and Food Producers - UA Cooperative Extension, Maricopa County

Our team works with several small growers/farmers in Phoenix. In September, we hosted a series of two urban agriculture workshops geared toward growers looking to sell to the public. The first workshop "Bringing Your Produce to Market," taught participants what they need to know before heading to the farmer's market. We partnered with Pinnacle Prevention to share about Farmer's Market Nutrition Program, Double Up Food Bucks, and accepting Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) transactions. A panel of farmers who have experience selling at local markets also answered questions about their experiences and successes selling produce.

The second workshop served as an introduction to food safety and post-harvest management. As we start to encourage local growers to partner with schools to promote Farm to School Practices, it is important for farmers to consider food safety practices. The workshop was held at our UA MCCE office at a post-harvest demonstration area. The area was used to demonstrate principles related to food safety on the farm and demonstrate different ways to wash produce. Workshop participants expressed gratitude for the introduction to food safety and things to consider when preparing to distribute food safely to their community. This workshop also provided a space for our team to connect with farmers and growers in our communities.

Story #11 - Farmers Markets - UA Cooperative Extension, Cochise County

AZ Health Zone - UACE Cochise successfully partnered with three home visitation programs, one family agency, and one rural healthcare system by providing education about the local farmers markets, how and when to use WIC FMNP, SNAP- EBT, and Double Up Bucks. These presentations led to rich discussions about access, awareness, and affordability, which will be more described in the section on community engagement.

In addition to these trainings, AZ Health Zone - UACE Cochise also received feedback about the mailers that went to SNAP-eligible homes in Sierra Vista last reporting period. It was reported that multiple people brought their postcards to the farmers market information to ask about using their benefits. AZ Health Zone - UACE Cochise received email feedback from a community member commenting that she had received the postcard, but that she needed more clear information about the benefits and how to use them. This was important feedback, and also evidence the mailers were being received and considered.

AZ Health Zone - UACE Cochise has also been partnering with the local WIC office, who now has a community outreach staff person who regularly attends the farmers market. AZ Health Zone - UACE Cochise connects with this WIC staff person regularly to discuss outreach efforts, community feedback, and promote the live food demonstration AZ Health Zone - UACE Cochise does using Farmers Market ingredients. AZ Health Zone - UACE also communicates regularly via phone and email with the local WIC director to ensure there are clear understandings about the benefits and identified needs/challenges.

Story #12 - Farmers Markets - UA Cooperative Extension, Nutritional Sciences (CENS)

The AZ Health Zone CENS continued to build on its partnerships with Tucson House, Tucson's largest public housing site, and Tucson Community Access, Referral, Education, and Service (Tucson C.A.R.E.S.), which works to increase the health and wellbeing of residents at Tucson House, to increase residents' access to fresh produce. The AZ Health Zone CENS participated in a food resource fair at Tucson House and provided information about food retail programs, such as Double Up Food Bucks Arizona (DFBA) and the Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP); food access resources; along with AZ Health Zone recipes and cooking tools to approximately 250 residents.

Through informal conversations with Tucson House residents, 80 percent of whom are seniors, staff at Tucson C.A.R.E.S. and the AZ Health Zone CENS learned that transportation was a significant barrier to their participation in the FMNP. The AZ Health Zone CENS and Tucson C.A.R.E.S. developed a pilot FMNP proxy program that provided volunteer proxies for seniors who wanted to participate in the FMNP but who didn't have the ability to get to the farmers market. With a signed consent form from the FMNP participant, the proxy collected their FMNP coupons, valued at $50, from the farmers' market information booth and used them to purchase Arizona-grown produce. Then, the proxy delivered that produce to the participant. The pilot program provided proxies to eight seniors at Tucson House and delivered $50 worth of Arizona-grown produce to them over the course of two weeks.

In partnership with the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona's Santa Cruz River Farmers' Market and Tucson C.A.R.E.S., the AZ Health Zone CENS is using information from the pilot program to develop a sustainable FMNP proxy program that will launch at the beginning of the next FMNP season.

Story #13 - Food Stores - UA Cooperative Extension, Graham County

CEGC has continued to support Thriftee Super Market on the Healthy Check-out Lane by providing materials from AZ Health Zone such as recipe cards. The store selected an employee to lead this project and is responsible for maintaining the lane with healthy food choices. This lane is now sustainable and CEGC offers technical assistance on an as-needed basis. The store has done a complete reset and now offers a variety of new and healthy foods. The store also advertises to their customers that if there is a particular item they do not offer, to let an employee know and they will work on getting that item in the store.

Story #14 - Food Stores - Maricopa County Department of Public Health

The owners stated that they have goals to refresh the exterior of their store with new paint, signage, front door and illuminated sign (damaged). SNAP-Ed staff contacted the City of Phoenix Restoration/ Paint and Patch Program to solicit support for this. Since the store owners do not own the building, this is currently not an option. To help them with their goal, we ordered new Healthy Starts Here rainproof corrugated sign (Swahili/English) and contacted Pinnacle Prevention to order a new Double Up sign to replace the one that was faded. The owners expressed interest in promoting the Maricopa Healthy app (highlighting healthy WIC and SNAP-Ed recipes) in their store, so SNAP-Ed programming and communications staff worked together to create door clings with Maricopa Healthy app information on them. In addition, new shelving was provided for the display of fruits and vegetables near the checkout area.

Story #15 - Go NAPSACC - Maricopa County Department of Public Health (MCDPH)

SNAP-Ed MCDPH worked in partnership with the Empower Program and MCDPH Child Care Health Consultants (CCHCs) to support two early care and education (ECE) centers in the Alhambra community. The project focused on developing quality ECE programming and children's health as a foundation for life-long success through learning collaboratives and the use of GO NAPSACC. At its completion, both centers had attended all learning collaborative sessions which trained attendees the following Go NAPSACC modules: Child Nutrition, Breastfeeding & Infant Feeding, Infant & Child Physical Activity and Screen Time. The centers completed pre assessments, set and accomplished goals, and showed improvements had been made through the results of post assessments. SNAP-Ed and CCHC staff conducted the training, coordinated check-ins with centers between training to provide technical assistance, and support the implemented changes. SNAP-Ed supported achievement of the following goals:

> **Goal 1:** Teachers incorporate planned nutrition education into their classroom routines 1 time per week or more. SNAP-Ed provided nutrition books for story time and educational purposes. The ECE providers and educators were provided tips on how to implement planned nutrition education into the classroom.

> **Goal 2:** Toddlers are provided 90 minutes or more for indoor and outdoor physical activity each day. SNAP-Ed provided tips and tools regarding indoor physical activity and the use of equipment to help increase time allotted for physical activity per day. This included special attention to increasing PA time during summer when outdoor play is limited.

> **Goal 3:** Teachers and staff receive professional development on infant feeding and nutrition 2 times per year or more. SNAP-Ed provided tips and materials to support breastfeeding in the ECE centers.

Throughout the Learning Collaborative, SNAP-Ed supplied materials that supported the centers' Go NAPSACC goals and provided nutrition and physical activity resources to the families they served. The feedback received indicated that families especially liked the SNAP-Ed AZ Health Zone recipes. SNAP-Ed and CCHCs continued to provide support to the ECEs and recruit additional ECEs to participate in Go NAPSACC.

Story #16 - Local Wellness Policies and Wellness Committees - Coconino County Health and Human Services Department

Coconino County Health and Human Services Department (CCHHS) staff collaborated with Grand Canyon Unified School District (GCUSD) administrators and food service staff to organize and start a School Wellness Council to work on updating the Local Wellness Policy. After sharing the WellSAT 3.0 results and recommendations, the council has been working through guidance and comparing the local wellness policy against best practices. Discussions have included topics the district excels at and opportunities for growth from student and parent input. Staff facilitated great discussion between administration, students, and parents/caretakers around snacks and foods brought into the school and not using food as a reward. There were many different viewpoints. In addition, staff shared best practices and policy verbiage to include in the updated policy. The council comprises a variety of individuals representing multiple community sectors, including the school principal, food service director, Parent Teacher Association (PTA) weekend backpack food coordinator, parents, teachers, students, and public health. CCHHS staff has collaborated with the school to promote and encourage participation in the council by sharing details during PTA, Grand Canyon Wellness Coalition, and Tusayan Community Awareness meetings and distributing flyers during community events like the Grand Canyon School PTA Book and Health Fair.

During GCUSD's website remodel, the local wellness policy was inadvertently removed. Staff noticed the change, brought it to the school administration's attention, and it was reinstated on the website for transparency and ease of access by families and community members.

Age-appropriate nutrition lessons were provided to Grand Canyon Unified School District's kindergarten, 2nd, 4th, and 5th grade classes to support work in the cafeteria through the 'Smarter Lunchroom Movement' and the district's local wellness policy. Students cooked in the classroom, tasted new foods, and created snacks based on their developmental stage and knowledge. Older elementary students learned basic knife skills while dicing vegetables and cooking fried rice. Younger students expressed emotions and feelings through MyPlate faces and taste-tested various fruits and vegetables. Kindergarten students connected 'Discover MyPlate' lesson characters with posters they observed in the school cafeteria and with the food groups being served at lunch. The teacher shared, 'The students are loving the lessons. After lunch today, they told me each of the food groups they ate.'

Story #17 - Nutrition Pantry Program - Coconino County Health and Human Services

CCHHS staff worked with the Grand Canyon Food Pantry to implement the Nutrition Pantry Program best practices. When looking at the 'Healthy Food Pantry Assessment Tool' results, one area of improvement was in 'Other Supplementary Programs'. Discussions with the pantry manager and board of directors created action to improve this section.

CCHHS organized and led the annual Volunteer Appreciation Event, where volunteers and their families gathered to celebrate their service at the pantry, highlight accomplishments over the year, and participate in annual nutrition training. CCHHS staff assisted the pantry in obtaining donations for the event, including hot drink reusable cups and gift certificates, restaurant gift certificates, online gift cards, and hotel day-use passes for pool and bowling access. The support of local businesses shows the value placed on the service the food pantry provides the community to increase food access.

CCHHS staff provided nutrition training during the event to build capacity amongst board members and volunteers, including facilitating the 'Meaning of Food in Life Questionnaire' as presented in the Leah's Pantry Nutrition Pantry Program. This questionnaire was new to participants and gave a new way to explore their relationship with food and what that might look like for participants. This led to a rich discussion of how we can effectively serve our pantry participants with compassion and empathy while meeting their nutritional needs.

Story #18 - Nutrition Pantry Program - Desert Mission Food Bank, Maricopa County Department of Public Health

SNAP-Ed staff led the Desert Mission Food Bank team in completing the Nutrition Pantry Program work plan outlining steps for the food bank to achieve certification. They are working to implement changes in each of the six focus areas, concentrating on completing some of the simpler tasks while continuing to make progress on pieces that support larger changes.

Desert Mission staff formed a Nutrition Pantry Program committee, which meets weekly. The Desert Mission nutrition team and staff from the food bank are making sure this is a collaborative project and are holding each other accountable. Each subcommittee member is encouraged to provide input during meetings and is responsible for completing assignments.

The team faced challenges advancing this project and implementing NPP as staff and volunteer counts continue to be low. Since priorities for the food bank are to manage operations and provide outstanding client experiences, the movement on the NPP initiative takes secondary priority leading to delays in meeting scheduled goal deadlines. The creation of the subcommittee is helping to overcome challenges and develop excitement and buy-in as a team.

Story #19 - Park Improvements and Park Rx - Maricopa County Department of Public Health

The Park Rx of Mountain View has inspired more community-led activities, extending into a community garden group and tree planting. Park Rx Arizona – Maricopa County has programming designed to improve access to local physical activity in community parks and pockets of nature. The results are support for events, community leaders, and community groups. The physical activity programs occur regularly, at Mountainview Park, in coordination with community-based activity leaders, providing support, training, and reusable equipment to inspire active lifestyles. Programming includes walking clubs, yoga, Pilates and more. The program is finding more connections to health care providers to recruit more residents in need of no-cost physical activity programming a chance to be active. Outcomes are stronger community ties around a more active lifestyle and developing skills in community leaders.

Story #20 - Park Improvements and Park Rx - UA Cooperative Extension, Pinal County

In 2013, the First Baptist Church took on revitalizing the Arizona City Park playground to provide a better playground for the [small town] community…the AZ Health Zone continued to partner with the church, and a County Supervisor [helped to] finish out the last part of the planned project.…In the Spring of 2021, we collaborated with the church to install signs and reflectors in a new walking path. During the installation, church representatives, AZ Health Zone staff, and the Supervisor discussed adding a drinking fountain to the park. The Supervisor provided the church with grant opportunities for funding, and earlier this month the drinking fountain was installed.

Story #21 - Park Improvements and Park Rx - UA Cooperative Extension, Maricopa County

This year, UA Cooperative Extension staff in Maricopa connected with Linda, a highly active member of the Maryvale community. Linda's leadership brought new opportunities to engage the community around improving and activating Falcon Park. She championed a clean-up event that gave residents the opportunity to provide feedback, connect with local politicians, and learn about the PARA. Soon after, a community-engaged PARA offered residents the chance to envision park improvements alongside a local councilwoman who co-completed the assessment. Subsequent park renovations, already slated for 2023, addressed some community concerns and created momentum for future advocacy work. ""Residents expressed a desire for a splash pad. [City] Councilwoman Pastor advised that they should get organized to advocate for this, because a big project like this could take time to be approved in the City's plan and budget.

Story #22 - Physical Activity Integration - UA Cooperative Extension, Nutritional Sciences (CENS)

At Amphitheater High School, two teachers attended an in-person facilitation of the TTT titled Brain Energizers aimed at incorporating physical activity into breaks and content-focused activities in the classroom. The AZ Health Zone CENS was also introduced to a new segment of the student population at the school. Amphitheater High School offers unified basketball and cheer teams, which provide inclusive opportunities for students with and without intellectual disabilities to participate in safe and structured physical activity together. The current Point Person for the school, is a coach for the unified teams and teaches math for students at the school with moderate-severe learning disabilities.

The AZ Health Zone CENS was invited to attend a Special Olympics basketball tournament at the school and hosted an information booth about MyPlate food groups which students, caregivers, and student aides visited during breaks between games. The Point Person's passion for her students was evident in her approach to the school's partnership with the AZ Health Zone CENS and her role as Point Person has presented opportunities for the AZ Health Zone CENS to learn from and strategize with the school to continue fostering equitable access to nutrition and physical activity resources for all students.

Story #23 - Playground Stencils - Mohave County Department of Public Health

One example of this (AZ Health Zone supports that don't require school funding) was Fort Mojave Elementary identifying a need to enhance the physical activity environment at the school. We were able to offer them the use of the AZ Health Zone stencils for free so they could use their grant funds elsewhere. The principal communicated that there was a delay in doing the stencils due to lack of available funding for the paint and painting supplies. Sarah reached out to local hardware stores in the area to request donations for the project and was able to secure all paint and supplies necessary to get started. The stencils were painted during the school's spring break, and Mohave County Department of Public Health - AZ Health Zone staff were there to help with the painting. The school posted the pictures of the new stencils on their social media pages and the reaction from the community and the students has been amazing.

Story #24 - Shared Use - Maricopa County Department of Public Health

Sí Se Puede Neighborhood Association (SSPNA) has proven to be very resourceful in identifying a wide variety of learning opportunities for the professional development of the SSPNA leadership committee, association members, and residents-at-large. They built a strong relationship with the superintendent of the Fowler Elementary School District, as well as with two principals at nearby elementary schools. The two schools made their facilities available to host trainings at these trusted sites.

SNAP-Ed funding made it possible for SSPNA to send a representative to a Photovoice training that took place on September 18, 21, and 25. More members of the leadership committee were interested in taking the course, but we have had difficulty finding this learning opportunity delivered in Spanish.

Story #25 - Smarter Lunchrooms Movement - Maricopa County Department of Public Health

Madison School District assesses all schools within the district with the Smarter Lunchroom Movement scorecard. This is part of the local wellness policy for the district, so they require every school to be assessed and show improvement by the end of the year. Of the 8 schools assessed at the beginning of this year 5 were in the gold status and 3 in the silver status.

Results and recommendations from the State Evaluation Team (SET) team were shared with the food service director and cafeteria managers. Even when a school is already in the gold status, they will make at least 1 to 2 changes this year to improve their lunchroom environment and therefore scorecard. Throughout the school year, Andrea works in collaboration with the food service director and cafeteria managers at the SNAP-Ed eligible schools to develop guidance for the school cafeterias. This year, with guidance and suggestions from the cafeteria managers they requested monthly informational flyers focusing on the Smarter Lunchroom No Time to Train information. Monthly in-person trainings were not an option per the school district. We will reassess schools again in May with the Smarter Lunchroom Movement scorecard. Madison school decided to share the Smarter Lunchroom No Time to Train positive communications information with the lunch aides that are monitoring the students while eating. The cafeteria manager stated, "It has had a positive impact on communication and relationships between the students and staff."

Story #26 - Smarter Lunchrooms Movement - UA Cooperative Extension, Mohave County

During the last reporting period in September, AZ Health Zone-CEMC started providing SLM No Time to Train (SLM NTTT) professional development to all food service staff. Monthly training sessions continued throughout this reporting period.

Additionally, food service staff worked with AZ Health Zone-CEMC on a routine basis to move through the steps of the SLM improvement cycle, including the planning and implementation of SLM techniques. In October, AZ Health Zone-CEMC presented the SLM scorecard results to the food service staff. The presentation included photos taken of the lunchrooms during the assessments. The food service staff chose one of two goals to implement for the elementary school lunchrooms and middle/high school lunchroom. Over the next few months, the food service staff were fully engaged with the process and even involved the students. The food service staff at the elementary school surveyed students and involved the student council in identifying food items they would like to see on the menus and which they currently liked best. The elementary food service staff even created a scrapbook highlighting their process of improving their lunchroom and working with the kids. AZ Health Zone-CEMC provided technical assistance and met with food service staff regularly to work on implementing the changes they were working towards.

Two elementary school goals were to create catchy names for food items and a more welcoming environment in their lunchrooms. One of the elementary lunchrooms shares a space with the gym utilized for physical education. The art class has also expanded into a corner of the space; making improvements to the lunchroom environment challenging to implement.

All the activities occur in the same space at the same time. To make foods more appealing and boost food sales for complete reimbursable meals, the food service staff worked with AZ Health Zone-CEMC to create menu books that the teachers could share with students in the morning. The menu books include photos of the foods being offered along with a newly created catchy name so students get the opportunity to see their menu options and encourage them to select the entrée of the day. Menu boards were added in the lunchrooms displaying a photo of the foods with the catchy name. AZ Health Zone-CEMC provided MALC with A-frames to display the daily menu and include photos of the foods. The A-frames were placed around the school campuses and at lunchroom entryways.

In the middle/high school lunchroom, MALC improved the variety of fruits offered and the display of the fruits. During the planning and goal-setting meeting in November, food service staff mentioned that they would frequently see whole fruits dumped in the trash, and kids would not take the fruit options. The food service director started ordering varieties of fruits while the food service staff improved the fruit displays.

The fruit displays now include pretty display bowls placed at the beginning of the service line. Serving utensils now match the food items accordingly so that the serving size is larger for items like fruits and vegetables and smaller for condiments. The food service staff added tablecloths to the entry tables and A-frames to display the entrée of the day. At the SLM NTTT sessions, food service staff enthusiastically share their progress, explore new ideas with AZ Health Zone-CEMC, and even present their progress to the rest of the food service staff.   AZ Health Zone-CEMC will complete the scorecards in April to capture their progress and complete the SLM improvement cycle.

Story #27 - Social Support Networks - UA Cooperative Extension, Pinal County

For the month of April, we facilitated 4 sessions of the walking club, we have actually doubled our participation this month. We believe this has been due to the networking and promotion efforts that have been implemented. Also taught the 4-session, Eat Smart, Live Strong curriculum at the CG Community Recreation Center. Session evaluations were very positive. Some of these participants have also joined the walking club.

For the month of May, we facilitated 5 sessions of the Senior Walking Club. We've had new participants join in their quest to exercise safely in the warmer months. One woman shared when she joined the walking club a few months ago, she could only walk 4 laps around the track in the thirty minutes, now she is up to 8 laps. She said she has noticed her knees hurt less and she has more energy. For the month of June, four sessions of the Senior Walking Club were held. We had four new participants join this month. One woman shared she loves to do Zumba but after a foot injury, she was worried she would have to stop being active. She was happy to learn about the Walking Club and enjoyed socializing with the existing members.

Story #28 - Summer Food - UA Cooperative Extension, Maricopa County

The Food Access Coordinator/Maryvale Lead has continued to meet with the six parents from the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Parent Advisory Committee in a new project. From May through August, the Coordinator facilitated a new project pilot called Brand Ambassadors where parents promoted the new SFSP logo that was created this year.

The parents completed different activities in their communities such as event tabling, hanging up posters and banners at local businesses and community spaces and distributing flyers in person and on social media. The group of moms also met once a month from May-August to debrief and discuss their promotion activities. At the last meeting, the group expressed interest in continuing to meet and work on other projects of interest. After being connected for a year and a half, the Lead feels like a relationship of trust has been built with the group and will pursue community engagement opportunities.