

SNAP-Ed Toolkit

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Shaping Healthy Choices Program (SHCP)

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Overview

The Shaping Healthy Choices Program (SHCP) is a direct education and PSE change intervention designed to improve children's health through a school-based, multicomponent approach. The program consists of 4 components: 1) Nutrition Education and Promotion, 2) Family and community partnerships, 3) Foods available on the school campus, and 4) School wellness policy. Program activities include nutrition education, cooking demonstrations, family newsletters, instructional school garden, salad bar, regional produce, school-site wellness committees, and community health fairs. Activities and programs were designed to operate on multiple levels of the Social Ecological Model (SEM) framework, integrated principles from Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), and a program evaluation was conducted. The goal of the program is to improve child diet and physical activity behaviors to prevent obesity. **Target Behavior:** Healthy Eating, Physical Activity **Intervention Type:** Direct Education, PSE Change

Intervention Reach and Adoption

SHCP targets youth in schools and in afterschool programs. Specifically, the Shaping Healthy Choices Program team has implemented the intervention in nearly 150 classrooms in 15 counties in California over 8-years, reaching nearly 4,500 youth. **Setting:** School **Target Audience:** Elementary School **Race/Ethnicity:** All

Intervention Components

SHCP includes 4 primary components: 1) Nutrition Education and Promotion, 2) Family and community partnerships, 3) Foods available on the school campus, and 4) School wellness policy.* Descriptions of each program component are provided below. These intervention components provide comprehensive, evidence-based strategies for improving child health and preventing obesity. Program activities include nutrition education, cooking demonstrations, family newsletters, instructional school garden, salad bar, regional produce, school-site wellness committees, and community health fairs. SHCP integrates principles from Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) and the Social Ecological Model (SEM) framework. SHCP components targeted the following

SCT constructs: 1) reciprocal determinism, 2) outcome expectations, 3) behavioral capability, 4) self-efficacy, and 5) reinforcements. The interaction of factors across multiple levels of the school community was emphasized using the SEM.

- Nutrition education and promotion: Development and implementation of a nutrition education curriculum (Discovering Healthy Choices, adapted from the Nutrition to Grow curriculum), cooking demonstrations (Cooking Up Healthy Choices), physical activity education (Healthy Choices in Motion), and instructional school gardens.
- Family and community partnerships: Using promotional and reinforcing materials like family newsletters. Newsletters (Team Up for Families and the newly developed Healthy Choices at Home) had 8 lessons to reinforce SHCP components, and at least 1 health fair is held at each intervention school.
- Foods available on school campus: Increasing healthy foods available in schools by creating/promoting salad bars and sourcing local, healthy foods to include on menus.
- School wellness policy: Establish a school wellness committee including school staff, parents, and community members to guide program planning, implementation, and sustainability.

*It should be noted that the Best Practices manual indicates the 4 program components above, while the Methods publication indicates an additional component: Supporting Regional Agriculture.

Intervention Materials

- SHCP in Action Best Practices Guide: <https://cns.ucdavis.edu/content/shcp/bestpractices/bestpractices.pdf>
- Cooking Up Health Choices Curriculum: https://cns.ucdavis.edu/content/shcp/cooking/cooking_up_healthy_choices.pdf
- Discovering Healthy Choices Curriculum: <https://cns.ucdavis.edu/programs/shcp/curriculum.html>
- Team Up for Families Newsletters: <https://cns.ucdavis.edu/programs/shcp/newsletter.html>
- Healthy Choices in Motion Curriculum: <https://cns.ucdavis.edu/resources/classroom/healthy-choices-in-motion>
- Healthy Choices at Home Newsletters: <https://cns.ucdavis.edu/programs/shcp/newsletter>

Intervention Costs

Materials available at no cost.

Evidence Summary

As stated in the Best Practices manual, “Data analyses showed an increase in student nutrition knowledge and physical activity, improvement in student dietary behaviors, and a decrease in Body Mass Index Percentile.” Additionally, the following potential benefits for children and schools are presented in the Best Practices Guide:

Potential Benefits for Students

- Increases nutrition knowledge and use of critical thinking skills
- Improves dietary patterns and physical activity

- Improves overall health

Potential Benefits for Schools

- Helps fulfill federally mandated district wellness policies
- Adheres to Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards
- Assists with the fulfillment of HealthierUS School Challenge requirements

Additional Publications and Reports:

- Fetter, DS, Linnell, JD, Dharmar, M, Bergman, JJ, Byrnes, M, Gerdes, M, Ruiz, LD, Pang, N, Lawry-Hall, S, Pressman, J, Chapman, J, and Scherr, RE. Using Theory to Develop Healthy Choices in Motion, an Experiential Physical Activity Curriculum. *Frontiers in Public Health Education and Promotion*. In Press.
- Ruiz, LD, Brian, KM, Scherr, RE. Lessons Learned: Implementing the Shaping Healthy Choices Program using Teenagers as Teachers. *Journal of Youth Development*. *Journal of Youth Development*. In Press.
- Fetter, DS, Scherr, RE, Linnell, JD, Dharmar, M, Schaefer, SE, and Zidenberg-Cherr, S. Effect of the Shaping Healthy Choices Program, a Multi-Component, School-Based Nutrition Intervention, on Physical Activity Intensity. *Journal of the American College of Nutrition*. 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07315724.2018.1436477>.
- Bergman, JJ, Linnell, JD, Scherr, RE, Ginsburg, DC, Brian, KM, Carter, R, Donohue, SS, Klisch, S, Lawry-Hall, S, Pressman, J, Soule, K, and Zidenberg-Cherr, S. Feasibility of Implementing a School Nutrition Intervention That Addresses Policies, Systems, and Environment. *Journal of Extension*. 2018. 56(1): 1FEA6.
- Linnell, JD, Smith, MH, Briggs, M, Scherr, RE, Brian, KM, and Zidenberg-Cherr, S. Building the Capacity of Classroom Teachers as Extenders of Nutrition Education through Extension: Evaluating a Professional Development Model. *Journal of Human Sciences and Extension*. 2018. 6(1): 58-75.
- Taylor, JC, Scherr, RE, Linnell, JD, Feenstra, G, and Zidenberg-Cherr, S. Impact of a multi-component, school-based nutrition intervention on students' lunchtime fruit and vegetable availability consumption: a randomized-trial of the Shaping Healthy Choices Program. *Journal of Hunger and Environmental Nutrition*. (2017): 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19320248.2017.1374899>
- Scherr, R.E., Dharmar, M. Linnell, J., Smith, M.H., Briggs, M., Bergman, J., Brian, K., Feenstra, G., Hillhouse, J.C., Keen, C.L., Beccarelli, L.M., Ontai, L.L., Schaefer, S.E., Spezzano, T., Steinberg, F.M, Sutter, C., Young, H.M., and Zidenberg-Cherr, S. A Multicomponent, School-Based Intervention, the Shaping Healthy Choices Program, Improves Nutrition-Related Outcomes. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*. 2017. 49(5)368-379.e1. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2016.12.007>
- Linnell, JD, Smith, MH, Briggs, M, Brian, KM, Scherr, RE, Dharmar, M, and Zidenberg-Cherr, S. Evaluating the relationships between teacher characteristics, implementation factors, and student outcomes among children participating in an experiential school-based program. *Pedagogy in Health Promotion*. 2016. DOI: 10.1177/2373379916649603
- Scherr RE, Linnell JD, Smith MH, et al. The Shaping Healthy Choices Program: Design and Implementation Methodologies for a Multicomponent, School-Based Nutrition Education Intervention. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*. 2014;46(6):e13-e21.
- Linnell JD, Zidenberg-Cherr S, Briggs M, Scherr RE, Brian KM, Hillhouse C, Smith MH. [Using a Systematic Approach and Theoretical Framework to Design a Curriculum for the Shaping Healthy Choices](#) *J Nutr Educ Behav*. 2016 Jan;48(1):60-9.

Classification: Research-tested

Evaluation Indicators

Based on the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework, the following outcome indicators can be used to evaluate intervention progress and success.

	Readiness and Capacity – Short Term (ST)	Changes – Medium Term (MT)	Effectiveness and Maintenance – Long Term (LT)	Population Results (R)
Individual	ST1 , ST3	MT1 , MT2	LT1 , LT3	
Environmental Settings	ST5 , ST6 , ST7	MT5 , MT6	LT5 , LT6 , LT10	
Sectors of Influence		MT9		

Evaluation Materials

Nutrition knowledge was assessed using a validated 35-point questionnaire and a validated Test of Basic Science Process Skills was used to examine science process skills. A vegetable preference assessment, a plate waste analysis, and a Block Food Frequency questionnaire were all used to assess various aspects of dietary intake. A physical activity assessment, child anthropometrics, and parent questionnaires were collected and various measures were used to assess local produce procurement. Finally, the School and Community Actions for Nutrition Survey was used to evaluate various aspects of the school environment, including policies and partnerships. Citations for all the evaluations measures are available in the methods paper listed in the evidence summary. Evaluation materials will be provided upon request.

Success Story

School Health Check: <https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/success-stories/school-health-check>

Additional Information

Website: The Shaping Healthy Choices Program website <https://cns.ucdavis.edu/programs/shcp/index.html> includes an overview of the SHCP as well as links to the best practices guide, curriculum, cooking demonstrations, family newsletters and SHCP news **Contact Person(s):** Center for Nutrition in Schools Nutrition Department, University of California, Davis (530) 752-4630 cns@ucdavis.edu