

# SNAP-Ed Toolkit

This document was downloaded from <https://snapedtoolkit.org/interventions/programs/snap-ed-soccer-for-success-sfs/>. Copyright © 2022 UNC Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention.

---

## SNAP-Ed Soccer for Success (SfS)

### U.S. Soccer Foundation

## Overview

*Soccer for Success (SfS)* is a direct education intervention designed to improve fitness levels of participants, improve nutritional knowledge and behavior of participants (and their families), and improve youth development outcomes of participants. *SfS* helps kids establish healthy habits and develop critical life skills through trained coach-mentors. Our multifaceted model combines structured physical activity, nutritional education, family engagement resources, and coach-mentoring best practices. The nutrition component meets USDA standards. *SfS* lessons are taught 3 times a week for 12 or 24 weeks by trained coach-mentors. *SfS*' curriculum provides coach-mentors with tools to integrate nutrition lessons into fun activities. As a result, children are constantly engaged and challenged to incrementally increase both their level of physical activity and their understanding of healthy lifestyles. To further address the social determinants of health, we use *SfS* as a hub for wrap-around health services. The *SfS* model incorporates community engagement days, featuring health resources from local community-based organization partners. **Target Behavior:** Healthy Eating, Physical Activity and Reducing Screen Time **Intervention Type:** Direct Education

## Intervention Reach and Adoption

*SfS* targets elementary and middle school students and their families in a variety of settings. *SfS* is designed to engage youth ages 6-13 from low-income families, who are at or below 185% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. *SfS* is offered where youth live: subsidized housing developments or at local schools in low-income neighborhoods. *SfS* was originally designed for schools, community-based organizations, and parks and recreation departments in major cities, but it has been found to work in non-conventional settings such as USDA program sites, Indian Tribal Organizations, faith-based organizations, and any other local organizations operating in the after-school 3-6 pm time frame. **Setting:** Community (Live), Faith-based community, Health care, Indian Tribal Organizations, School (Learn), USDA program sites (not National School Lunch Program) **Target Audience:** Elementary School, Middle School, Parents/Mothers/Fathers, Adults **Race/Ethnicity:** All

# Intervention Components

*SfS* includes 60-90 minute lessons that run three days per week for 12 to 24 weeks, with each session encouraging youth to work towards achieving the recommended 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity per day. Lessons are led by adult coaches trained as mentors and educators. Within lessons, topics such as how to avoid foods and beverages with added sugars, saturated fats, and achieving a balanced diet, are incorporated into physically demanding soccer activities. Newsletters are sent home throughout the year with information about the lessons and ways to reinforce them at home. These intervention components provide youth knowledge and physical activity opportunities to live healthy and active lifestyles. An administrative staff member devoted to the program (depending on how many children are being reached) and a child to coach ratio of 15:1 is recommended. Partners build their *SfS* program on the five *SfS* core components (physical activity, health & wellness, mentorship, community & family engagement, and safe spaces). Partners are trained every program year and should have access to the refreshed online curriculum. All coach-mentors must clear a criminal history background check. The curriculum is rooted in Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which holds that children learn by observing within the social context in which they live.

# Intervention Materials

Intervention materials are available on the U.S. Soccer Foundation's Resource Hub. To access and explore the Resource Hub, contact [emunir@ussoccerfoundation.org](mailto:emunir@ussoccerfoundation.org). Intervention materials include:

- Resource Hub (coach-mentor online training)
- SNAP-Ed *SfS* Curriculum approved by CDPH
- Measurement & Evaluation Tools
- Player Safety Training Materials
- Coach-Mentor Blueprint
- *SfS* Admin Guide
- Background Nutrition Information Pages approved by CDPH
- Family & Community Engagement Fliers (English and Spanish)
- Local Training Resources (.ppt, script, planning sheet)
- Criminal History & Abuse Prevention Trainings.

To order materials, potential partners should contact the U.S. Soccer Foundation (email: [party@ussoccerfoundation.org](mailto:party@ussoccerfoundation.org)), who will identify the potential partnership pathway that will be best for the setting and from there help identify funding opportunities to access program materials.

# Intervention Costs

Cost varies by organization type and the number of youths that will be engaged. Organizations that wish to implement *SfS* can contact the U.S. Soccer Foundation (Foundation), where we will identify what type of resources will be required to implement the program. We can work with potential partners to ensure that the *SfS* Curriculum is attainable and removes barriers to access.

# Evidence Summary

*SfS* is continuously monitored using researcher-developed evaluation tools. Healthy Communities Research & Design and American Institutes for Research implemented third party evaluations of *SfS*. Qualitative data, including site visits and focus groups, provide data about how the curriculum and trainings can better support partners and provide lessons learned for the future. This data and the latest research are used to regularly update the curriculum. Working with private/public sectors, partners leverage resources and existing infrastructure to meet the needs of families in their program. For example, a parent shared how, due to *SfS*, her child was asking for more vegetables. Their community did not have many stores with fresh food options. In response, a partner engaged a local farmers market to sell fresh food at *SfS*. Family engagement is now tracked in surveys and 80% of youth state that their families make healthier choices due to *SfS*. In the American Institutes for Research’s external evaluation of *SfS* as a group-mentoring model, 74% of participants reported that *SfS* increased their gang resistance and “helped them stay away from violence and fighting,” 73% said *SfS* helped them “try harder in school,” and 93% reported an increased perception of social support by their peers. A quasi-experimental study conducted by Healthy Networks Design & Research demonstrated that participants who undergo just one year of *SfS* exhibit a greater improvement in Body Mass Index (BMI), aerobic capacity, and eating habits than children enrolled in other evaluated programs.

- [Soccer for Success Evaluation Overview](#)
- [Independent Evaluation of Program Impact 2013-2014](#)

**Evidence-based Approach:** Practice-tested

## Evaluation Indicators

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

	<b>Readiness and Capacity – Short Term (ST)</b>	<b>Changes – Medium Term (MT)</b>	<b>Effectiveness and Maintenance – Long Term (LT)</b>	<b>Population Results (R)</b>
Individual		<a href="#">MT1</a> , <a href="#">MT3</a>	<a href="#">LT3</a>	
Environmental Settings				
Sectors of Influence				

- MT1: 87% of participants reported healthy eating changes that impacted their weight after participation in *SfS*
- MT1: 80% of participants reported making healthier choices after participation in *SfS*
- MT3: 84% of participants indicated that they exercised more after participation in *SfS*
- LT3: 76% of participants decreased Body Mass Index (BMI) after participation in *SfS*

- LT3: 83% of participants demonstrated improvement in their PACER time after participation in *SfS*

## Evaluation Materials

Intervention materials are available on the U.S. Soccer Foundation's Resource Hub. To access and explore the Resource Hub, contact [bmarchesi@ussoccerfoundation.org](mailto:bmarchesi@ussoccerfoundation.org). Evaluation materials include:

- Data Collection Overview
- Post Surveys for Youth
- Surveys for Coach-Mentors
- Surveys for Parents

Promising Practices from Experienced Coach-Mentors

## Additional Information

**Website:** The [SfS website](#) includes information on the U.S. Soccer Foundation, their impact, their programs (including *SfS*), and how to get involved. **Contact Persons:** Bruno Marchesi Email:

[bmarchesi@ussoccerfoundation.org](mailto:bmarchesi@ussoccerfoundation.org) Sarah Pickens Email: [spickens@ussoccerfoundaion.org](mailto:spickens@ussoccerfoundaion.org)