

SNAP-Ed Toolkit

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ST6: Champions

Framework Component

Readiness & Capacity – Organizational Motivators

Indicator Description

This indicator is intended to identify people who provide sustained and often charismatic leadership that successfully advocates for, creates appeal of, or improves access to nutrition and physical activity in various organizations or environmental settings. SNAP-Ed [glossary]champions[/glossary] are community members, participants, partners, and organizational leaders who extend their influence beyond direct delivery sites of SNAP-Ed interventions. In many SNAP-Ed programs, there are award and recognition programs to thank and celebrate efforts of people whose contributions went above and beyond the normal course of collaborative action.

Background and Context

Research has consistently shown that successful social change movements need leaders who “champion” the cause over a long period as it develops and grows over time. In SNAP-Ed, such leaders can emerge naturally at any stage of intervention, from planning an innovation through to its diffusion on a larger scale. It does not have to be demonstrated that the SNAP-Ed program was responsible for developing or “creating” the champion. But there should be a description of how the SNAP-Ed program interacted with the champion and benefited from the champion’s activities, or alternatively, how the efforts and accomplishments of the champion benefited from the activities of the SNAP-Ed program. ST6 defines the added value that such champions contributed to help achieve SNAP-Ed outcomes, primarily in Environmental Settings, but also in multiple Sectors of Influence, to help population results (R1-11). For a champion’s activities to be considered a SNAP-Ed outcome, there must be a connection between the champion’s work and the presence of the SNAP-Ed program such that the SNAP-Ed objectives are supported and benefits accrue to SNAP-Ed eligible people, sites, and communities. For example, the champion’s efforts might directly augment the SNAP-Ed program activities, or the champion might be identified through interactions with SNAP-Ed staff to work for change in the broader SNAP-Ed

eligible site, organization, or community-at-large. The achievement would not have occurred without them. Some examples of champions and their activities follow: [collapse title="Youth"] To encourage more students to play during recess, through the SNAP-Ed youth empowerment initiative a school's student advisory committee recommended that school administrators build "buddy benches." Students who wanted to engage in physical activity could sit on the bench, and active students could invite them to play. The benches were built during the 2015 school year, and not only did active play increase, but also there were improvements in students' social interactions outside of class and in classroom dynamics. Use of youth engagement techniques expanded in elementary schools throughout the district. [/collapse] [collapse title="Parent"] A parent whose child had participated in a SNAP-Ed gardening program initiated and led a parent steering committee to maintain the garden over the summer. The parent stayed involved to set up an ongoing garden "booster" club, so it continued even after her children went on middle school. The booster club model was adopted widely in the district. Three booster clubs joined with the *Let's Move! Salad Bars to School* initiative so that the harvest could be used in the school lunch program. Two clubs went on to successfully advocate for new Summer Meal programs. [/collapse] [collapse title="Community leader"] After a SNAP-Ed agency had partnered with the farmers market association to set up a mobile farmers market event, a community member donated 300 tickets (at \$1 each) to students who attended, to be used toward the purchase of produce at the event. The effort was so successful that the community member worked with the district's School Wellness Council and other community members to set up a fund for ongoing nutrition, physical activity, and food security programming. [/collapse] [collapse title="Service provider"] A teacher in a SNAP-Ed qualified school invited her peers and hosted an in-service to encourage them to create opportunities for their students around healthy eating. This team was recognized as a model and led to district-wide changes in the academic and physical activity curricula. [/collapse] [collapse title="Retailer"] An executive at a medium-sized grocery chain initiated a policy that welcomed SNAP-Ed demonstrations in selected stores. It was expanded to include in-store merchandizing, store tours, and community service partnerships with SNAP-Ed in the entire chain. The executive joined the SNAP-Ed partner team to meet with the area's Congress members and gave the business case for SNAP-Ed which resulted in two new SNAP-Ed champions in Congress. [/collapse] [collapse title="Local celebrity"] A local high school track star joined a SNAP-Ed physical activity coalition and offered to talk to elementary school students about the importance of physical activity and diet. She co-presented "25-Mile Club" certificates to students at the school's awards assembly and began working with elementary-age girls on track and field; the school formed three new girls' sports teams. Ultimately, she enlisted other high school athletes and got her high school to "adopt" the district's elementary schools in three different sports. [/collapse] [collapse title="Farmer"] A local farmer worked with the regional food bank to increase their produce donations as part of the *SNAP-Ed Harvest of the Month* program. They enlisted help from the county agriculture commissioner, restaurateurs, and chain grocers, and they then did a segment with one of the local TV stations. Those activities resulted in establishment of the area's first food policy council. [/collapse] [collapse title="Pastor"] As an outgrowth of a SNAP-Ed program in faith settings, a pastor led an event to promote healthy eating and physical activity, which included extensive media coverage. When SNAP-Ed funding was later threatened, she and other parishioners testified before the county board of supervisors that resulted in a resolution of concern that was sent to the city's state and federal legislators. The pastor stayed involved such that the Board supported changes in the county's General Plan to improve park lighting, bike lanes, and community gardens in lower-income neighborhoods. [/collapse] [collapse title="Media Outlet"] After covering local activities for several years, a local TV station adopted SNAP-Ed as one of 10 community organizations it would feature for the year. This included planned TV coverage of issues that SNAP-Ed programs were addressing, production and placement of public service advertisements, several talk show appearances, invitations to events with other station clients and advertisers, and appearances by station celebrities at SNAP-Ed community events. This led to joint projects with two local sports teams, an auto dealership, and a bank specializing in agriculture. [/collapse]

Outcome Measures

ST6a.	Champions: The number of champions that specifically advanced SNAP-Ed activities and mission, by domain and setting type, and their role
ST6b.	Sites: The number and percent of SNAP-Ed qualified organizations or sites that benefited from the activities of champions, by domain and setting type.
ST6c.	Accomplishments: Written, audio, or visual descriptions of the activities and accomplishments of the champions, by domain and setting type.

What to Measure

Numerical counts and qualitative descriptions. Reporting is done only when there are examples of champions who achieved significant results during the period assessed. The documentation for this indicator includes brief descriptions of selected champions' activities, accomplishments, and benefits to the site, organization, or community. Their activities may involve the following areas of activity:

- Providing leadership
- Promoting collaborations (e.g., establishing or strengthening partnerships, coalitions, committees)
- Producing innovations (e.g., initiating creative strategies to achieve nutrition and physical activity goals or to overcome barriers)
- Engaging in advocacy (working with community leaders and decision-makers to advance policies and institute best practices)

For aggregation purposes, the instances of champion activities may be assigned a level within the following categories. (If a champion has multiple roles, such as parent and community leader, the designated role can be the one that is most closely tied to that individual's champion activity.)

- **Domain:** Eat, learn, live, play, shop, and work
- **Role:** Youth, parent/caregiver, community member, staff/service provider, community leader/decision maker, local celebrity.

Population

Champions may be specific to different environmental settings or organizations, or to multiple sectors of influence.

Surveys and Data Collection Tools

Often champions will bubble up naturally because of the unusual contributions or close working relationships

with SNAP-Ed staff and partners. In other cases, it may be necessary to use qualitative approaches, identifying key informants and using individual or focus group interview approaches in the local setting. The key informants might represent organizations, agencies, stakeholder groups, individuals in the community, etc. For example, interviews with key informants can be used to identify who the champions in a community are. Individual interviews with the champion can be used to find out about the details of the champion's activity.

CDC. Data collection methods for program evaluation: Interviews. 2009. Evaluation brief #17.

<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/evaluation/pdf/brief17.pdf> CDC. Data collection methods for program evaluation: Focus groups. 2008. Evaluation brief #13.

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/evaluation/pdf/brief13.pdf> Additional evaluation tools to measure ST6 can be found in the [SNAP-Ed Library](#).

Key Glossary Terms

[glossary]Champions[/glossary]

Additional Resources or Supporting Citations

Resources that discuss champions: These Web sites will differ in their direct relevance to SNAP-Ed, but they all provide helpful perspective for understanding the general concept of champions more deeply, and how champions can impact a community.

- Center for Collaborative Planning <http://connectccp.org>
- Arizona Champions for Change (Arizona Nutrition Network) <http://www.eatwellbewell.org/>
- Champions for Change (Calif. Dept. of Public Health, Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Branch)
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DCDIC/NEOPB/Pages/ChampionsforChangeProgram.aspx>
- White House Champions of Change <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/champions>
- Change Lab Solutions <http://changelabsolutions.org>
- Texas Health Champion Award <https://sph.uth.edu/research/centers/dell/texas-obesity-awareness-week/about-the-texas-health-champion.htm>
- CDC
 - Parents for Healthy Schools
<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/parentengagement/parentsforhealthyschools.htm>
 - Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program Guide
http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/physicalactivity/pdf/13_242620-A_CSPAP_SchoolPhysActivityPrograms_Final_508_12192013.pdf
 - Increasing Access to Drinking Water in Schools
https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/npao/pdf/water_access_in_schools_508.pdf

Resource on analyzing data from interviews:

- CDC's general "Data Collection and Analysis" page
<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/evaluation/data.htm>

Publication describing factors found to influence successful social movements:

- Economos C, Brownson R, DeAngelis M, Foerster S, Foreman CT, Kumanyika S, Pate R, Gregson J.

What lessons have been learned from other attempts to guide social change? *Nutrition Reviews*. 2001: (II) S40-S56.