

# SNAP-Ed Cuts Hurt Millions of Americans

## IMPROVING THE HEALTH AND WELLNESS OF AMERICANS



*Young chef learns to cook*

## **SNAP-Ed HAS EDUCATED MILLIONS OF AMERICANS SINCE 1992 HAVING A DRAMATIC IMPACT ON HEALTH**

### **What is SNAP-Ed?**

SNAP-Ed is the nutrition education component of the USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP-Ed programs educate families and youth on making healthy food choices and choosing active lifestyles.

### **Why is SNAP-Ed important?**

It's no secret that the United States has an obesity problem and that our children are suffering from it. In Philadelphia alone, 30% of school age children struggle with overweight or obesity. Rising obesity threatens the next generation leading to a lifetime of weight related diseases like diabetes and overburdening our health care system. Thanks to programs like SNAP-Ed childhood obesity rates are starting to level off, even decrease slightly in some recent studies, but program cuts threaten that important progress.

### **Why does SNAP-Ed matter in Pennsylvania?**

For the first time in the last three decades, the childhood obesity rate in Philadelphia is decreasing instead of increasing. We are finally moving in the right direction, but there is much more work to do. The SNAP-Ed program is a critical part of the comprehensive approach that was employed in Philadelphia to get these results.

**SNAP-Ed work in Philadelphia reduced the incidence of childhood obesity among children by 50%.** This study showed that children receiving nutrition education and environmental supports through SNAP-Ed were less likely to gain weight in their early adolescent years than those that did not receive the program.

**In Pennsylvania, 229,943 individuals receive SNAP-Ed Services.** Adult participants report eating more low fat dairy products (22%) and reducing their daily intake of soda (13%), among other changes that contribute to good health.

### **How do SNAP-Ed cuts affect the program?**

The recently signed American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 requires significant reductions in SNAP-Ed funding for FY 2013. Nationally, funding has been reduced from \$394 million to \$285 million resulting in a \$7 million (28%) reduction in Pennsylvania's SNAP-Ed allocations. Pennsylvania has already received a pro-rata share of FY 2013 funding for the first half of the fiscal year provided through a continuing resolution. This action will result in a 48% reduction of the remaining allocation for the second half of FY 2013, a reduction which will affect and severely limit nutrition education to vulnerable low income Pennsylvanians and every SNAP-Ed program.

***“I am finding different ways to cook healthy and use things I have at home.”***

***– SNAP-Ed participant in Chester, Pennsylvania***

***“I find I am eating healthy and feeling better.”***

***– SNAP-Ed participant in Chester, Pennsylvania***



*Nicole Speller, grandmother and cook*

## **SNAP-Ed SUCCESS STORY**

Nicole lives in a row home in West Philadelphia, in a neighborhood where fresh, nutritious food is hard to find. She's in her 60s and wants to stay healthy into her senior years, but it can be tough to eat right on a budget with so few options available.

Last year, Nicole enrolled in a SNAP-Ed program. Each week, she joined 12 other adults for a free nutrition and cooking lesson at her neighborhood library. Many of the participants were parents of children at the local elementary school, where SNAP-Ed staff teach nutrition education. Nicole and her cooking class learned about healthy eating and prepared meals together. Nicole was the star chef, eager to share each week's recipe with her neighbors and her church group.

One week, the class visited a farmers' market and learned that they can use their SNAP benefits to buy fresh produce. Their favorite part was swapping recipes with the farmers. Another week, they visited a corner store in their neighborhood. "Healthy food at a corner store? No way!" one woman said, and the class erupted in laughter. They were amazed to learn about corner store owners selling fresh, healthy options. When they arrived at Rodriguez Mini-Mart they found whole wheat bread, fruit, skim milk, and healthy recipe cards.

This year, Nicole started teaching healthy cooking classes at her church twice a week and started working in the community garden. She uses the vegetables in her church cooking classes. One woman said, "I'm not going to eat squash. I don't like zucchini." But Nicole showed her how to cook them with some garlic and fresh herbs and she loved it. Nicole is sharing the skills she learned in SNAP-Ed with her community so everyone can benefit from the program.

### **TRACKS partners are a diverse group of agencies working together to deliver SNAP-Ed.**

Adagio Health  
Albert Einstein Healthcare Network  
Commission on Economic Opportunity  
Community Action Program of Lancaster County  
Center for Childhood Obesity Research  
Drexel University  
Fayette County Community Action Agency, Inc.  
The Food Trust  
Fulton County Food Basket, Inc.

Health Promotion Council of Southeastern Pennsylvania  
Maternal and Family Health Services, Inc.  
Penn State Extension  
Penn State University – College of Health and Human Development  
Pennsylvania Nutrition Education Network  
School District of Philadelphia  
Urban Nutrition Initiative  
Williamsport Area School District