2025

CREATE BETTER HEALTH™

CREATE BETTER HEALTH

ANNUAL REPORT YEAR 3

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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTORS

The Create Better Health team is proud to share highlights from Fiscal Year 2025. Through evidence-based nutrition education, policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) strategies, and innovative social marketing campaigns, our program supported individuals and families across Utah in building healthier habits and improving access to nutritious foods and opportunities for physical activity.

In FY2025, Create Better Health reached 13,503 individuals through direct nutrition education and impacted over 62,000 Utahns through community-level policy, systems, and environmental changes. These efforts occurred in schools, food pantries, community gardens, stores, and community centers across the state, helping create environments that make healthy choices easier and more accessible. Our social marketing initiatives further expanded our reach, generating over 2.3 million media impressions and connecting Utah families with practical tools and encouragement for healthy living.

This work would not be possible without the dedication of our Create Better Health ambassadors, Extension faculty and staff, and the hundreds of community partners who collaborate with us across urban and rural communities. Together, we continue to support diverse populations across the state, including youth, families, older adults, refugee communities, and tribal communities.

While this year reflects the continued success of SNAP-Ed programming in Utah, it also marks a time of transition. In July, we received notice that SNAP-Ed would no longer be federally funded in the coming years. The impact documented in this report represents what has been built over the culmination of decades of community engagement, innovation, and partnership. FY2025 is the final year of traditional SNAP-Ed, but it will not be the end of Create Better Health. The lessons learned, relationships built, and programs developed through the SNAP Ed program will continue to inform Create Better Health's structural pivot to continue strengthening nutrition security and improving health outcomes for Utah families.

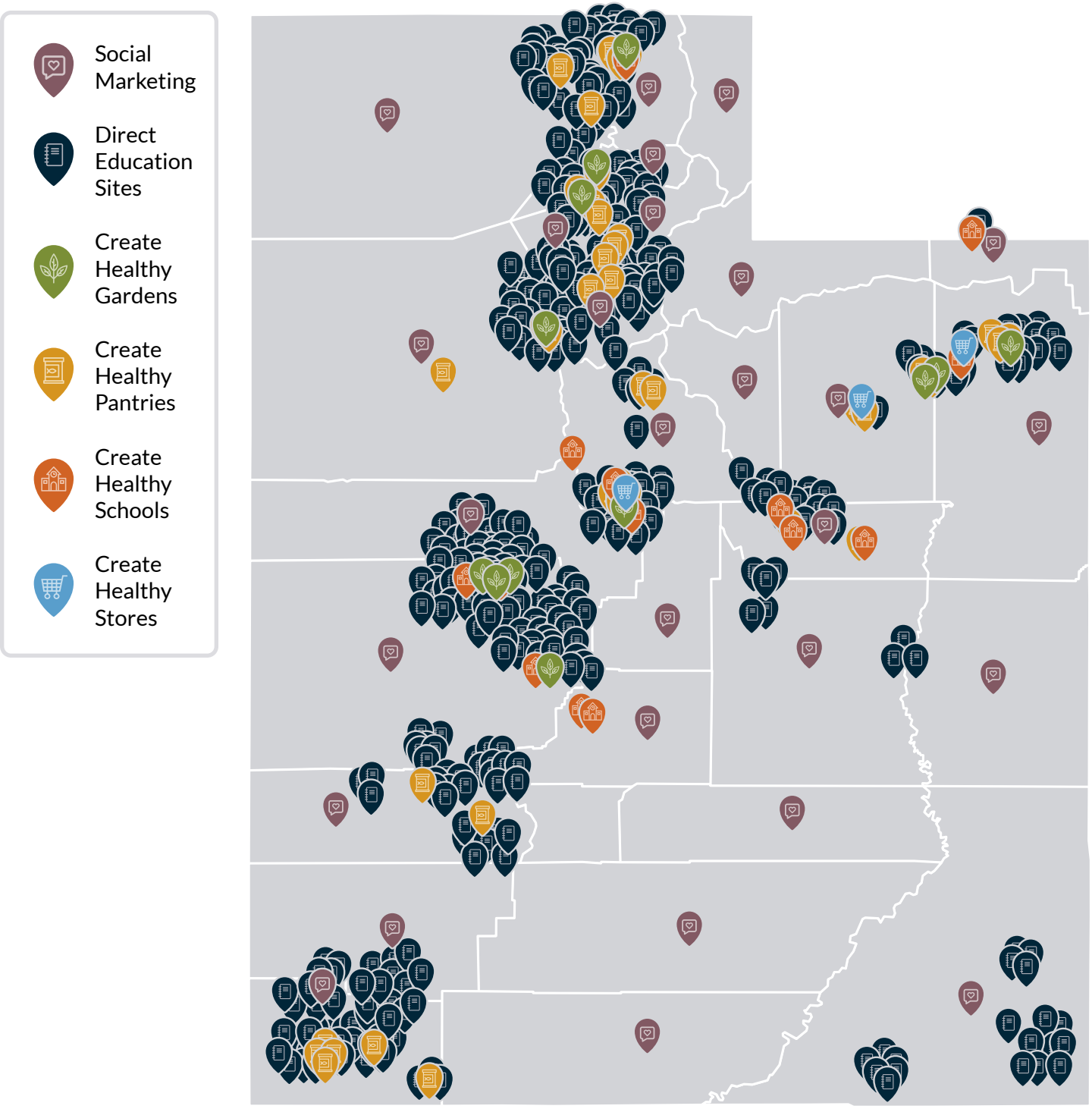
We remain deeply grateful to the community organizations, educators, volunteers, and participants who make this work possible. Your collaboration and commitment help ensure that individuals and families across Utah have the knowledge, resources, and support they need to create healthier futures.

With much appreciation,

Lea Palmer, MBA MPH RDN
Assistant Director & Manager

Heidi LeBlanc, MS
Director

2025 PROGRAMMING MAP



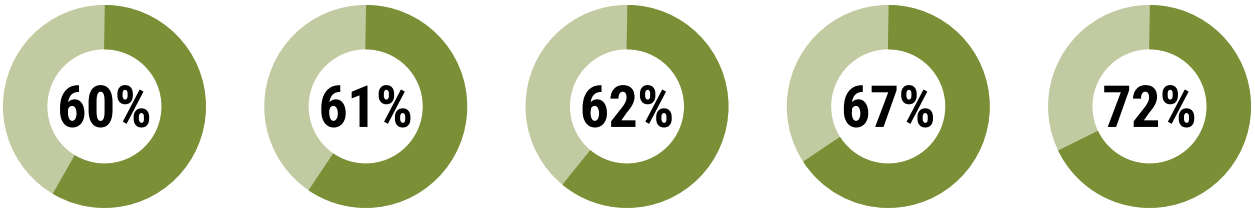
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Utah State University Extension Create Better Health program (Utah's SNAP-Ed) aims to improve the likelihood that persons eligible for SNAP will make healthy food choices within a limited budget and choose physically active lifestyles. Create Better Health takes a comprehensive approach to reducing obesity and chronic diseases among vulnerable populations in urban and rural locations.

Direct Education

13,503 people received direct education

Six months after participating in a SNAP-Ed class series, adult participants reported they:



eat vegetables more often | eat fruit more often | participate in physical activity more often | use the Nutrition Facts label more often | use MyPlate recommendations to make food choices more often

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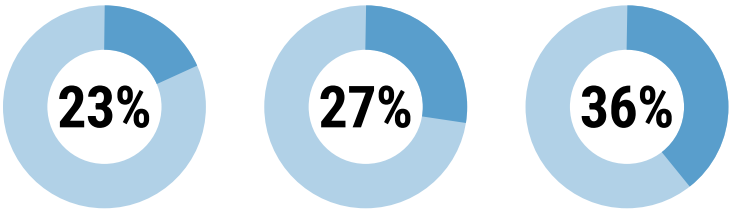
After participating in a Create Better Health Teens series, 6th-8th graders reported they:



eat vegetables more often | eat fruit more often | choose healthy snacks more often

Policy, Systems & Environment (PSE)

262	42	17	3	13
PSE Changes	Create Healthy Pantry Sites	Create Healthy Schools Sites	Create Healthy Stores Sites	Community Garden Sites

62,482 Utahns reached with PSE changes

Social Marketing

2,371,096	62,088	5,070	271
media impressions	SNAP-Ed eligible Utahns reached through e-newsletters	likes on TikTok	shares on YouTube

---

Partnerships

Multi-sector partnerships allowed Create Better Health (Utah's SNAP-Ed) to expand program reach and impacts

218 partnering organizations

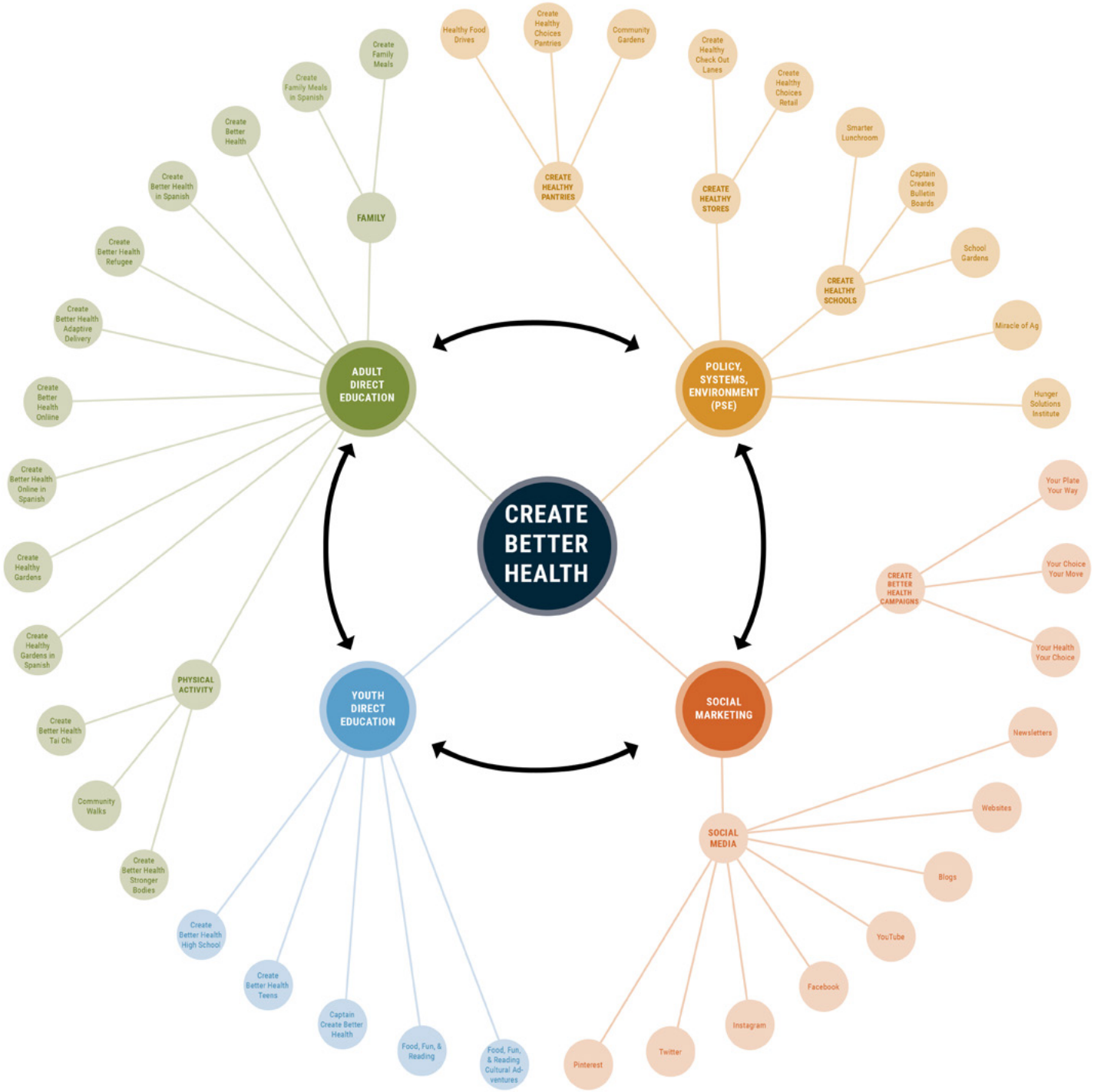
Other Achievements

974 students enrolled in the National Nutrition Certification Program

5 scholarly publications related to SNAP-Ed work were authored by Create Better Health directors and coordinators

UTAH'S SNAP-ED APPROACH

Create Better Health plays a crucial role in enhancing nutrition security by educating and supporting Utah families and individuals with limited resources. The program empowers participants to make healthier food choices on a budget through strategic programming, including nutrition education, social marketing, and PSE work. Emphasizing cultural relevance, SNAP-Ed tailors its programs to diverse backgrounds, incorporating culturally appropriate nutrition education and cooking techniques to engage participants effectively from childhood through adulthood. This approach fosters empowerment and ownership over health decisions, leading to sustained behavior change and improved nutrition security.



COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMMING

Create Better Health offers comprehensive SNAP-Ed programming, encompassing direct education, social marketing, and PSE changes. Direct education provides participants with skills and knowledge of nutrition, meal preparation, physical activity, and food resource management. PSE initiatives facilitate participants' ability to adopt healthy behaviors by making them accessible. As participants change health behaviors, social marketing strategies enhance the appeal and achievability of healthy choices by delivering impactful health messages and practical examples, guiding individuals toward healthier lifestyles. These combined efforts support a positive environment in which program participants can find success as they create better health.

DIRECT EDUCATION

Direct education is an evidence-based, behavior-focused nutrition education and physical activity intervention conducted at the individual and interpersonal levels with an intensity and duration that supports behavior change and allows for active engagement in-person or through interactive media.

Adults

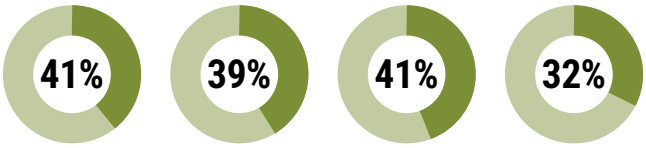
2,159* adults received nutrition education

**An additional 2,321 participants who did not report their age received nutrition education.*

CREATE BETTER HEALTH

A comprehensive nutrition education curriculum designed to teach adult and older adolescent SNAP-Ed participants how to eat well and be active on a budget. Each lesson focuses on a nutrition topic, a physical activity discussion, and a Create recipe demonstration sample. The curriculum has been adapted as an online course and culturally adapted for Latino and refugee audiences. In FY 2025, an adaptation of the curriculum for adults with intellectual disabilities and developmental delays (IDD) was piloted in multiple counties.

Since the beginning of the Create Better Health series, adults have reported that they:

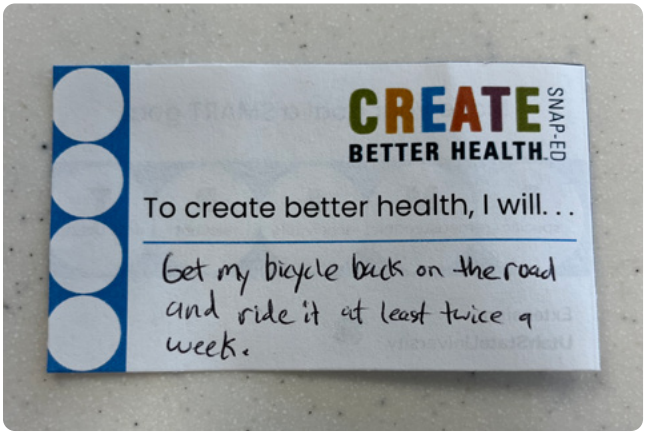


(n = 201) ate fruit more often

(n = 203) ate vegetables more often

(n = 201) did physical activity more often

(n = 288) were better able to stretch their food dollars to last the month



"I decided to try reducing my intake of added sugar this week, starting with my morning chai tea. I got the reduced sugar version, which was 17g of added sugar less than my usual. It cut the sugar more than in half."

- *Create Better Health participant*

Participants were excited to learn how to read and interpret the nutrition facts label. Several adults shared that they had rarely or never used the nutrition label before and expressed interest in applying the information to their own food choices. One participant commented,

"I'm so glad that we're learning about this today because I never understood what the percentages meant on the nutrition facts label! I'm going to look at them from now on."

Online course survey participants represented

17 counties in Utah

31 other states

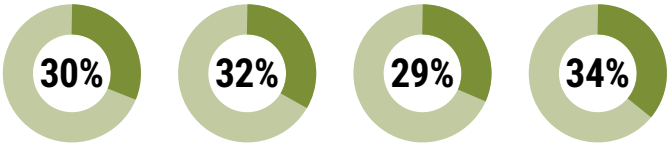
12 other countries

89 participants completed a Create Better Health Canvas course

"I learned that exercise can help me feel better and not be so anxious and depressed. I struggle with anxiety and depression a lot and I am beginning to realize that if I will go for a walk and exercise and get out in nature it will help me with my anxiety and depression."

- *Create Better Health participant with IDD*

Since the beginning of the Create Better Health series adapted for persons with IDD, participants reported they:



(n = 37) ate fruit more often

(n = 38) ate vegetables more often

(n = 38) drank sugar-sweetened beverages less often

(n = 38) used Nutrition Facts labels more often

CREATE FAMILY MEALS

A family-based nutrition education curriculum that engages children and parents or caregivers in meal preparation, emphasizing nutrition, food resource management, and food safety.

"My daughter coming to this class has made a positive difference in her eating habits and interest in cooking. She has started making healthier food choices and enjoys trying new recipes. The hands-on experience in the kitchen has boosted her confidence. Overall, the class has been a fun and great way to inspire my daughter to eat better and become more involved in cooking, helping with a lifelong appreciation for good food and cooking."

- *Create Family Meals participant*

CREATE HEALTHY GARDENS

A gardening and nutrition hybrid education series that helps participants learn how to cultivate, harvest, store, and prepare fresh vegetables and fruit.

"Our Fillmore Elementary Garden has been producing a lot of fresh produce this year. The families helped me plant tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini, yellow squash, butternut squash, spaghetti squash, eggplant, cauliflower, bell peppers, serrano peppers, and Anaheim peppers."

- *Create Healthy Gardens participant*

Youth

9,023* youth received nutrition education

**An additional 2,321 participants who did not report their age received nutrition education.*

FOOD, FUN AND READING

A nutrition education series designed for preschoolers to 2nd graders and their parents. Each lesson includes reading children's story book related to the nutrition topic, learning about MyPlate and nutrition, playing a physically active game, and tasting a healthy snack.

4,528 people attended Food, Fun and Reading classes

> **"[The Food, Fun and Reading program] fosters community connections, promotes literacy, and creates a welcoming space where everyone can explore the joys of reading and healthy eating."**
>
> - *Library Director*

862 classes were taught

91 locations statewide

KIDS CREATE BETTER HEALTH

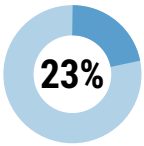
A nutrition education series designed for 1st to 6th graders. Lessons focus on a MyPlate Message, a fun physical activity or game, and tasting experience.

> **"I am reading the Nutrition Facts Label to look at how much added sugar is in the cereals and other foods that I have been eating. This helps me to eat less sugar."**
>
> - *Kids Create Better Health 4th grader*

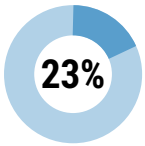
"I chose white milk at lunch today!"

- *Kids Create Better Health 1st grader*

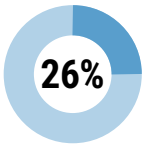
After participating in a Captain Create Better Health series, 3rd through 6th grade participants reported the following:



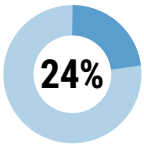
(n = 739) ate more fruit



(n = 732) ate more vegetables



(n = 731) chose healthy snacks more often



(n = 730) did physical activity more often

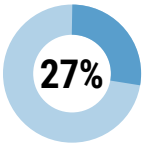
CREATE BETTER HEALTH FOR TEENS

A nutrition education series designed for 6th to 8th graders. Lessons focus on a MyPlate Message, a fun physical activity or game, and a healthy snack.

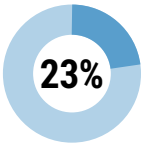
"The class has made a difference in [my child] wanting to cook more and eat different foods. She learned a lot."

- *Parent of Create Better Health Teens participant*

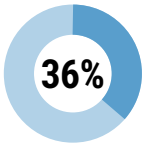
After participating in a Create Better Health for Teens series, 6th through 8th grade participants reported the following:



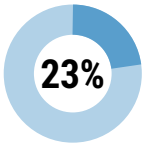
(n = 44) ate more fruit



(n = 44) ate more vegetables



(n = 44) chose healthy snacks more often



(n = 44) did physical activity more often

CREATE BETTER HEALTH HIGH SCHOOL

"I have been going to the gym more. I even got my dad involved!"

- *Create Better Health High School participant*

POLICY, SYSTEMS, AND ENVIRONMENT (PSE) CHANGE

A PSE change encompasses modifications, whether in writing or practice, that enhance accessibility to and desirability of nutritious food, beverages, or physical activity options at a site relevant and accessible to the SNAP-Ed audience.

62,482 Utahns were impacted by PSE changes

CREATE HEALTHY PANTRIES

"After the class I found all the ingredients [for the fruit salad with spinach] in the pantry. I was able to make that salad several times. It was a very enjoyable meal. I will continue to make it."

- Create Healthy Pantry participant

42 pantry sites

2 policy changes

38 sites implemented PSE changes

81 systems changes

4 sites were in the planning stage

62 environmental changes

53% Of pantries had an increase in the shelf space, amount, or variety of healthy food options

Over 3,198 pounds of fresh produce donated through healthy food drives, gleaning, and gardening projects

Over 4,234 pounds of healthy food items donated through healthy food drives and partnerships

"The community coordinator reached out to ask us for some recipes that could be used to create meal prep kits and that would be shelf stable. They used funds to purchase everything that would be needed for residents to assemble kits and had a day when residents could come and put together their meal kits to take home and use. Extra ingredients were compiled into meal kits that were put in the food pantry for families to take during pantry hours."

- Create Better Health Ambassador

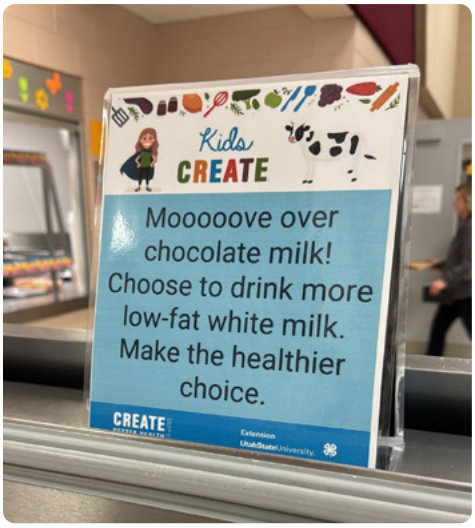
CREATE HEALTHY GARDENS

- **13** community garden sites
- **1** policy change
- **33** systems changes
- **25** environmental changes
- **12** sites implemented PSE changes
- **1** site was in the planning stage

"The zucchini plant and tomatoes did so well this season! I used them in soups, skillet meals, salsas, and frittatas. They tasted so good fresh and saved me a lot of money in my grocery budget."

- Create Healthy Gardens participant

CREATE HEALTHY SCHOOLS



- **17** school sites
- **1** policy change
- **15** systems changes
- **33** environmental changes
- **3** school garden sites
- **17** schools adopted ongoing, point-of-decision prompts to make a healthy eating or physical activity choice with Captain Create Bulletin Boards

"The school's kitchen manager shared that since putting up the Create Healthy Schools signs, she has noticed more children choosing to drink milk with their lunch."

- Create Better Health principal

CREATE HEALTHY STORES

- **3** store sites
- **1** systems change
- **5** environmental changes

SOCIAL MARKETING

By fostering a supportive online community with relatable messaging and visuals, Create Better Health empowered SNAP-Ed participants to make healthier choices. This digital approach provided accessible resources and encouragement, catalyzing positive behavior changes and cultivating a culture of well-being among participants.

CREATE BETTER HEALTH

2,371,096

media impressions

Spokespersons

Kelsey Braithwaite
Ambassador influencer
(general audience)

Michelle VanFleet
Ambassador influencer
(partner audience)

Sandra Vera
Ambassador influencer
(Latino/Hispanic audience)

Sydney Steele
Ambassador mascot, Captain Create
(youth & parent audience)

CHANNELS

PODCAST

270 Media impressions

PINTEREST

19,121 SNAP-Ed eligible people were reached (estimated)

E-NEWSLETTERS

62,088 SNAP-Ed eligible people were reached
2,647 Clicks

TIKTOK

357,448 Media impressions
123 Comments
5,070 Likes
299 Shares

WEBSITES

42,954 SNAP-Ed eligible people were reached (estimated)

FACEBOOK

67,488 SNAP-Ed eligible people were reached (estimated)

1,767 Clicks

LINKEDIN

1,158 Media impressions

YOUTUBE CHANNEL

8,353 SNAP-Ed eligible people were reached (estimated)

INSTAGRAM

117,722 SNAP-Ed eligible people were reached (estimated)

SUCCESS STORY

Empowering Utah Seniors: Nutrition, Connection & Food Access with Create Better Health

For several years, Create Better Health (SNAP-Ed) partnered with community organizations to help Utah's older adults stay active, confident in the kitchen, and connected. Efforts included nutrition education, physical activity classes, PSE interventions aimed to reach older adults, and social marketing.

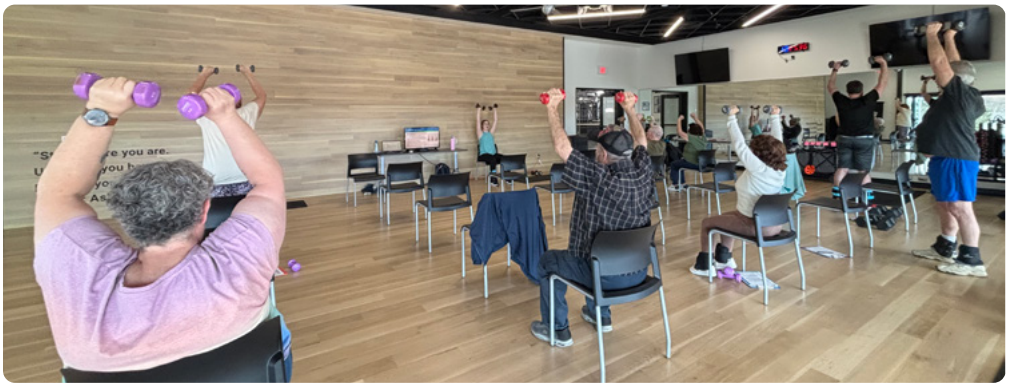
A key collaboration with the Utah Food Bank, Utah Health and Human Services, and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) raised awareness of CSFP resources and provided recipe demonstrations to make the most of monthly food boxes. In FY 2025, the team launched a CSFP cookbook, eight instructional cooking videos, and nutrition articles on topics like balanced eating and hydration. Surveys showed promising trends, including increased fruit and vegetable intake among participants.

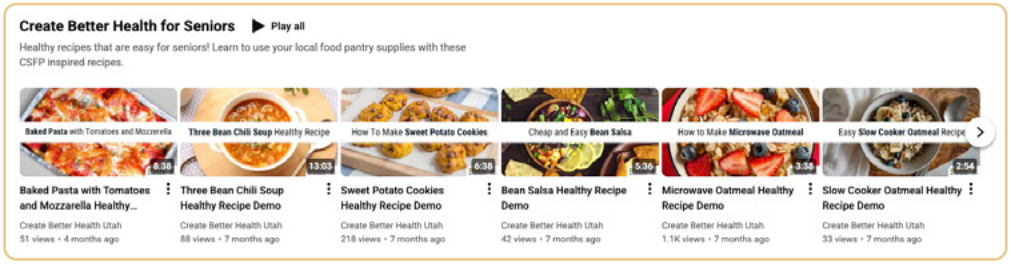
> "Your team's support has added so much value to seniors' lives."
>
> *- Utah Food Bank Food Box Program Manager*

Create Better Health also addressed real-world challenges. When a food bank had surplus peanut butter and oatmeal, the team created muffin kits and recipes—one participant shared, "I've already made the muffins three times! They're perfect for protein and fiber." In Tooele, thanks to Cargill funding, residents of a low-income apartments for older adults received $25 worth of healthy groceries and Create Better Health classes, encouraging choices like fresh produce, whole grains, and lean proteins. During one class, a resident unsure how to use beef stew meat worked with the ambassador to create a simple slow-cooker meal using items from her grocery bag. The next month, she proudly reported making beef stew and sharing it with neighbors.

> "I am 82 and I am still learning new things from [CBH]!"
>
> *- Create Better Health Participant*

Physical activity programs like Tai Chi and Strong People, Strong Bodies supported mobility and independence. In 2025, 144 older adults completed 24 SPSB classes, building strength, balance, and confidence. As one participant reflected, "I never knew how much of a difference stretching the right way could make."





COUNTY HIGHLIGHTS

Utah SNAP-Ed county work, under the guidance of Utah State University Extension faculty supervisors, engages directly with local residents to address their unique health needs. Tailored program delivery promotes nutrition education, physical activity, overall wellness, and healthier communities. This grassroots approach ensures relevance and effectiveness by considering local demographics, challenges, and resources, empowering residents for sustainable health improvements and fostering a sense of ownership within the community.

In FY 2025, some counties did not have a SNAP-Ed educator, or Create Better Health Ambassador, and are excluded from the following section. SNAP-Ed programming was available and delivered to all counties virtually and some counties engaged in limited in-person programming delivered by supervisors or ambassadors from other counties.

BEAVER COUNTY

Key Individual Impacts

471 people reached through direct education*

354 youth

15 adults

116 nutrition education classes taught

23% of 3rd-6th graders (n = 45) ate fruit more often

25% of 3rd-6th graders (n = 45) ate breakfast more often

23% of 3rd-6th graders (n = 45) participated in physical activity more often

Community Impacts

2 PSE sites

2 food pantries

5 PSE changes adopted or maintained

980 estimate of people reached through PSE interventions

Program Outreach

2,491 people reached through social media (potential duplication)

90 people reached at community events

Success Story

STRONG PEOPLE, STRONG BODIES

We had an older adult couple attend our Strong People, Strong Bodies class. They had GREAT attendance and were so grateful for every class. They ordered their own weights so they could continue at home. Now, every time I see them in the community, they make sure to tell me how much the class helped them and hope we can offer more in the future!

- Create Better Health Ambassador

**Age groups do not equal the total reach due to some participants not reporting their age.*

BOX ELDER COUNTY

Key Individual Impacts

1,451 people reached through direct education

1,116 youth

84 adults

177 nutrition education classes taught

Community Impacts

2 PSE sites

2 food pantries

6 PSE changes adopted or maintained

11,432 estimate of people reached through PSE interventions

1,275 pounds of fresh produce grown and donated

Program Outreach

513 people reached at community events (potential duplication)

41,044 people reached through social media (potential duplication)

Success Story

THEY LOVED THEM ALL!

"NourishEd truly got the kids at the Boys and Girls Club excited about local fresh fruits and vegetables. I was always surprised by how many extra kids wanted to attend the classes (it was up to them if they attended NourishEd or another activity) and how excited they were to try the recipes we made together. They loved them all! We made kale chips, fresh salsa, melon sorbets, and peach smoothies. I was shocked by how much they loved the kale chips. Not a single kale chip went uneaten. Never are recipes so universally loved among the kids I teach, but the fact that they got to help make the recipes made them more excited and willing to try them. The kids also loved getting to take home a bag of fresh produce for their families. The kids were so eager to try the produce in the bags that they sometimes ate things raw while I was handing them out, like raw kale and bell peppers. These NourishEd classes were a great way to get kids more excited about locally grown produce and helped them think about fruits and vegetables more positively."

-Box Elder Ambassador

CACHE COUNTY

Key Individual Impacts

696 people reached through direct education*

591 youth

79 adults

84 nutrition education classes taught

Community Impacts

4 PSE sites

1 elementary school

1 food pantry

1 community garden

12 PSE changes adopted or maintained

3,152 estimate of people reached through PSE interventions

Program Outreach

305

people reached at community events or with handouts (potential duplication)

2,277

people reached through social media (potential duplication)

Success Stories

BRINGING NUTRITION TO LIFE

A Cache County ambassador led a nutrition education lesson for early teens at a local middle school, covering topics such as healthy choices, balanced meals, and the importance of physical activity. By connecting the curriculum to students' everyday lives, the ambassador helped make the lessons relatable and actionable. Students were encouraged to consider how they could apply these habits at home and in their daily routines, creating a meaningful bridge between classroom learning and real-life practice.

GOAL SETTING

"I set a goal to add two healthy foods every day...I've also been trying to stand up more instead of sitting down."

-Create Better Health participant

**Age groups do not equal the total reach due to some participants not reporting their age.*

CARBON COUNTY

Key Individual Impacts

230 people reached through direct education*

151 youth

78 adults

62 nutrition education classes taught

Community Impacts

5 PSE sites

2 food pantries

3 schools

13 PSE changes adopted or maintained

971 estimate of people reached through PSE interventions

Program Outreach

2,836 people reached through social media (potential duplication)

150 people reached at community events (potential duplication)

Success Story

HANDS ON HEALTHY EATING

During the Helper Library Summer Reading Program, the CBH ambassador delivered Food, Fun, and Reading lessons to introduce healthy eating concepts in an engaging, age-appropriate way. Participants practiced basic food preparation skills while creating their own "Rainbow Pizza." Older youth safely diced and sautéed vegetables, while younger participants helped spread sauce on whole wheat pita bread. Each child prepared an individual pizza featuring all MyPlate food groups. Youth showed excitement and pride in preparing and tasting their creations, demonstrating increased confidence, food skills, and positive attitudes toward healthy eating.

Age groups do not equal the total reach due to some participants not reporting their age.

DAVIS COUNTY

Key Individual Impacts

1,525 people reached through direct education*

821 youth

577 adults

237 nutrition education classes taught

Community Impacts

8 PSE sites

7 food pantries

701 pounds of fresh produce donations

1 community garden

34 PSE changes adopted or maintained

12,334 estimate of people reached through PSE interventions

Program Outreach

5,016

people reached at community events, with handouts or newsletters (potential duplication)

16,581

people reached through social media (potential duplication)

Success Story

GREEN SMOOTHIES ARE A BIG HIT

This summer Davis County Ambassadors taught Kids Create during a summer program with Francis Peak View Apartments. During the fruits and vegetables lesson, we made a green smoothie using spinach, frozen mango, bananas, Greek yogurt, and orange juice.

One of the girls was all grins and giggles after trying the green smoothie and asked for more. She had a green smoothie moustache above her big smile. She drank a full cup of her own and wanted the recipe to take home to her mom! She later reported, “We make smoothies every day!”

**Age groups do not equal the total reach due to some participants not reporting their age.*

DUCHESNE COUNTY

Key Individual Impacts

453 people reached through direct education

203 youth

250 adults

41 nutrition education classes taught

Community Impacts

7 PSE sites

2 gardens

2 food pantries

1 garden in planning stage

2 other emergency food distribution sites

1 store

29 PSE changes adopted or maintained

4,718 estimate of people reached through PSE interventions

Program Outreach

3,070

people reached at community events or with handouts (potential duplication)

1,893

people reached through social media (potential duplication)

Success Story

HIGH YIELD AT PANTRY GARDEN

The Roosevelt Pantry Garden strengthened food access in Duchesne County by providing 2,319 pounds of fresh produce to the local food pantry during the growing season. This effort was made possible by 81 hours of volunteer service, with community members working together to plant, tend, and harvest the garden.

Through shared effort, the pantry garden turned volunteer time into fresh, locally grown food for neighbors in need—demonstrating how community collaboration can support healthier choices and stronger connections across Duchesne County.

EMERY COUNTY

Key Individual Impacts

184 people reached through direct education*

25 youth

11 adults

43 nutrition education classes taught

Program Outreach

2,121

people reached at community events or with handouts (potential duplication)

4,771

people reached through social media (potential duplication)

Success Story

In preparation for the Super Bowl, Create Better Health assembled special "take-home kits" at the Emery County Food Bank featuring the ingredients for a hearty, healthy bean-based dip. The kits included canned beans, diced tomatoes, corn, green chilies, and fresh onions—everything except a green pepper and a bottle of Italian salad dressing—and each kit came with a simple recipe and serving ideas, such as using the dip with chips or as a topping for baked potatoes.

A mother and her teenage son stopped by, and while she accepted a sample, she hesitated to take a kit, explaining that her son "detested" beans and she didn't want to make a large batch that only she would eat. The staff gently suggested that it might be a dish his friends would enjoy during a game—maybe even something he would like as well—and the teen agreed to try a bite.

"Wait… this actually tastes really good," he said, surprised. "I didn't think I liked beans!"

Age groups do not equal the total reach due to some participants not reporting their age.

JUAB COUNTY

Key Individual Impacts

521 people reached through direct education*

436 youth

40 adults

146 nutrition education classes taught

27% of 3rd-6th graders (n = 33) participated in physical activity more often

27% of 3rd-6th graders (n = 33) chose healthy snacks more often

Community Impacts

10 PSE sites

4 elementary schools

4 new emergency food distribution sites

1 store

18 PSE changes adopted or maintained

1,328 estimate of people reached through PSE interventions

Program Outreach

27,450 people reached at community events, signage, or with handouts (potential duplication)

1,972 people reached through social media (potential duplication)

Success Story

GRATEFUL PARENTS

"Class members in Juab learned that regular activity has many benefits. A class participant decided to start walking regularly. He found that even walking just five blocks each day improved his mood, helping him feel happier and think more positively. Another participant added that walking also helps with managing anxiety, highlighting the mental health benefits of simple exercise.

After suggesting they occasionally walk together to boost communication and positivity, with the possibility of increasing their walking distance over time. This small group effort aimed to build both physical endurance and a possible friendship. These two participants, now friends, are still walking together and have increased the amount of walking they are doing."

- Juab County Create Better Health Ambassador

**Age groups do not equal the total reach due to some participants not reporting their age.*

MILLARD COUNTY

Key Individual Impacts

2,127 people reached through direct education

1,975 youth

136 adults

434 nutrition education classes taught

24% of 3rd - 6th graders (n = 252) ate fruit more often

26% of youth ate vegetables more often

28% of youth increased how often they choose healthy snacks

27% of 3rd-6th graders (n = 252) did physical activity more often

Community Impacts

8 PSE sites

4 community gardens

3 elementary schools

1 food pantry

45 PSE changes adopted or maintained

4,758 estimate of people reached through PSE interventions

Program Outreach

31,588

people reached at community events, signage, or with handouts (potential duplication)

1,519

people reached through social media (potential duplication)

Success Stories

RIPPLES OF IMPACT

This year, a high school student who once participated in Create Better Health lessons as an elementary student reached out to her former educator. Now serving as Miss Millard, she shared that her platform, Healthy Child, Happier Life, focuses on promoting nutrition and wellness among youth. She recalled making fun, healthy treats in class and said those experiences stayed with her over time. Inspired by that foundation, she requested a partnership to co-deliver a lesson and prepare a healthy snack with students, showcasing how early nutrition education can spark lifelong habits and leadership.

SALT LAKE COUNTY

Key Individual Impacts

1,329 people reached through direct education*

979 youth

301 adults

419 nutrition education classes taught

47% of adults (n = 99) ate vegetable more often

43% of adults (n = 99) did physical activity more often

40% of adults (n = 99) were better able to stretch their food dollars to last the month

23% of 3rd-6th graders (n = 187) chose healthy snacks more often

22% of 3rd-6th graders (n = 187) did physical activity more often

*Age groups do not equal the total reach due to some participants not reporting their age.

Community Impacts

3 PSE sites

1 food pantry

1 homeless resource center

1 farmers market

9 PSE changes adopted or maintained

1,651 estimate of people reached through PSE interventions

Program Outreach

2,051 people reached at community events or with handouts (potential duplication)

404 people reached through social media (potential duplication)

Success Story

SHARING HEALTHY HABITS AT HOME

During a third-grade dairy lesson, students prepared yogurt parfaits while learning about healthy snacks they could make at home. The hands-on activity encouraged students to think about how nutrition lessons could apply beyond the classroom. After the lesson, one student asked for the recipe, eager to share it at home, saying, "I can show my mom how to make this. She will love this. Then she will take care of her body too."

The CBH ambassador reflected that while students are not yet responsible for grocery shopping, they are developing awareness of healthier food choices and learning to recognize better options when shopping with their families.

Returning to the classroom each year allows lessons to build on previous learning, reinforcing nutrition concepts over time. This early, cumulative approach helps shape how children think about food and supports the development of lifelong healthy habits.

SAN JUAN COUNTY

Key Individual Impacts

414 people reached through direct education

328 youth

86 adults

58 nutrition education classes taught

37% 6th-8th graders (n = 30) ate fruit more often

23% 6th-8th graders (n = 30) ate vegetables more often

37% 6th-8th graders (n = 30) chose healthy snacks more often

20% 6th-8th graders (n = 30) did physical activity more often

Program Outreach

463

people reached at community events or with handouts (potential duplication)

1,883

people reached through social media (potential duplication)

Success Story

TEEN NUTRITION PROGRAM

Create Better Health San Juan County paired up with community partners to provide nutrition education classes to teens in San Juan County. Two hundred and thirty-seven youth participated in classes learning about properly fueling the body, the importance of physical activity and reducing the consumption of foods with added sugars.

SEVIER COUNTY

Key Individual Impacts

35 youth reached through direct education

21 nutrition education classes taught

Community Impacts

3 PSE sites at elementary schools

3 PSE changes adopted or maintained

989 estimate of people reached through PSE interventions

Program Outreach

100 people reached at community events

6,777 people reached through social media (potential duplication)

Success Story

WELLNESS REMINDERS

Create Better Health supported nutrition and wellness education in Sevier County through engaging visual outreach at Ashman and Pahvant Elementary Schools. Bulletin boards were strategically placed in school lunchrooms, reaching students daily in an environment where food choices and healthy habits were on their minds.

TOOELE COUNTY

Key Individual Impacts

259 people reached through direct education*

220 youth

38 adults

95 nutrition education classes taught

Community Impacts

3 PSE sites

1 food pantry

1 community garden

1 1 other food distribution site

16 PSE changes adopted or maintained

2,559 people reached at the site

Program Outreach

175

people reached at community events (potential duplication)

2,058

people reached through social media (potential duplication)

Success Story

GROWING COMMUNITY FOOD ACCESS IN TOOELE COUNTY

The Create Better Health ambassador in Tooele County expanded access to fresh, nutritious food by connecting community gardens, youth volunteers, and hunger relief partners. Working with the Switchpoint- Tooele Food Pantry, which serves approximately 2,500 individuals each month, the ambassador led efforts at the Benson Grist Mill Garden, strengthening its role as a community food resource. She recruited families to participate in family garden plots and coordinated donations of fresh, locally grown produce to the food pantry throughout the summer and fall. Through a partnership with the Boys & Girls Club, youth volunteers helped maintain the garden while gaining hands-on experience with growing food. Participating youth were also able to take fresh produce home to their families, extending the garden's impact beyond the site. She also organized a healthy food drive within her office building, collecting over 40 pounds of nutritious food to support pantry distribution.

*Age groups do not equal the total reach due to some participants not reporting their age.

UINTAH AND DAGGETT COUNTIES

Key Individual Impacts

UINTAH

81 people reached through direct education

70 youth

5 adults

44 nutrition education classes taught

DAGGETT

17 youth reached through direct education

4 nutrition education classes taught

Community Impacts

UINTAH

8 PSE sites

1 store

2 schools

1 garden

4 pantries

43 PSE changes adopted or maintained

10,376 estimate of people reached through PSE interventions

DAGGETT

1 elementary school

1 PSE change adopted

200 estimate of people reached through PSE interventions

Program Outreach

2,947 people reached at community events or with handouts (potential duplication)

4,777 people reached through social media (potential duplication)

Success Stories

TOWER GARDEN PILOT

Create Better Health partnered with the USANA Foundation to pilot garden towers in select counties, expanding opportunities for hands-on food access and nutrition engagement. Two towers were placed at the Golden Age Center, a residential community serving older adults.

A variety of vegetables were planted, including tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, and squash. The project encouraged engagement, responsibility, and connection while increasing access to fresh vegetables. Residents and staff embraced caring for the tower and used the harvested produce in meals served at the center.

UTAH COUNTY

Key Individual Impacts

127 people reached through direct education*

50 youth

67 adults

89 nutrition education classes taught

Community Impacts

2 PSE sites at food pantries

4 PSE changes adopted or maintained

203 estimate of people reached through PSE interventions

Program Outreach

400

people reached at community events

1,647

people reached through social media (potential duplication)

Success Story

NOURISH ED

The NourishEd series in Utah County brought families together around food, learning, and connection. At the South Franklin Community Center, fresh produce donations from the Community Action Food Pantry allowed families to put lessons into practice right away.

Participants, parents, and volunteers shared positive feedback about the hands-on classes. Parents noted that children were more willing to try new fruits and vegetables, and families felt more confident preparing healthy meals at home. As one parent shared, "My kids were excited to try foods they normally wouldn't eat, and we've started making some of the recipes at home." The NourishEd series supported healthier habits while creating a welcoming space for families to learn, share, and grow together.

Age groups do not equal the total reach due to some participants not reporting their age.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Key Individual Impacts

1,473 people reached through direct education*

964 youth

82 adults

259 nutrition education classes taught

23% 3rd-6th graders (n = 200) ate fruit more often

24% 3rd-6th graders (n = 200) ate vegetables more often

24% 3rd-6th graders (n = 200) chose healthy snacks more often

23% of 3rd-6th graders (n = 200) did physical activity more often

Community Impacts

6 PSE sites

2 food pantries

4 pantries in planning stage

3 PSE changes adopted or maintained

240 estimate of people reached through PSE interventions

Program Outreach

7,438 people reached at community events or with handouts (potential duplication)

3,156 people reached through social media (potential duplication)

Age groups do not equal the total reach due to some participants not reporting their age.

Success Story

A FAMILIAR FACE

For many years, Cheryl, the Washington County ambassador, has been a familiar face at LaVerkin Elementary, teaching students the importance of healthy habits. Through consistent lessons and engaging activities, these students have grown in both knowledge and understanding. This year marked a special moment, the ambassador's final visit. During the last class, students proudly recalled much of what they had learned over the years, sharing their insights and demonstrating how far they've come.

From learning about MyPlate and balanced meals to participating in fun activities like making smoothies on a blender bike, the ambassador has helped lay a strong foundation for lifelong health.

"I hope that these children will carry these lessons forward, growing into healthy adults who raise healthy families of their own."

- Washington County Ambassador

WEBER COUNTY

Key Individual Impacts

1,846 people reached through direct education*

437 youth

123 adults

134 nutrition education classes taught

34% of adults (n = 36) ate fruit more often

28% of adults (n = 36) ate vegetables more often

31% of adults (n = 36) did physical activity more often

42% of adults (n = 36) used MyPlate for food choices more often

Community Impacts

3 PSE sites

1 food pantry

2 community gardens

10 PSE changes adopted or maintained

2,518 estimate of people reached through PSE interventions

Program Outreach

1,879 people reached at community events (potential duplication)

4,594 people reached through social media (potential duplication)

Success Stories

CABEZA, HOMBROS, RODILLAS Y LOS PIE

During a dairy nutrition lesson, students learned about calcium and its role in building strong bones. To reinforce both nutrition and physical activity, the ambassador led the class in "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes" in Spanish—Cabeza, Hombros, Rodillas y los Pies—to support the many Spanish-speaking students in the classroom. The activity was met with immediate excitement and participation from all students. The activity has continued in the classroom, supporting movement, language inclusion, and joyful learning.

"Once you left, the kids kept requesting over and over again to do the Spanish head, shoulders, knees, and toes song."

- Classroom Teacher

**Age groups do not equal the total reach due to some participants not reporting their age.*

CREATE BETTER HEALTH (SNAP-ED) TEAM

In the kitchen of Create Better Health, teamwork is the secret ingredient that turns recipes from ordinary into extraordinary. Just as each ingredient in a recipe plays a crucial role in flavor and nutrition, every member of the Create Better Health team brings their unique skills and perspective to the table. Whether it's building partnerships, advocating for healthier food options, or providing nutrition education, each contribution adds depth and richness to the collective effort.

CREATE BETTER HEALTH AMBASSADORS

Nutrition educators and representatives of Create Better Health who treasure their communities and model SNAP-Ed behaviors in their own lives.

Beaver – Allie Laub Bradshaw
Box Elder – Kelsey Braithwaite Fairbourn
Cache – Habiba Nur, Trhas Tafere
Carbon – Harim Driggs
Davis – Amberly Lambertsen, Madison McArthur
Duchesne – Mercedis Zismer
Emery – Barbra Jones
Juab – Laurie Bates
Millard – Mary Anna Henke
Salt Lake – Zeynab Ahmed, Habiba Nur, Jennifer Parke, Laura Streeter, Sandra Vera, Shaysta Parsa
San Juan – Suzanna Clark-Nakai
Sevier – Mallory Beatty
Tooele – Jessica Percival
Uintah – Tammy McKee
Utah – Kate Christensen
Washington – Cheryl Lines
Weber – Jenny Hawkins, Makayla Hemmert
Social Marketing – Amberly Lambertsen, Sydney Steele, Michelle Vanfleet, Sandra Vera

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Create Better Health recognizes and appreciates all the Ambassadors whose work is included in this report who no longer work as Ambassadors for the program.

Cache – Mayra Estrada, Ingrid Sanchez
Uintah – Tammy McKee
Weber – Jenny Hawkins
Salt Lake – Zeynab Ahmed
San Juan – Tamela Willie
Sevier – Aarika Viula
Utah – Kate Christensen
Social Marketing – Sydney Carpenter

SUPERVISORS & STATE OFFICE

County SNAP-Ed Supervisors

Beaver – Cindy Nelson
Box Elder – Kristen Koci
Cache – Jenna Dyckman
Carbon – Christina Pay
Davis – Emma Parkhurst
Duchesne – Yvette Rea
Juab – Emma Lopez
Millard – Eva Timothy
Salt Lake – Melanie Jewkes
San Juan – Ryan Benally
Sevier – Anna Gilliam
Summit – Jared Hawkins
Tooele – Darlene Christensen
Uintah – Cara Murray
Utah – Cindy Jenkins
Washington – Andrea Schmutz
Weber – Sadie Wilde

Create Better Health recognizes and appreciates all the Supervisors whose work is included in this report who no longer work for the program.

Juab – Melanie Dabb
Millard – Eva Timothy

State Office

Director – Heidi LeBlanc
Assistant Director/Program Manager – Lea Palmer
Latino Programming Director – Celina Wille
Interim Latino Programming Director – Maria José Velasco Burgos
Native American Programming Director – Ryan Benally
Evaluation Specialists – Cris Meier & Lendel Narine
Program Assistants – Abby May, Macy Bryant & Sarah Best
Expansion Coordinator – Abby May
Program Assistant – Sarah Best
Business Services Manager – Carol Ann Downs
Direct Education Coordinator – Kristi Strongo
Graphic Designer – Olivia Yeip
Latino Program Coordinator – Paola Johnson
Policy, System, and Environment Coordinator – Amberly Lambertsen
Refugee Program Coordinator – Habiba Nur
Reporting Coordinator – LaCee Jimenez

Create Better Health recognizes and appreciates all the State Office team members whose work is included in this report who no longer work for the program.

Business Services Manager – Liz Cerenzie
Engagement and Training Coordinator – Marcia Gertge
State Interns – Macy Bryant, Charbine McBride & Jinjer Smith
Website Manager – Jocelin Gibson

ADDITIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

National Nutrition Certification Program

Utah SNAP-Ed provided free paraprofessional nutrition education training through the National Nutrition Certification Program. In fiscal year 2024:

Program enrollment totaled **974 participants**

Participants were from **36 states**

The program certified **386 individuals**

The top programs or entities who utilized the certification program were:

- SNAP-Ed
- EFNEP
- WIC
- Cooperative Extension
- Public Health Departments
- Community Health Programs
- Food Pantries
- Members of the Society of Nutrition Education and Behavior
- High School Students

UTAH FOOD SECURITY COUNCIL

Utah's Food Security Council, formally known as the Utah State Nutrition Action Coalition, completed its third year as a codified council. Create Better Health (SNAP-Ed) is one of the official council members and fulfills additional roles to address nutrition security in Utah.

STATEWIDE IMPACTS

In partnership with Utah Hunger Solutions Institute, SNAP-Ed supported Nourish Tank, an innovative program to address hunger. One project, NourishEd, was piloted this past year in multiple counties.

NATIONAL IMPACTS

Create Better Health (SNAP-Ed) provided leadership on the Association of SNAP Nutrition Education Administrators leadership team and chaired multiple professional organization committees.

Awards

National Extension Association of Family & Consumer Sciences, Excellence in Teamwork Award

- 3rd Place Regional

Publications

Coombs, C., Savoie-Roskos, M. R., Farnsworth, A., Jimenez, L., & LeBlanc, H. (2025). Assessing the impact of multilevel comprehensive programming on SNAP-Ed participant behaviors. Health Promotion Practice, 26(2), 287–295. https://doi.org/10.1177/15248399231218938

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Johnson, B., Jimenez, L., Palmer, L., & LeBlanc, H. (2024). Assessing the Impact of the SNAP-Ed Social Marketing Campaign. Outcomes and Impact Quarterly, 4(4). https://doi.org/10.59620/2995-2220.1086

Millward, C., Lyman, K., Lucero, S., LeCheminant, J. D., Jenkins, C., Strongo, K., Snow, G., LeBlanc, H., Palmer, L., & Richards, R. (2025). Evaluation of diet quality, physical health, and mental health baseline data from a wellness intervention for individuals living in transitional housing. Nutrients, 17(15), 2563. https://doi.org/10.3390/nu17152563

Strongo, K., Coombs, C., LeCheminant, J. D., Merrill, C., Jenkins, C., LeBlanc, H., Smith, M. W., Bell, M., Skidmore, B. K., & Richards, R. (2025). Formative qualitative research informs tailoring SNAP-Ed curriculum for transitional housing residents. Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior, 57(4), 338–344. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2025.01.004

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addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **mail**: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

2. **fax**: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

3. **email**: program.intake@usda.gov.

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1475 Old Main Hill, Logan, UT 84322

For further information regarding non-discrimination, please visit crtix.usu.edu or contact:

U.S. Department of Education
Denver Regional Office
303-844-5695
OCR.Denver@ed.gov

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
800-421-3481
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