

Partnership to Programming

Engaging with Community Partners Guide

A primary goal of Create Better Health is building relationships with community groups or partners. Our program mission says, ***“We work with partners to provide food and nutrition education to people in need in a way that inspires public confidence and supports American agriculture.”***

Community partners are experts in their community and a valuable part of Create Better Health programming. Working together with partners and community helpers allows you to:

- Better understand the needs and priorities in your community
- Build trust and increase buy-in
- Generate a wider reach in your community
- Increase access to your target population
- Assist with project funding
- Distribute the workload

Step 1: Identifying Community Partners

Community partners should be existing groups in the community that already serve the target population. *Which community groups are involved with food security, education, food access, etc.?* Consider what input you want from partners or stakeholders at every stage of the program. Engaging community partners and other people involved helps show clear promises to ensure that the project is serving the community.

Tips for identifying community partners:

- Talk with your supervisor, partners you already have, and community members with diverse backgrounds and perspectives.
- Use the eligibility map on the staff website to identify eligible sites and potential partners that you are not reaching yet.
- Search your area online or walk around the neighborhood to see what businesses, organizations, and community groups are in the area.

- Research your potential partnerships to learn more about their organization and how our program goals may overlap with theirs.

Tips for identifying partnership contributions:

- Consider how you will include groups of people, voices, and perspectives that have been underrepresented or left out of decision-making in the past.
- Decide how you will involve decision-makers, both in Create Better Health and in partner groups.
 - Who manages the resources that you need for your project?
 - Who is involved in shaping policies and systems?
 - Who can assist with needed approvals?
- Identify supports. A supporter is someone who has influence, connection, and enthusiasm for your project. If you can find a champion or two, they can help you engage others, build buy-in, and address challenges.
- Identify resources needed for a program activity. This can help in planning discussions as partnering groups decide which contributions they have the capacity for.

Building Comprehensive Partnerships

Comprehensive Programming with a Community Partner

Strong partnerships can form when one partner offers multiple types of programming, like in-person classes, online resources, policy and system changes, and social marketing. Combining these efforts helps partners meet more community needs and makes a bigger difference overall.

Example 1: A food pantry with a community garden distributes recipe bags with fresh produce to clients with a CBH recipe, each bag also contains an invitation to connect with virtual CBH classes in English or Spanish.

Example 2: Participants come to the local food pantry for a CBH class. Directly after class, they have an early entry to shop at the pantry that also participates in the Thumbs Up program.

Example 3: An elementary school teaching Kids Create also has Captain Create posters and a bulletin board in the cafeteria supporting the lessons being taught in the classrooms.

Comprehensive Program Activities Involving Multiple Partners

Sometimes, several partners can work together to strengthen one program area. It often helps to team up with more than one group to fill classes or coordinate PSE changes. For example, instead of only promoting a class through one community center, try also reaching out to schools, food pantries, or other programs to spread the word. Another example, connect with the health department, local library, and city offices to host a food drive that will benefit the community food pantry. You can also ask your current partners if they know of any other groups that might want to join.

Example 1: Consider partnering with libraries, childcare, home visiting programs, schools, or community non-profit that already sees young children or pregnant/new mothers to plan a recurring event at park where kids can learn and play.

Example 2: Consider collaborating with community centers or faith-based groups as potential partners and hosts for the sessions.

Example 3: Consider collaborating with organizations serving school-age youth; consider partnering with schools, after-school programs, YMCA/Girls and Boys Clubs, 4-H, community centers, or churches.

Examples of Community Partners

Here are some groups that may be available, though not all options are possible in every community.

<p>Addiction prevention recovery groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addict II Athlete • Campaign for a Drug Free Neighborhood • High School Substance Abuse Committee 	<p>Advisory Community Support Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends of the library • Neighborhood Park advisory council
<p>Mentoring Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After school mentors • Peer mentoring groups • Church mentoring groups • Big brothers, big sisters 	<p>Mutual Support Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent-to-parent groups • Family-to-family groups
<p>Neighborhood Improvement Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood garden club • Clean-up campaign 	<p>Business Organizations/Support Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Chamber of Commerce • Economic Development Councils

<p>Charitable Groups and Drives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local hospital auxiliary • Local United Way 	<p>Civic Events Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local parade planning committee • Arts and crafts fair • July 4th carnival committee • Health fair committee
<p>Religious Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Churches • Mosques • Synagogues • Men's Religious Groups • Women's Religious Groups • Youth Religious Groups 	<p>Health Advocacy Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local health department • Health council • Hospital advisory board • YMCA/YWCA
<p>Service Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotary clubs • Lions club • Kiwanis club 	<p>Youth Serving Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-H • After school groups • Girl Scouts • Scouting America
<p>Education Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local school council • Local book clubs • Parent-teacher association • Literacy council • Tutoring groups 	<p>Social Cause/Advocacy/Issue Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace club • Hunger organizations • Community action council • Social outreach ministry • Soup kitchen group
<p>Elderly Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospital senior groups • Senior clubs • Church senior clubs • Senior living centers 	<p>Environment Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood recycling group • Adopt-A-Stream • Bike path committee • Clean air committee
<p>Governmental Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City government • State government • Federal government 	<p>Family Support Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teen parent organization • Foster parents' support group • Parent alliance group

Step 2: Connecting with Potential Partners

Tips for Community Partner Building & Engagement

Once you have established your list of possible partners and decided how you would like to involve them, it is time to reach out.

Networking with partners and stakeholders will require you to explain Create Better Health SNAP-Ed and PSE work. You should be able to explain:

- Why SNAP-Ed work matters, both in general and to the people involved, and how it connects with other issues that are important to your stakeholders and your community.
- The mutual benefit or impact of participating in the project.
- How can both groups work together to address the issue and develop a project.

Communicating with Potential Partners

Below are some examples of how you might start your conversations with a potential partner. You can use these scripts in person, over the phone, or through email.

Introduce Yourself and CBH:

- “Hi, my name is [Your Name], and I work with Create Better Health, Utah’s SNAP-Ed program. We focus on helping individuals and families utilize their resources to live a healthy lifestyle.”
- “I’d love to share a little about the work we do and explore how we might support your efforts and work together in the community.”

Explain SNAP-Ed:

- “We offer free nutrition education, cooking demonstrations, and physical activity opportunities for adults and youth, especially in communities with limited resources.”
- “We also work on improving access to healthy food and safe places to be active. This work takes place in like community gardens, food pantries, schools, stores and through collaborative workgroups or coalitions.”

Make the Connection:

- “I noticed your organization [describe what you’ve observed or learned]. I think there’s potential for us to partner and support each other’s efforts.”
- “I’d love to learn more about your goals and see if there’s a way we could collaborate.”

The most impactful outreach is personal and authentic. Don't forget to share what excites you about the work they do and why you're reaching out to this specific partner.

Building Successful Partnerships

The following strategies will set your partnerships up for success.

- Come to the first discussion prepared. Use the 'partnership to programming action plan' as a guide for your discussion.
 - Get to know each other to help establish trust, connection, and understanding. Educate each other about your respective professional cultures, languages, perspectives, and organizational goals.
 - Share your strengths and weaknesses and what each partner can offer.
 - Discuss how the project and partnership can benefit each stakeholder.
- Share your vision and establish a commitment to common goals.
- Define roles and agree on what each of you will do to contribute to the project. The agreement should be based on the needs of the project and the strengths and assets of each partner.
- Identify plans for how you will interact.
 - Decide:
 - How you will communicate
 - When and where you will meet
 - How decisions will be made
- Be open to everyone and ensure that all partners are respectful of each other's time and help.
- Follow up on promises, review progress regularly, and share and celebrate accomplishments together. Success sustains engagement.
- Be open to ideas and ready to solve problems together. Even if you share the same goals, there might be different opinions or challenges with time, money, or plans.
- Think long-term. Rather than viewing a partnership as a way to accomplish your goals for one specific project, work to build a network of relationships that can help serve the needs of children and families now and in the future.



**Partnership to Programming
Comprehensive Action Plan for FY 2026
(October 2025– September 2026)**

Section 1: Community Partner Information

- 1. Community Partner Name:**
- 2. Contact Person:**
- 3. Contact Information:**
 - Phone:
 - Email:
- 4. Organization Address:**
- 5. Mission and Goals of the Community Partner:**

Any initial needs or requests from the partner prior to partnership planning meeting:

Section 2: Initial Assessment

How can we best serve the community this partner is involved with?

1. Strengths and Resources of the Partner:

2. Barriers and Challenges Faced:

3. Overlap of Partner/CBH Goals:

Section 3: Comprehensive Program Plan

This first table provides ideas for different work you can do in each area to build comprehensive Create Better Health programming with your community partner. Use the second page with the blank table to add in your ideas, goals, and plans, even if they are not ones that will take effect right away.

Comprehensive Program Examples

Direct Education	Policy Work	Systems Work	Environmental Changes
Adults <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CBH - CBH en Español - CBH Online/Virtual Audiences needing Adaptation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CBH/IDD - Older adults - Refugee - High School teens - Temporary housing 	Pantries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food safety protocols - Increase availability of healthy foods - Sit on pantry board 	Pantries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shift to client choice/shopping style - Freezers or Refrigerators - Pantry organization - Place fresh produce at the front of the pantry 	Pantries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thumbs Up - Shelf Educators - Recipe Cards - Healthy Food Drive - Meal Kits - Pantry Organization
Youth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FFR/FFR CA - Kids Create - CBH Teens 	Schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recess before lunch - Join healthy schools 	Schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More white milk than chocolate - F&V in clear containers 	Schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MyPlate displayed in lunchroom

	workgroup or coalition	- Cut F&V	- Captain Create Cafeteria bulletin board/signs
Multi-generational <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create Healthy Gardens - Create Family Meals - Creaciones en la Cocina 	Stores <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food to local pantries (grocery rescue) 	Stores <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability of healthy, prepared foods (i.e., cut veggies) - Add nuts, water, and fresh fruit to the checkout lane displays 	Stores <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Location of fresh fruits and vegetables - Thumbs Up - Shelf educators - Healthy recipes

Section 4: PSE Strategies

Project Vision and Goals

1. PSE Project Vision:

2. Specific Goals of the Project:

○ Goal 1:

○ Goal 2:

○ Goal 3:

Strategy Development

Important Note:

Most projects will focus on one area: Policy, Systems, or Environment. Please fill out only the section that is most relevant to your project. You do not need to complete all three

- How will these systems be maintained?

- What are the potential barriers in system development?

Environment Strategies:

- What environmental changes are needed?

- How will these changes improve community health?

- What are the potential obstacles in changing the environment?

Section 5: Direct Education Strategies

Action Plan

1. Action Steps:

- Step 1: Identify audience to be taught
- Step 2: Discuss goals for series with the partner
- Step 3: Is adaptation needed for this audience to best meet their needs?
- Step 4: Identify PSE opportunities for comprehensive programming
- Step 5: Discuss roles and responsibilities of each partner (Ingredients, Teaching space, Promotion/recruitment)

1. Create Better Health Ambassador:

2. Community Partner:

2. Establish Timeline:

- Location:
- Start Date:
- Check in to confirm details with partner on [add date]
- Completion Date:

- Revisit future opportunities for direct education or PSE
 1. Quarterly, semiannually, annually
 2. Different curriculum
 3. PSE project

Section 6: Partnerships in PEARS

- Enter Partnerships often into PEARS
- Point of contact at the top of the comments section
- Meetings dates/communications in comments

Depth of relationship

Five Levels of Collaboration and Their Characteristics				
Networking 1	Cooperation 2	Coordination 3	Coalition 4	Collaboration 5
-Aware of organization -Loosely defined roles -Little communication -All decisions are made independently	-Provide information to each other - Somewhat defined roles -Formal communication -All decisions are made independently	-Share information and resources -Defined roles -Frequent communication -Some shared decision making	-Share ideas -Share resources -Frequent and prioritized communication -All members have a vote in decision making	-Members belong to one system -Frequent communication is characterized by mutual trust -Consensus is reached on all decisions

<https://transitionca.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Levels-Collaboration-1650581497levels-of-collaboration-scale-pdf1650581497.pdf>

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