

Healthy Eating PSE Project Implementation in Childcare

Summary of Key Findings

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR OBESITY PREVENTION STUDY

2016

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The Building Capacity for Obesity Prevention Project (BCOP) is a partnership between Case Western Reserve University, Prevention Research Center for Healthy Neighborhoods; The Ohio State University, SNAP-Ed program; and the Ohio Department of Health, Creating Healthy Communities Program (CHC). The aim of this researcher-practitioner collaborative project is to develop diagnostic tools that can be used by SNAP-Ed and CHC practitioners as they implement and sustain four different nutrition-related policy, systems, and environment (PSE) interventions. The targeted interventions include: *Farmers' Markets*, *Healthy Food Retail*, *Farm to School*, and *healthy eating policies in childcare*.

This report focuses on analysis of qualitative data collected from 9 counties in Ohio (4 rural, 5 urban) in 2015. Data collection included 18 interviews conducted with 11 CHC and 9 SNAP-Ed practitioners as well as 23 focus groups conducted with community residents including 47 CHC Coalition members and 127 SNAP-Ed participants or SNAP eligible residents regarding healthy eating policies in childcare PSE projects. The data that are the focus of this report provide rich information about factors perceived to influence successful implementation of healthy eating PSE projects in childcare settings.

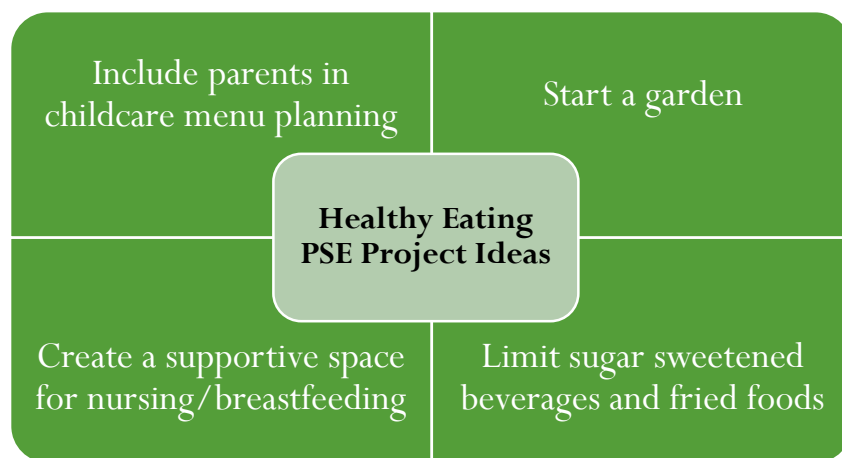


FIGURE 1. EXAMPLES OF HEALTHY EATING PSE PROJECTS IN CHILDCARE

The qualitative data revealed that successful healthy eating PSE projects in childcare are dependent on factors related to *organizational and practitioner capacity*, *community perceptions*, and *social capital*. Each of these factors includes themes and sub-themes that are described in greater detail in the following pages.



Organizational & Practitioner Capacity

- Practitioner awareness, perceptions, and motivations for healthy eating PSE projects in childcare
- Community resources and support systems
- Childcare center skills, resources, and parental support systems



Community Perceptions

- Community awareness, motivations, and challenges to implementing healthy eating PSE projects in childcare
- Influences of young children's exposure to food and beverage messaging



Social Capital

- Community networks , partnerships, and collaborations to support healthy eating PSE projects in childcare

FIGURE 2. FACTORS INFLUENCING IMPLEMENTATION OF HEALTHY EATING PSE PROJECTS IN CHILDCARE



Theme

Definition

Example Quote

1

Community
Nutrition and Public
Health
Organizational and
Practitioner
Capacity

Having the budgets, staff, resources, work plans, and community support systems to implement healthy eating PSE projects in childcare

“I think funding is the biggest barrier, I think funding to support the different healthy activities cause they’re seen as extra activities and not necessarily required.”

(CHC Urban Interview)

“But all these extra like facility, building, and gardening, all those kinds of things we don’t really have the time to do that.”

(SNAP-Ed Urban Interview)

2

Childcare Center
Capacity for Healthy
Eating PSE Projects

Having the skills, resources, and parental support systems to foster implementation of healthy eating PSE projects in childcare

“I feel like it would be an awesome avenue to get parents involved in education and things like that...”

(CHC Urban Focus Group)

“The [childcare] staff was a little bit resistant but when the administrator was excited about it, the staff kind of started to get on board with the changes too.”

(CHC Rural Focus Group)

3

Community Attitudes & Perceptions

Community factors such as awareness, motivations, implementation challenges, and messaging that influence the implementation of healthy eating PSE projects in childcare

“As far as the gardens and stuff in daycares, have them give the children more vegetables and a healthier way of living so when they do become adults they already know what to do.”

(SNAP-Ed Urban Focus Group)

“They are not getting it [message], like out there, like it’s not advertised better for everyone to be included...”

(SNAP-Ed Rural Focus Group)

4

Social Capital for Healthy Eating PSE Projects

The social networks and collaborations from which practitioners, childcare centers, and community members can draw on to implement and remain connected to healthy eating PSE projects in childcare

“We collaborate with organizations that work on HEAL in both licensed preschool settings and in home childcare providers. We also work on several state level committees to look at incorporating these things into [system name] and licensing standards.”

(CHC Urban Focus Group)

“They are actually going out and working with the childcare centers and providing them with the technical assistance and, you know, guidebooks on how to implement the policy, what to do, suggestions for activities they can do.I think [it] is really important.”

(CHC Urban Focus Group)

Sample Indicators for Assessing Readiness and Capacity to Implement Healthy Eating PSE Projects in Childcare

Once the most important themes for successful implementation of healthy eating PSE projects in childcare were identified, the BCOP team worked to create indicators that can be included in the diagnostic tool to assess readiness and capacity to implement healthy eating PSE projects in childcare. These indicators were reviewed by leaders from SNAP-Ed and CHC as well as by experts in healthy eating policy implementation in childcare settings. Below are two sample indicators for each theme. In fall 2016, these and related indicators will be incorporated into a tool for SNAP-Ed and CHC practitioners to use for planning and goal setting.

Community Nutrition and Public Health Organizational and Practitioner Capacity

- To what extent does your current annual organizational budget have funds to support implementation of healthy eating PSE projects in childcare/preschool centers that serve low-income children in your service area?
- To what extent does your organization have staff who are available to support implementation of healthy eating PSE projects in childcare/preschool centers that service low-income children in your service area?

Childcare Center Capacity for Healthy Eating PSE Projects

- To what extent is there parent buy-in and support for healthy eating PSE projects in childcare/preschool centers in your service area?
- To what extent do administrators from childcare/preschools serving low-income children in your service area promote healthy eating PSE projects as an essential part of their curriculum and programming?

Social Capital for Healthy Eating PSE Projects

- To what extent are you involved with collaborations/coalitions focused on increasing implementation of healthy eating PSE projects in childcare/preschool centers through actions such as promoting policy changes and/or informing childcare/preschool licensing changes?
- To what extent are you able to remain connected to childcare/preschool centers that serve low-income children in your service area when there is staff turnover at the center?

Community Attitudes and Perceptions

- To what extent are there effective programs or initiatives in your service area to help parents from low-income households manage breastfeeding within busy schedules?
- To what extent are there initiatives in your service area designed to reduce marketing and advertisements aimed at children for unhealthy foods?

Acknowledgements

This report was produced through feedback from members of the Building Capacity for Obesity Prevention team including Pat Bebo, MS, RDN, Ana Claudia Zubieta, PhD, Carol Smathers, MS, MPH, Daniel Remley, MPH, PhD, Ashley Davis, MA, RD, LD, and Sarah Ginnetti, RD, LD. We are thankful to the SNAP-Ed and CHC practitioners and the focus group participants for their feedback. Additionally, we thank Emia Oppenheim, PhD, RD, LD, Jenny Lobb, MPH, RD, LD, and Jamie Turner, MPH for their expert opinions.

Suggested Citation

Freedman, D. A., Lee, E., Monteban, M., Parsons, A., Ngendahimana, D., Hewitt, J., and Dalton, J., (2016). Healthy eating in childcare PSE project implementation: Summary of key findings. Prevention Research Center for Healthy Neighborhoods, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio.

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