

**UC CalFresh Delivers Programs That Produce Results.** For over 20 years, UC CalFresh Nutrition Education has served California's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education (SNAP-Ed) communities through the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE). In 2016, the program operated in 31 counties. Building upon a foundation of long-standing community relationships, UC CalFresh has established programs that offer the latest university research and evidenced-based direct education to youth, adults and seniors. In recent years, the integration of policy, systems and environmental (PSE) change initiatives has contributed to establishing a bedrock of opportunities for communities to create long lasting change – decreasing obesity and chronic disease rates -- and increasing healthy lifestyles.

Using the “school as the hub” model, 89% of UC CalFresh's 116,505 direct education participants are preschool and school aged youth. Adults receive food resource management education to promote food security at school and community sites. Direct education is delivered at 861 SNAP-Ed eligible sites.

In 2016, UC CalFresh county programs collectively achieved or exceeded all five Statewide Objectives measured using the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework priority indicators. Evaluation findings showcase *statistically significant gains from pre to post in adult participants fruit and vegetable intake (over 2/3 cup more; MT1), more frequent use of food resource management behaviors (MT2), greater food security among adult participants (MT2), and more frequent physical activity among adolescent participants (MT3); while also capturing reductions in the consumption of soda by adults and adolescents (MT1); and the implementation of PSE supports (MT4 and MT5) in the vast majority (87%) of counties.*



UC CalFresh Nutrition Education

**Building Capacity, Competency and Sustainability.** As we continue to foster funded and non-funded partnerships, UC CalFresh has established an organizational framework which builds programmatic competency, capacity, and sustainability at the local level. This is accomplished by employing a strategy based on quality, evidence-based direct education that embraces policy, systems, and environmental change initiatives. In coordination with local school and community leadership, programs incorporate:

**Direct Education (DE):** is delivery of evidenced based curricula in school classrooms and community centers by UC CalFresh nutrition educators or by “extenders” such as teachers, afterschool instructors or community educators. *Extenders* are offered ongoing training and technical assistance by UC CalFresh educators. UC CalFresh identifies opportunities to move programs from *individual/group education and intervention strategies to comprehensive interventions that can positively affect community health.*

**Physical Activity (PA):** is integrated in all counties by UC CalFresh trained PA Leads. Visual and hardscape reinforcements such as stencils and murals create an environment that promotes movement and play. UC CalFresh partners with Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH) Global Foundation, Fuel Up to Play 60 and others to provide resources in schools, build capacity, and explore ways youth can have the greatest opportunity to be physically active in educational settings. In 2016:

- 22 County PA Leads were trained
- 121 total UC CalFresh staff across all 31 counties trained in CATCH

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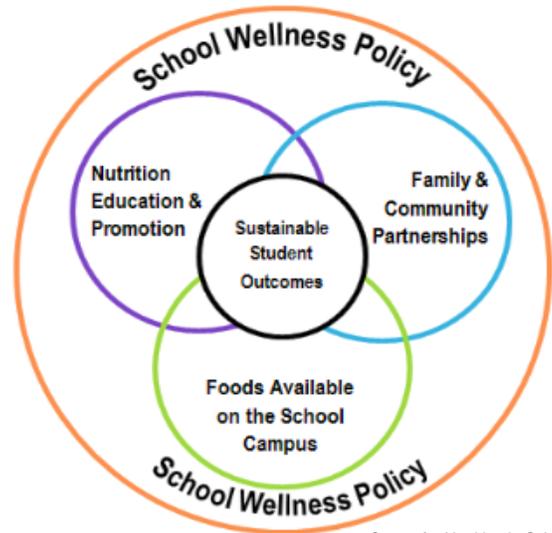
**The Smarter Lunchrooms Movement of California (SLM of CA):** began in 2013 in partnership with the Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics in Child Nutrition Programs. SLM of CA has a goal of changing the way food choices are presented, nudging children toward choosing more nutritious foods. This year's meetings and strategic planning have included California Department of Public Health and the Center for Ecoliteracy along with the founding partners for SLM of CA, UC CalFresh, California Department of Education and the Dairy Council of California. In 2016:

- 127 certified Technical Advising Professionals (TAPs) serve as a local resource to support SLM implementation, training and support activities.
- For UC CalFresh:
  - 41 UC CalFresh certified TAPs
  - SLM assessments conducted at 57 schools with over 36,000 students enrolled

**The Shaping Healthy Choices Program (SHCP):**

is a comprehensive school-based intervention developed by the UC Davis Center for Nutrition in Schools. This program integrates four key “ingredients” to developing a sustainable healthy lifestyle for youth in schools (see the figure at right). In 2016:

- SHCP expanded from 3 to 8 counties. Counties implementing SHCP in schools included Butte, Placer, Sutter, Yuba, Calaveras, El Dorado, San Joaquin, and Santa Barbara.



Center for Nutrition in Schools

**Garden-Based Learning:** UC CalFresh partners with schools and communities to provide garden-based education. This is an opportunity to experience fresh vegetables first hand – from seeding gardens to picking the produce -- and is accompanied by classroom lessons and discussion. In select counties, the UC CalFresh program collaborates with UCCE Master Gardeners and 4-H to extend garden-based learning efforts and create youth leadership and engagement opportunities. In 2016:

- UCCE county/cluster programs reported establishing, reinvigorating and/or maintaining 123 edible gardens across 25 counties.

**Youth Development:** UC CalFresh strives to expand its focus from serving youth to one that actively engages youth as leaders in program development and implementation. Partnering with the Center for Wellness and Nutrition and UCCE's 4-H program, UC CalFresh is embracing the voice and leadership of youth in our programs.

**CONCLUSION**

The strategies employed by UC CalFresh have been proven to build programs that reach SNAP-Ed participants effectively, incorporate their feedback, and provide results that move individuals and communities toward healthier lifestyles. The following are three examples of county accomplishments exemplifying comprehensive approaches that are producing behavioral and community impacts.

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# Playing for Life: Integrating Physical Activity into Preschool Programs

## The Issue

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Starting early to create a lifetime habit of play and movement is critical. Research links overweight/obesity, poor nutrition, and lack of physical activity to negative physical, academic, social, and psychological outcomes. While a constellation of factors contributes to weight gain in children and adults, one factor—inactivity—can be addressed through the integration of PA into daily schedules. "Easier said than done" is a comment frequently made. However, USDA-funded SNAP-Ed agencies are now engaged in strategies to integrate PA into their nutrition programs. This is part of recognizing that direct nutrition education, coupled with policy, systems, and environmental supports, such as physical activity with hardscape reinforcements, help create a healthy lifestyle. Further, best practices advise that preschoolers receive at least 2 hours of both structured and unstructured physical activity daily to encourage competence in fundamental motor skills.



*Encouraging Physical Activity by Painting Stencils on Playgrounds*

## What Has UC Agricultural and Natural Resources Done?

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In Alameda County, UC CalFresh Nutrition Education, in partnership with Oakland Unified Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs is launching a district-wide playground stenciling effort for students aged 3-5 years old. Painting playground stencils and supporting teachers with structured physical activity curriculum that uses stenciled playgrounds is one way to increase opportunities for physical activity and support the development of healthy habits in low-resource school and community settings. Teachers are provided with the "Painted Playground Activities: A Guide for Grown-ups," adapted from the Orange County Department of Education. This guide offers age-appropriate games and activity prompts. California Department of Education information highlighting how stencils can meet certain Pre-K learning standards is also included.

## The Payoff

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### Moving Forward: Play and Comprehensive Nutrition Education Programs for Preschool

In the past year, over 200 preschool students in three ECE schools began participating in the PA initiative. With the support of The Clinton Global Initiative, two schools received complete playground stencils and garden refurbishment. Sites couple playground activities with UC CalFresh Nutrition Education curriculum ("Go Glow Grow and Grow It! Try It! Like It!") for garden-enhanced learning. Playground stencils will be provided district wide over the next 3 years, reaching 24 ECE sites and serving nearly 2,000 students.

## Clientele Testimonial

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*"The kids really like the new playground stencils, they are finding all sorts of creative ways to engage with them"*

- Teacher, Yuk Yau Child Development Center

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# UCCE Riverside Helped Alvord Unified Get Recognition

## The Issue

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Alvord Unified School District was awarded a \$1.1 million Physical Education (PE) Program Grant for 2012-2015 and UCCE was a partner on this grant. UCCE Riverside assisted Alvord Unified in implementing by providing comprehensive nutrition education and obesity prevention interventions at the schools. In addition to improving PE programs, the grant objectives include increasing ongoing assessment and monitoring, increasing district and community support, and transitioning from a sports-based PE program to a wellness-based curriculum aligned to State standards. To be successful, Alvord Unified needed a team of dedicated partners. UCCE Riverside was one of the key partners working alongside others such as the Alliance for a Healthier Generation funded by Kaiser Permanente Thriving Schools, the Nutrition Education Obesity Prevention Program, and 15 other public entities and community-based organizations.

## What Has UC Agricultural and Natural Resources Done?

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Both nutrition programs at UCCE Riverside (UC CalFresh and EFNEP) contributed to Alvord's success transitioning to wellness-based physical education. UC CalFresh provided nutrition education, (EatFit and Money Talks Hunger Attack!), to seven middle and high schools in this school district and offered quarterly nutrition education training to PE teachers as part of their professional development. EFNEP taught Kindergarten through 3rd-grade students at eleven elementary schools using Happy Healthy Me, My Amazing Body, Good for Me and You, and It's My Choice. Both EFNEP and UC CalFresh provided taste-testing experiences so the students could try new fruits and vegetables. In addition, in the 2015-2016 school year, UC CalFresh provided Smarter Lunchrooms Movement training to cafeteria staff at Wells Middle and Norte Vista High and helped Wells revitalize their school garden to bring about environmental changes that encourage healthy eating. UC CalFresh also participated in the twice per year district-wide family health and wellness events and provided nutrition education to over 180 parents during the three-year period.



*Smarter Lunchrooms Movement training for school cafeteria staff*

## The Payoff

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### **Alvord's astounding success in district wide school wellness is due to collective impact**

The excitement and momentum around school wellness in Alvord Unified cannot be attributed to any one agency alone, but is due to the collective impact of all major and minor partners in partnership with school PE teams and Alvord Food Service. In 2016, a total of nine schools in Alvord Unified were recognized by the Alliance for a Healthier Generation Healthy Schools Program. One school, Loma Vista Middle, was awarded gold and one school, Wells Middle, was awarded silver, while seven other schools received a bronze award. More importantly, the success in Alvord resulted in positive student outcomes. During the first year of the grant, 53% of the students were in the Healthy Fitness Zone for Body Mass Index (BMI), and after the third year, this number increased to 62%. During the first year of the program, 14% of middle school students consumed fruits 2 or more times and vegetables 3 or more times a day, and this percentage increased to nearly 29% after the third year of the grant.

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# Collective Impact: The Calaveras County Experience

## The Issue

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Statistics can inform us of challenges counties face, but people create solutions. This is well illustrated in Calaveras County, a rural Sierra foothills community. Calaveras residents face many stumbling blocks to sustaining a healthy lifestyle. Dogged by high unemployment, the overall food insecurity rate is over 15%, with a rate among children as high as 23%. Other challenges include isolated residential areas with limited public transportation and infrastructure. In addition, the community has experienced natural disasters such as the 2015 Butte Fire, affecting over 12,000 people in the Sierra foothills.

## What Has UC Agricultural and Natural Resources Done?

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UC CalFresh and the California Department of Public Health, as USDA-funded SNAP-Ed partners, have worked shoulder to shoulder with several community organizations in order to build a “collective impact” approach that addresses food insecurity and promotes increased consumption of fruits, vegetables, and healthy beverages. This framework facilitates strategic partnerships collaborating to attain common local goals. In rural communities, schools can serve as models of healthy living. Guided by the insights of community members, Calaveras SNAP-Ed programs have developed in a way that speaks to the reality of people’s lives, not statistics. Combining the efforts of staff and resources from SNAP-Ed funded and non-funded partners, a comprehensive program has been developed to meet common health and wellness objectives and to streamline implementation. In Calaveras County, the school district has prioritized sequential garden-enhanced nutrition education (GENE) from preschool to 6th grade. This service is provided weekly through UC CalFresh, with trained staff from Food Corps, a nonprofit. The local public health department offers education to high school students and continued support, educational interventions and tastings at eligible retail locations.



## The Payoff

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### Unifying community assets - creating long-lasting change

UC CalFresh and the local health department’s work with Calaveras Unified School District (CUSD), Food Corps and Gardens to Grow In, a local non-profit, has led to a collective impact. Together these organizations have imparted greater sustainability within the community by sharing a common goal, mutually reinforcing activities, and communicating clearly. Through regular meetings, the common goal of “Creating Healthy and Sustainable Systems in Schools” (CHASSIS) was developed to guide decision-making, board policy, and programs. Over the past 3 years, this partnership has implemented garden and nutrition education in all nine CUSD schools, offering Harvest of the Month programs and garden-enhanced lessons to over 2,000 students and their families. This has resulted in the improvement and expansion of eight existing school gardens and the construction of three new school gardens. Additionally, a high school farm has become a productive learning lab.

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