

Success Story

More Mainers are Making Healthy Beverage Choices for Healthier Lifestyles

SUMMARY

SNAP-Ed works in low-income communities to provide nutrition education to youth and adults. Series-based curricula like 10 Tips for Adults and Teens **encourage water as a healthful substitute for sugary beverages**, and participants are reporting behavior changes that demonstrate SNAP-Ed interventions are working. In 2017, Maine adults participating in 10 Tips reported statistically significant **decreases in daily consumption of sugary drinks like sweetened soda, sports drinks, and energy drinks from 11% to 6%** after completing the classes. And **56% of teens reported drinking more water** after participating in 10 Tips classes.

In addition to direct education, Maine SNAP-Ed has successfully worked with **childcare centers and adult community centers** to encourage **healthy beverage policies** that promote water for meals and snacks. Targeted **social marketing campaigns further encourage healthy beverage choices** in schools and at home. Combined, these efforts are shifting the culture, and **more Mainers are choosing water**.



CHALLENGE

Maine is the most obese state in New England and 26th highest among the 50 States. About 2 out of 3 adults and 1 out of 3 students are either overweight or obese. About **1 out of 3 adult males and 1 out of 4 adult females report daily consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs)**, putting them at risk for having nutritionally inadequate diets.

There is good news regarding the trends related to the consumption of sugary drinks among Maine youth, however. Between 2011 and 2017, Maine middle and high school students reduced their weekly consumption of SSBs. **Most students in middle and high school (almost 4 out of 5) are making healthy beverage choices**, and the trends are very promising.

MAINE



SNAP-Ed

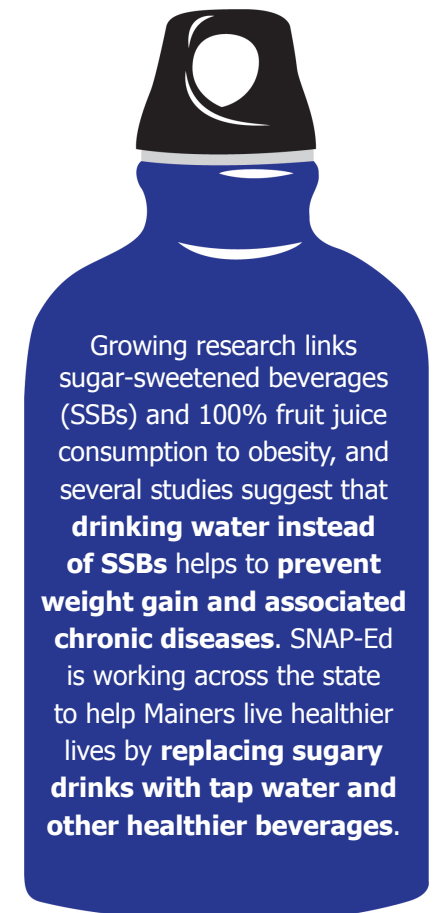
Healthy Eating on a Budget

Maine SNAP-Ed

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education

Maine SNAP-Ed is a USDA-funded program that teaches low-income Mainers the knowledge and skills needed to make healthier lifestyle choices. The program has **40 Nutrition Educators** throughout the state that implement 7 evidence-based curricula, reaching the entire age spectrum.

In 2017, Maine SNAP-Ed delivered **9,610** nutrition education classes, reaching a total of **28,481** youth and adult participants.



Growing research links sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) and 100% fruit juice consumption to obesity, and several studies suggest that **drinking water instead of SSBs helps to prevent weight gain and associated chronic diseases**. SNAP-Ed is working across the state to help Mainers live healthier lives by **replacing sugary drinks with tap water and other healthier beverages**.

SOLUTION

SNAP-Ed uses **3 evidence-based approaches** to promote consumption of and access to healthful alternatives to SSBs.

For example:

Direct Education – In 2017, **1,800 adults and 664 teens** participated in 10 Tips programming, which has as specific focus on water as a substitute for SSBs. **Adults report drinking fewer sugary drinks, and teens choose water more often** after class participation.

Policy, System, and Environmental Changes – In 2018, **SNAP-Ed educators are working in 10 schools, 2 childcare centers, and 5 retail sites** across the state to create policies and practices that promote healthy beverages.

Social Marketing – In 2017, **10,000 ChopChop magazines with water promotion messages** were distributed to Maine health centers, schools, and social service and community sites.



SUSTAINING SUCCESS

Going forward, SNAP-Ed programming will continue to focus on healthy beverage choices to build on past successes. In addition to addressing **healthful alternatives to sugary drinks in all 7 evidence-based curricula**, SNAP-Ed will promote strategies and tips related to using refillable water bottles and **purchasing healthy beverages**.

Nutrition Educators will continue to promote **policies in their communities that support water as a healthful alternative** in childcare, school, and worksite settings. Supportive messages that **reinforce the positive changes** in cultural norms will be incorporated into social marketing campaigns, ensuring that the maximum number of Maine SNAP recipients are reached.

SNAP-Ed also participates on **advisory councils and fosters collaborative partnerships** where there is a prominent focus on promoting healthy beverages. The goal is to continue and strengthen comprehensive program strategies designed to reduce obesity rates and ensure improved quality of life for low-income Mainers.

CLASS PARTICIPANT QUOTES

Most useful thing I learned from 10 Tips

Adults say...

"...eating moderately, drinking more water..."

"I need to drink more water, less fatty foods, less sweets..."

Teens say...

"...made me realize that I need to drink water."

"...learning to sometimes check your calories, and we learned how much calories are in energy drinks."

"Not to drink much soda..."



For more Success Stories from the Maine SNAP-Ed program, or to get in touch with your local Nutrition Educator, please visit www.mainesnap-ed.org.

Data sources are available upon request by emailing mainesnap-ed@une.edu.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. Maine SNAP-Ed is funded by the USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, which is administered by the Maine Department of Health and Human Services and implemented statewide by the University of New England through contracts with local community organizations. Maine SNAP-Ed educates low-income families on low cost, healthy eating and active lifestyles.