

Vermont SNAP-Ed Expanding!

The Vermont Department of Health is pleased to announce that starting October 1, Vermont SNAP-Ed is in more communities, is offering new strategies, and has expanded the age of those it is working to reach.

[SNAP-Ed](#) is the nutrition and physical activity education side of SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), a federal program that helps low-income individuals and families with food assistance (called [3SquaresVT](#) in Vermont). The goal of SNAP-Ed is to help people who are eligible for 3SquaresVT have healthy food options and get regular physical activity.

Working under a three-year State Plan, Vermont has funded Hunger Free Vermont, the Vermont Foodbank, and Come Alive Outside through grant agreements to implement evidence-based nutrition and physical activity strategies in St. Johnsbury, Newport, Barre, Rutland, Bennington. Click [here](#) to learn more about the SNAP-Ed work of these organizations to date.

October 1, 2019 marks the start of a new three-year SNAP-Ed plan for Vermont. In considering Vermont's demographics, disparate populations, and partner meetings and discussions, Vermont decided to maintain the five communities where SNAP-Ed programming has been offered and **add two new communities: Brattleboro and St. Albans**. These are among the most rural and highest need areas of Vermont.

Vermont's target audience has been Vermonters who are SNAP eligible, with special emphasis on families with children ages 2-12. **Vermont has expanded the age to families with children ages 2-18.** According the federal [SNAP-Ed Plan Guidance](#), targeting SNAP-Ed women and children captures a majority of SNAP recipients. With increasing numbers of children being overweight or obese, and evidence that poor eating patterns established in childhood may transfer to adulthood, families need information on providing healthy food to their children. Although most of the SNAP eligible families in Vermont are headed by women of childbearing age, more and more are headed by men and by grandparents who are often caring for children due to situations such as the opioid epidemic facing many communities. For this reason, our definition of "family" is kept broad.

Finally, Vermont is strengthening its direct education work, by having UVM Extension offer nutrition and physical activity education to children in grades 3-6 and for adults in SNAP-Ed communities.

For more information, contact [Suzanne Kelley](#).