

Three ripe, red pears with dark brown stems are arranged in a row on a weathered wooden log. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting an outdoor setting. The pears are the central focus of the image, with their smooth, slightly textured skin catching the light.

# Vermont SNAP-Ed Evaluation Summary Fiscal Year 2021

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*with funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service*

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

3

## Introduction and Program Overview

- + Food insecurity, inequities, and health
- + Overview of SNAP-Ed
- + SNAP-Ed and COVID-19
- + Healthy Vermonter 2020 Targets
- + SNAP-Ed partners and strategies
- + SNAP-Ed logic model

11

## Statewide Activities and Reach

- + Where SNAP-Ed works
- + Statewide reach
- + Statewide initiatives & coordination

16

## Partner Highlights

- + Come Alive Outside
- + University of Vermont Extension
- + Vermont Foodbank
- + Hunger Free Vermont

35

## Conclusions and Recommendations

- + Approach to drawing conclusions
- + Key takeaways
- + Partner adaptations, successes, and opportunities
- + Recommendations



Photo by Louis Hansel on *Unsplash*

# Introduction and Program Overview

# FOOD INSECURITY, INEQUITIES, AND HEALTH

## *Food insecurity and inequities put the health of Vermonters at risk*

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines food security as “access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life.”<sup>1</sup> Nearly 10% of Vermonters experienced food insecurity in 2016-2018.<sup>2</sup> COVID-19 dramatically increased this rate, with 32% of Vermonters experiencing food insecurity at some point during the first year of the pandemic.<sup>3</sup> Food insecurity is highest among people of color, women, households with children, those without a college degree, younger individuals, and those experiencing job loss or unemployment,<sup>3,4</sup> with the pandemic further illuminating and deepening existing disparities.<sup>5,6</sup>

Limited access to food and opportunities for physical activity is associated with increased risk of chronic conditions and greater health care spending. The Vermont Department of Health (VDH) conceptualizes this link through the 3-4-50 campaign.<sup>7</sup> Chronic diseases also affect the state’s economy, with costs reaching \$2.72 billion in 2020.<sup>7</sup> Chronic diseases do not impact all communities in the same way. Vermonters disproportionately affected include those with low incomes, individuals with disabilities, and older adults.<sup>8</sup>



Graphic from Vermont Department of Health

<sup>1</sup> USDA Economic Research Service (2020). *Food Security in the U.S.*

<sup>2</sup> USDA Economic Research Service (2020). *Food Security in the United States: How do States Compare?*

<sup>3</sup> McCarthy, A.C., et al. (2021). *Food Security Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic: Following a Group of Vermonters During the First Year.*

<sup>4</sup> Niles, M.T., et al. (2020). *Food and Job Insecurity in Vermont During COVID-19 Infographic*

<sup>5</sup> Larson, T., et al. (2020). *Inequality and COVID-19 Food Insecurity.*

<sup>6</sup> Dubowitz, T., et al. (2021). *Food Insecurity in a Low-Income, Predominantly African American Cohort Following the COVID-19 Pandemic.*

<sup>7</sup> VT Dept. of Health (VDH, 2021). *Data & Results.*

<sup>8</sup> VDH (2018).. *3-4-50 Special Population Data*

# OVERVIEW OF SNAP-ED

## *Evidence-based strategies improving health opportunities for people experiencing food insecurity*

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, or 3SquaresVT in Vermont) provides eligible households with monthly vouchers to purchase food at participating retailers. SNAP is funded by the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service and is administered in Vermont by the Department for Children and Families. Coordinated statewide efforts to promote nutrition education and policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) changes to increase healthy eating and physical activity are essential to health promotion and chronic disease prevention. Vermont's SNAP-Ed Program, overseen by VDH, collaborates with four community-based organizations to implement three categories of evidence-based strategies focused on healthy eating and physical activity:



Direct  
education



Policy, systems,  
environmental  
(PSE) change



Social  
marketing

By implementing these evidence-based strategies, SNAP-Ed partners help to increase the likelihood that people eligible for SNAP have the knowledge and opportunities they need to meet national dietary and physical activity guidelines. The evaluation of the SNAP-Ed program seeks to understand the short- and long-term impacts of these strategies on fruit and vegetable consumption and physical activity among priority populations within the program's focus regions throughout the state.

# SNAP-ED AND COVID-19

*COVID-19 has amplified existing inequities and increased the need for programs like SNAP-Ed*

The COVID-19 pandemic led to increases in food insecurity and changes in eating and activity behaviors. Half of all households in Vermont that experienced food insecurity reported eating fewer fruits and vegetables since the start of the pandemic.<sup>1</sup> A global review of studies found physical activity also decreased, and sedentary behaviors increased, during lockdowns.<sup>2</sup> Programs like SNAP-Ed continue to be essential to the health and well-being of Vermonters by increasing access to healthy foods, creating opportunities for safe physical activity, and supporting individuals navigating a shifting food benefit landscape.

This annual report provides a summary of SNAP-Ed strategies, reach, and outcomes accomplished in fiscal year 2021 (FY21, October 2020 – September 2021). Acknowledging the dynamic effects of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic on Vermonters and the statewide programs serving them, this report also highlights the ways in which partners have adapted to challenges presented this year.



Photos by Vermont Foodbank

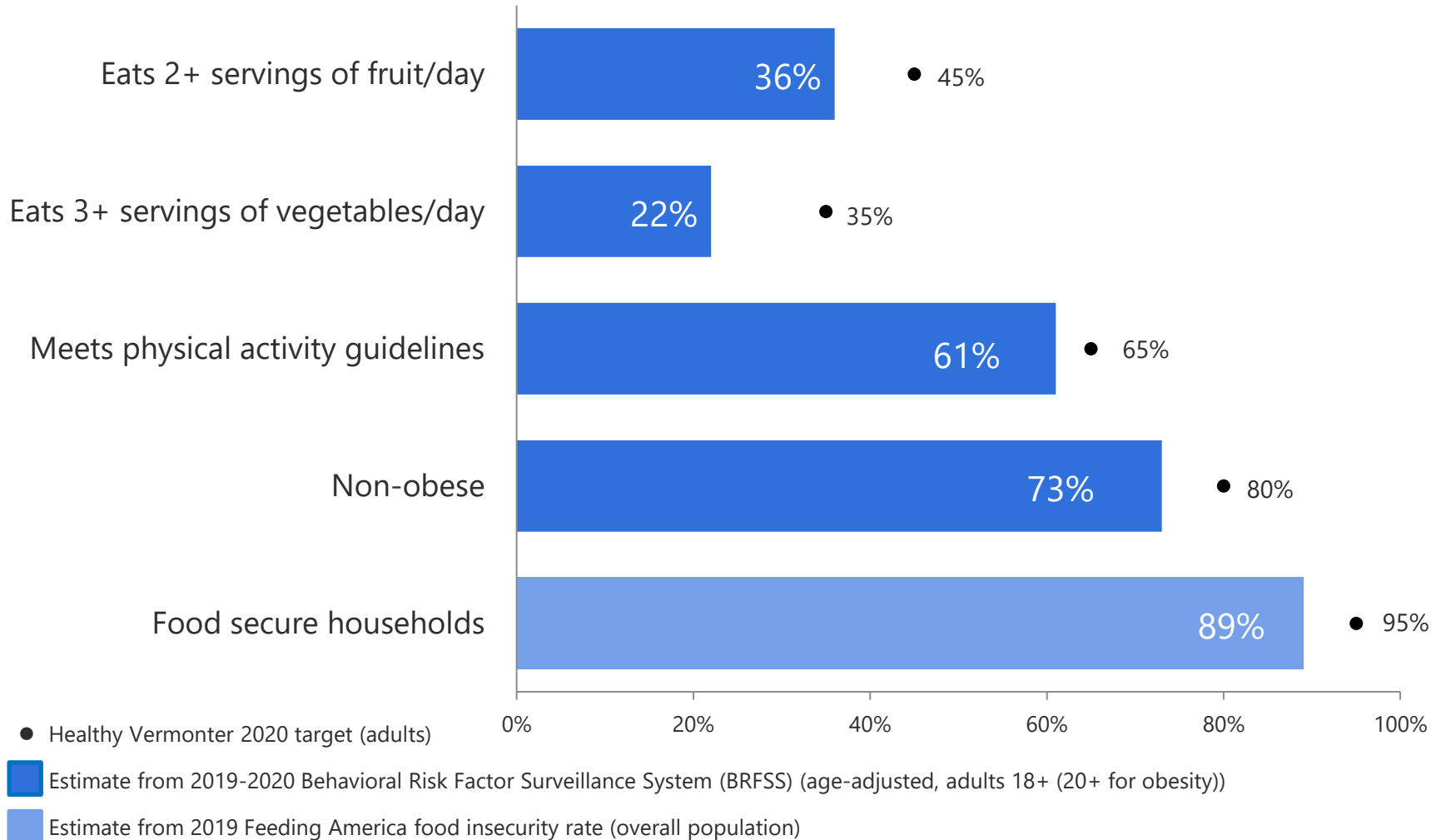
<sup>1</sup> Niles, M.T. et al. (2020). *COVID-19 Impacts on Food Security and Systems: A Third Survey of Vermonters*.

<sup>2</sup> Stockwell, S., et al. (2021). *Changes in physical activity and sedentary behaviours from before to during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown: A systematic review*.

# HEALTHY VERMONT 2020 TARGETS

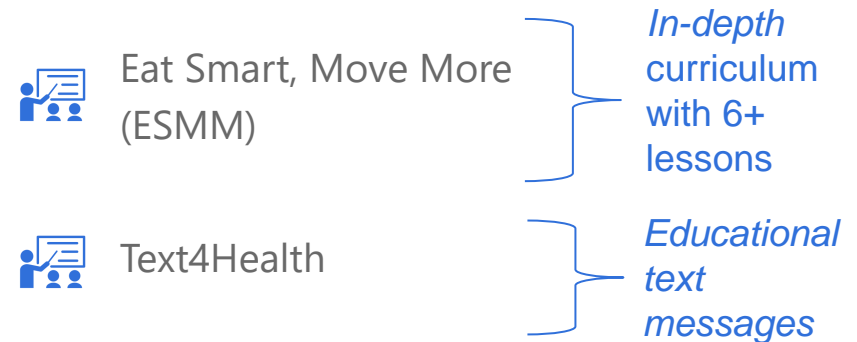
*SNAP-Ed is one of many state programs that contributes to the objectives below.*


*Data from 2019-2020 show that the state is making progress, but more work remains.*



# SNAP-ED PARTNERS & STRATEGIES

*Partners that implement direct education strategies only*



 Direct education

*Direct education strategies vary based on frequency, duration, and intensity, with the goal of impacting individual behaviors associated with healthy eating and physical activity. Higher intensity activities may reach fewer individuals, but greater impacts on behavior are expected. This icon is used throughout this report to indicate data from direct education strategies.*



# SNAP-ED PARTNERS & STRATEGIES

Partners that implement PSE strategies



VT Fresh: Community food shelves



Smarter Lunchrooms



Veggie Van Go mobile food shelves



NAP SACC (Early Care and Education)



Newsletter and social marketing



Direct education



PSE change



Social marketing

*Direct education strategies vary based on frequency, duration, and intensity, with the goal of impacting individual behaviors associated with healthy eating and physical activity. PSE changes are designed to make healthy eating and physical activity easier for individuals and families. Higher intensity educational activities may reach fewer individuals but are expected to yield greater impacts on behavior compared to PSE activities and social marketing, which are lower intensity but have higher anticipated reach. These icons are used throughout this report to indicate data from each type of strategy.*

# VERMONT SNAP-ED LOGIC MODEL

Partners have made progress towards SNAP-Ed Framework indicators, both individually and collectively

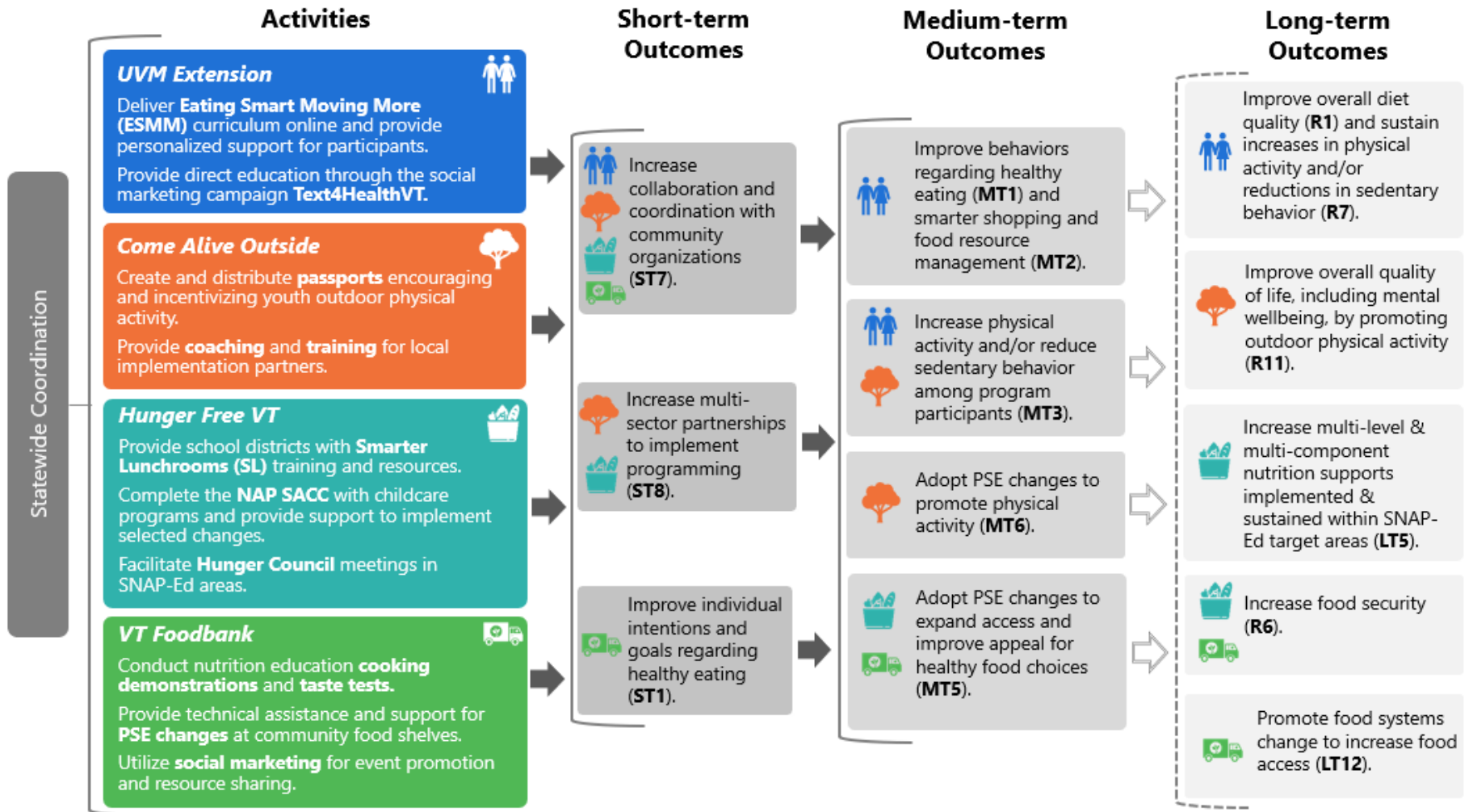




Photo by Children Nature Network

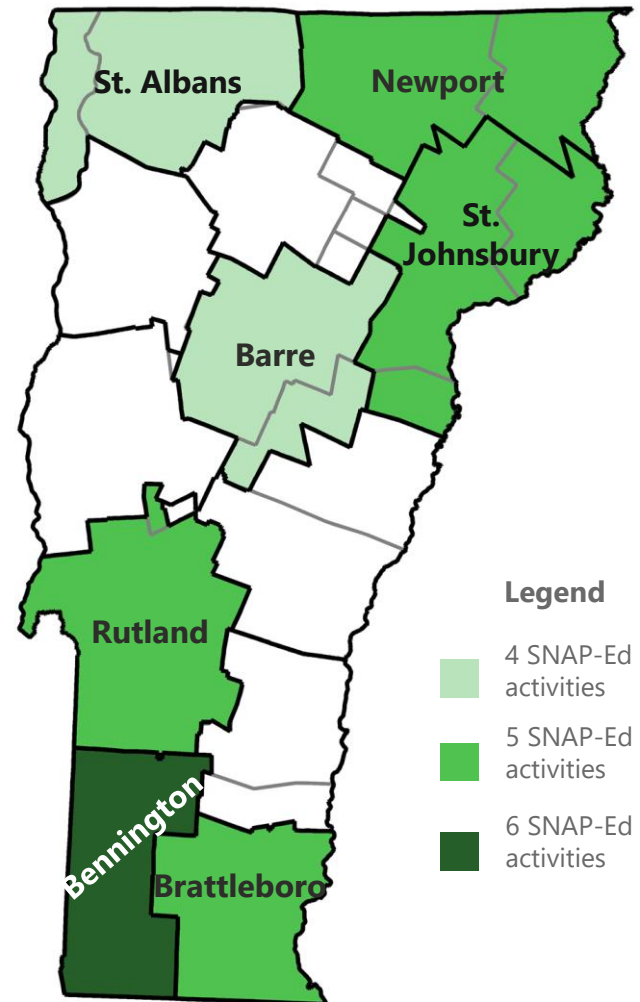
# Statewide Activities and Reach

# WHERE SNAP-ED WORKS

*SNAP-Ed strategies were implemented in seven regions*

SNAP-Ed strategies were implemented in FY21 in the regions shown on the map to the right. Seven out of 12 regions received at least four SNAP-Ed activities in the past year. One region, Bennington, received six.

SNAP-Ed implementing partners have expanded their geographic reach in the past year, while continuing to tailor programming to community needs. SNAP-Ed partners tapped into local networks and established new connections in SNAP-Ed regions. Some of these networks include local Hunger Councils (not pictured), which are present in each of the seven SNAP-Ed regions.



# STATEWIDE REACH BY REGION

SNAP-Ed activities vary by region, with some layering to amplify program effects



Region	Passport Programs	ESMM	Text4 Health	VT Fresh	Veggie Van Go	SL	NAP SACC	Hunger Councils
Barre								
Bennington								
Brattleboro								
Newport								
Rutland								
St. Albans								
St. Johnsbury								*

Darker shading indicates areas where all activities by a particular partner are being implemented.

\* St. Johnsbury shares a Hunger Council with Newport

Activity acronyms:

CHFF: Choose Health: Food, Fun, & Fitness

ESMM: Eat Smart, Move More,

SL: Smarter Lunchrooms

NAP SACC: Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care

# STATEWIDE REACH

*SNAP-Ed strategies reached over 110,000\* Vermonters in FY21*



Direct  
education

**8,687**

Goal: 2,780+

Direct education included both nutrition and physical activity education, with tailored programs for youth and adults. These educational events were implemented by Come Alive Outside, the University of Vermont Extension, and Vermont Foodbank.



Policy, systems,  
environmental (PSE)  
change

**58,188**

Goal: 46,280

PSE strategies included improving access to and appeal of fresh produce at community food shelves, early care and education settings, and school lunchrooms. These activities were implemented by Hunger Free Vermont and Vermont Foodbank.



Social marketing

**41,273**

Vermont Foodbank used social marketing to promote healthy eating and active living. Reach is based on the total number of views and engagements, such as likes and shares.

E-Newsletter

**2,028**

Vermont Foodbank also distributed an electronic nutrition education newsletter to over 2,000 recipients.

\*While reported reach is unduplicated at the strategy level, the statewide total may include duplication because people may have participated in more than one strategy.

# STATEWIDE INITIATIVES AND COORDINATION

*VDH supports cross-cutting efforts by SNAP-Ed implementing partners and external organizations*

SNAP-Ed is just one of many statewide programs working to improve the health of Vermonters by increasing access to healthy foods. The image to the right shows the many components of Vermont's food system. The Vermont Nutrition Education Committee (VNEC) and the Vermont Farm to Plate Initiative are two statewide initiatives that complement SNAP-Ed's work by addressing additional components of Vermont's food system in alignment with SNAP-Ed goals. VDH actively participates in and supports the work of these cross-cutting efforts to minimize duplication and amplify impact.



Figure at right by *Vermont Farm to Plate*



Photo by Melissa Legette on *Unsplash*

# Partner Highlights



# COME ALIVE OUTSIDE

*Engaging kids in physical activity year round*



**Direct  
education**

**4,032**  
youth  
reached

**21**  
partner  
schools

**36**  
community  
partnerships

Through its Summer and Winter Wellness Passport Program, Come Alive Outside (CAO) works to keep youth and families active all year long. Participants earn points for each activity completed and can claim a prize after earning 30 points. Parent survey completion at end of the season enters a child in the grand prize drawings. CAO partners with local school districts to distribute passports and to survey students and parents about passport use and impacts; passports may also be obtained directly from the CAO website. Other partnerships include parks and recreation, local businesses, health centers, other local nonprofit organizations and government agencies. In FY21, CAO expanded their reach and distributed 1,300 passports in Windham County through a partnership with RiseVT.

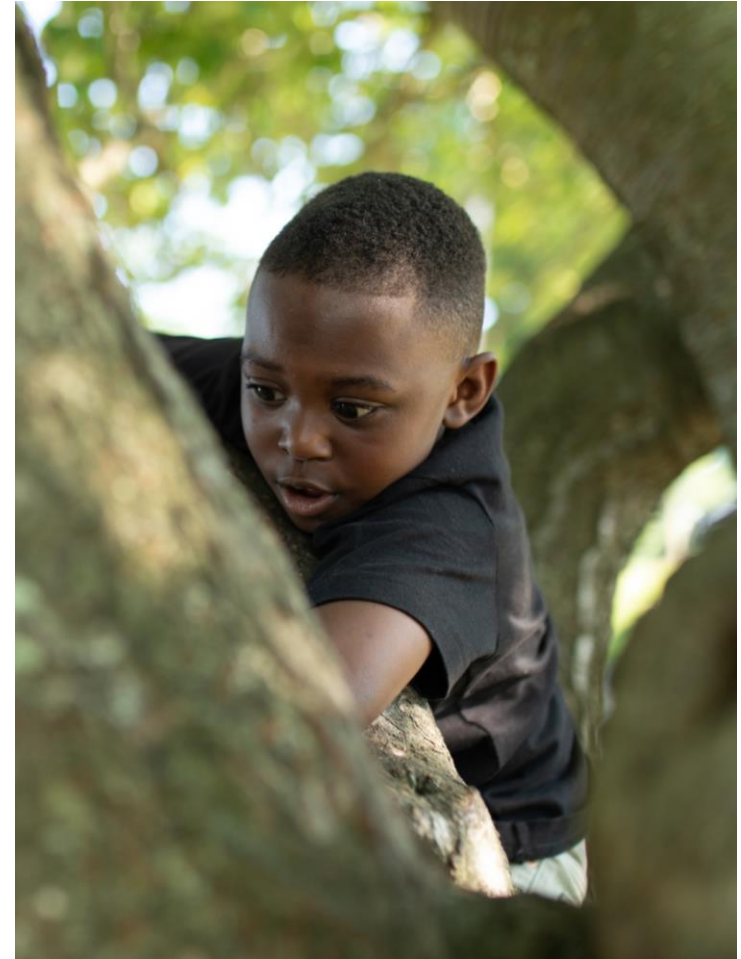
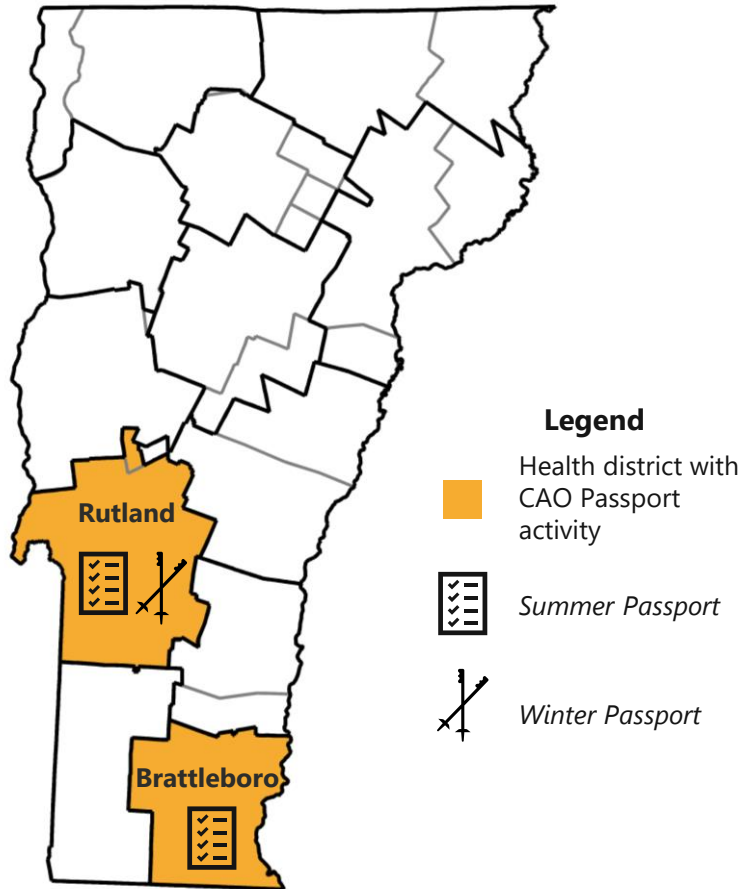


Photo by Children Nature Network

# WHERE COME ALIVE OUTSIDE WORKS

CAO worked with 21 schools across five school districts in two SNAP-Ed regions to engage youth in physical activity.

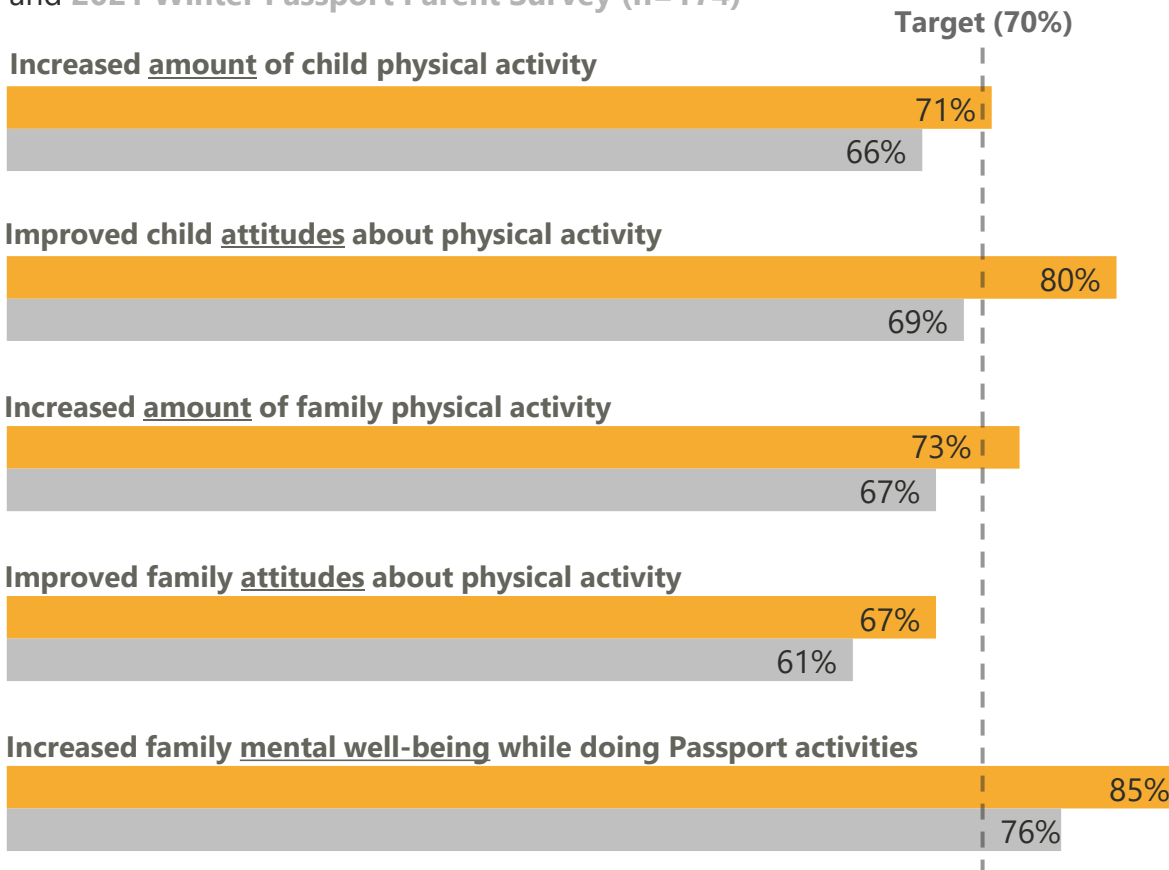


# COME ALIVE OUTSIDE PARENT SURVEY FINDINGS

CAO exceeded targets for almost all indicators in the most recent Summer Passport Parent survey.

## Direct education

Findings from **2021 Summer Passport Parent Survey (n=86)**  
and **2021 Winter Passport Parent Survey (n=174)**



## Key Takeaways

- CAO approached or exceeded the target for every indicator in the 2021 Summer and Winter Passport parent surveys. Differences in results for the Summer and Winter surveys were not statistically significant.
- Most families reported improved mental well-being while engaging in Summer and Winter Passport activities.
- 2021 survey results are comparable to pre-pandemic results. 2020 survey data collection and results were disrupted by COVID-19.

# COME ALIVE OUTSIDE IN ACTION

*CAO passport activities benefit families' physical and mental well-being*

*"We love our passports. We spend a lot of time outside already, but the passports have helped our family find **new ways to explore nature**. The **backyard scavenger hunt** really piqued the interest of my kids and from then on, everywhere we went a scavenger hunt was part of that trip...What I love most about this, is that it made my partner and I slow down and look for things, too. We saw way more fungi, flowers, nests, tracks, and other **wonders** because my kids were creating a way to explore that was **fun and imaginative** and required us to pay attention."*

- Parent of passport recipient



Photos by Come Alive Outside

# UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT EXTENSION

Helping Vermonters of all ages reach their health and wellness goals



THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT  
**EXTENSION**



**Direct  
education**

**70  
enrolled**

**35  
local  
partners**

**194  
education  
sessions**

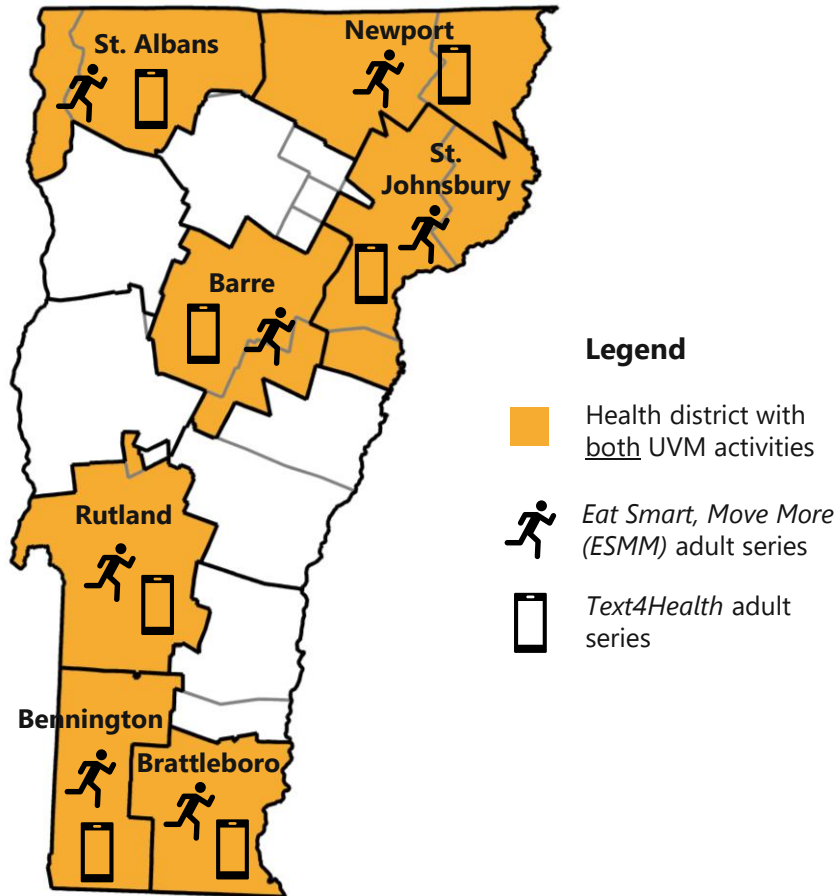
University of Vermont (UVM) Extension conducts direct nutrition education in order to promote healthy eating and physical activity among adults. UVM offers *Eat Smart, Move More (ESMM)* courses for adults through partnerships with community organizations. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, these courses were adapted to be offered virtually with six self-paced video lessons and live phone/web support by UVM Extension staff. UVM also piloted the *Text4HealthVT* initiative this year, a campaign to share twice-weekly messages promoting healthy behaviors. These programs directly reached 70 participants who attended at least one educational course and/or enrolled in Text4HealthVT, with four enrolling in both programs. UVM expanded their reach and impact through partnerships with local government, community organizations, health care providers, and schools.



Photo by UVM Extension

# WHERE UVM EXTENSION WORKS

*UVM brought direct nutrition education to adults in seven SNAP-Ed regions across the state*



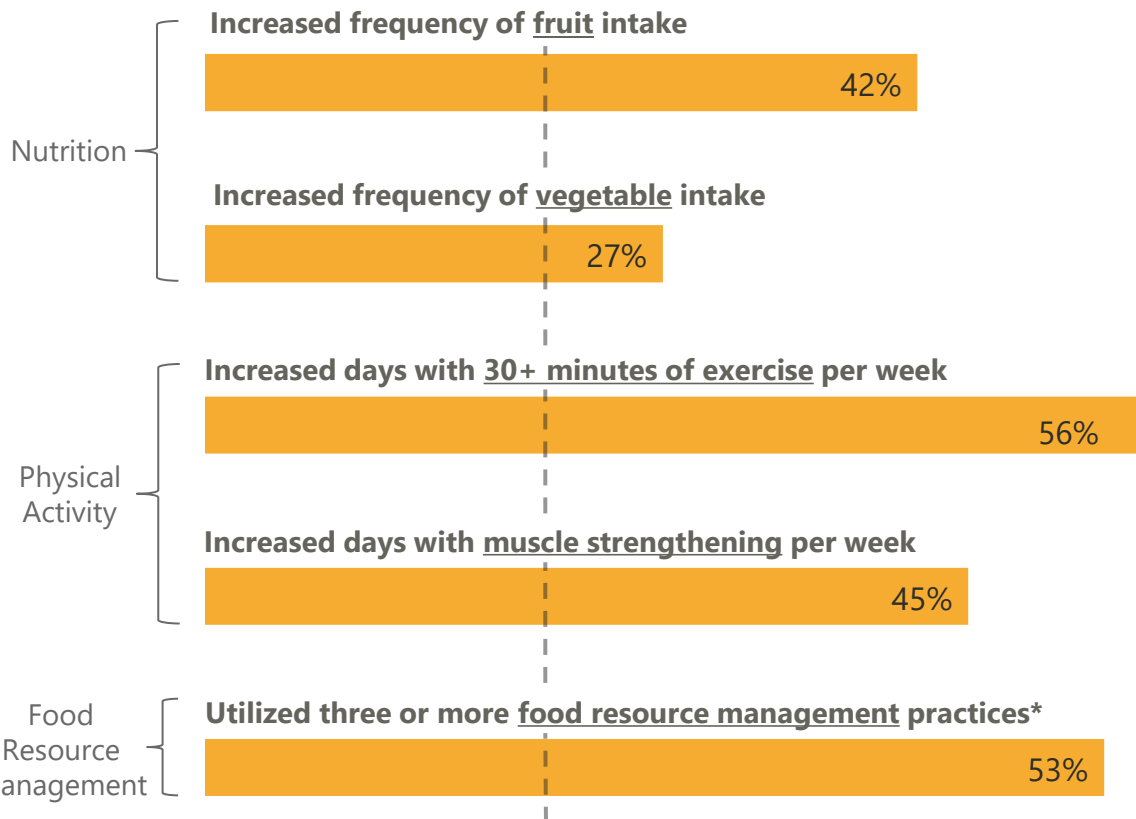
# UVM EXTENSION ADULT SURVEY FINDINGS

*ESMM classes exceeded targets for increasing fruit and vegetable intake, food resource management, and physical activity frequency*

## Direct education

Findings from **2021 Eat Smart, Move More Participant Survey (n=26)**

Target (20%)



## Key Takeaways

- The proportion of ESMM participants reporting increased frequency of nutrition and physical activity behaviors exceeded the 20% target set by the program
- The 26 individuals surveyed represent 63% of the 41 individuals who participated in the ESMM program; their responses may not be representative of program participants as a whole.

\*Food resource management practices included cooking dinner at home more often; comparing food prices; checking cupboards, planning meals, and making a list before shopping; using coupons; writing a food spending plan or grocery budget; and checking for sales on food items before and while shopping.

# UVM EXTENSION TEXT4HEALTHVT PILOT

*Text4HealthVT reinforces healthy behaviors*



THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT  
**TEXT4HEALTHVT**

In FY21, UVM Extension developed the educational content, website, and outreach materials for their Text4Health intervention and successfully launched the pilot program. The Text4HealthVT campaign uses direct education and social marketing practices to reinforce healthful physical activity and nutrition behaviors via text message. This intervention was modeled after the Text2LiveHealthy campaign, which was developed by the Rocky Mountain Prevention Research Center at the Colorado School of Public Health.

Text4HealthVT's twice-weekly messages complement the Eat Smart, Move More (ESMM) intensive curriculum. The campaign aims to communicate with adults who can act as "gatekeepers" to adopting healthy behaviors for the entire family. In FY21, 33 individuals enrolled in Text4HealthVT with only five unsubscribing. A total of 35 unique educational text messages were sent out, adding up to 1,030 total messages sent to participants.

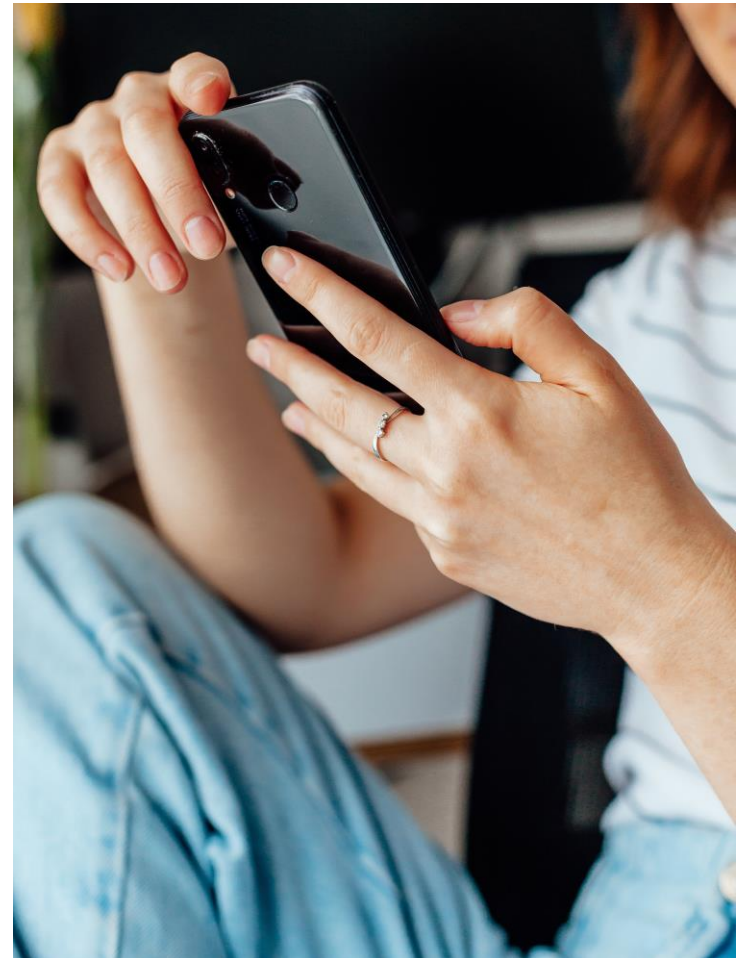


Photo by Darya Ezerskaya on Unsplash



# VERMONT FOODBANK

*Increasing healthy food access for all Vermonters*



**PSE  
change**



**Direct  
education**

Over  
**59,000**  
reached

**54**  
sites  
served

Over  
**43,000**  
reached



**Social  
marketing and  
e-newsletter**

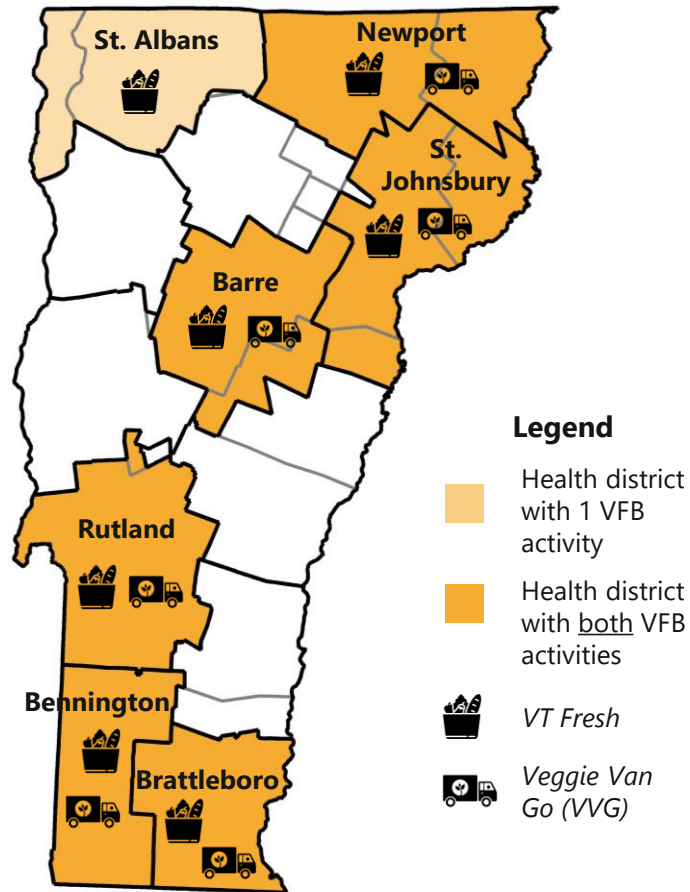
The Vermont Foodbank (VFB) provides direct service nutrition education and implements PSE strategies through their *VT Fresh* and *Veggie Van Go (VVG)* programs. To accommodate COVID-19 restrictions, VFB provided direct education with recipe kits that participants can prepare and sample at home in lieu of in-person cooking demonstrations and taste tests. VVG events were also modified so participants could continue to access food safely and comfortably. Food shelves implemented PSE strategies to promote fruit and vegetable consumption, including using signage and attractive displays, improving systems to procure more healthy foods, and reducing or eliminating limits on the amount of fresh produce visitors can access. VFB also reached participants remotely with social marketing strategies and an electronic nutrition education newsletter. Staff shared cooking videos and other digital content to engage virtually with SNAP-eligible individuals.



Photos by Vermont Foodbank

# WHERE VERMONT FOODBANK WORKS

*VFB worked in seven SNAP-Ed regions to improve community access to fresh produce and provide nutrition education to encourage healthy eating*



# VERMONT FOODBANK EDUCATION AND PSE FINDINGS

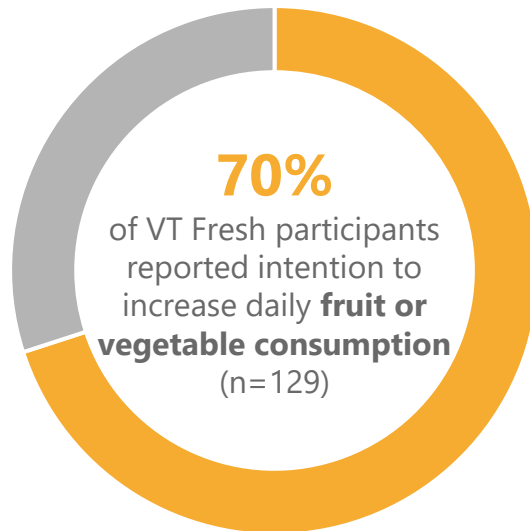
*Programs exceeded targets for number of PSE strategies and PSE reach*

Results from **FY21 Vermont Foodbank Annual Report to VDH**



## Direct Education

Total reach = 4,585



*Example of Direct Education strategies:*

- Bundled available produce and other ingredients with instructions to create recipe kits, which were distributed at local food shelves and VVG mobile food pantry events



## PSE Changes



*Examples of PSE strategies:*

- Displayed produce and signage to maximize appeal, convenience, and engagement with food
- Offered clients their choice of produce
- Posted signage encouraging physical activity

# VERMONT FOODBANK IN ACTION

*Increasing access to produce and nourishing foods through meaningful PSE changes*

Just Basics, a food shelf in Montpelier, has made great strides in eliminating barriers to food access by **listening** and **adapting** to their community's needs. They focused first on removing limits to the amount of fresh produce visitors can receive when they visit; individuals can now access all available foods as often as they need. To ensure visitors remain **safe** while also retaining **autonomy** over their food choices, they developed an online ordering system and curbside pickup option and used social media to promote available fresh produce. Just Basics also implemented a home delivery service to ensure access for individuals with limited **mobility** or transportation challenges. Next, Just Basics is planning to expand their delivery service and partner with Good Samaritan Haven to support community members experiencing homelessness.



Photos by Just Basics

# HUNGER FREE VERMONT

*Changing the environment to improve child nutrition*



**PSE change**

**3,207**  
youth  
reached

**21**  
local  
partners

**68**  
council  
meetings

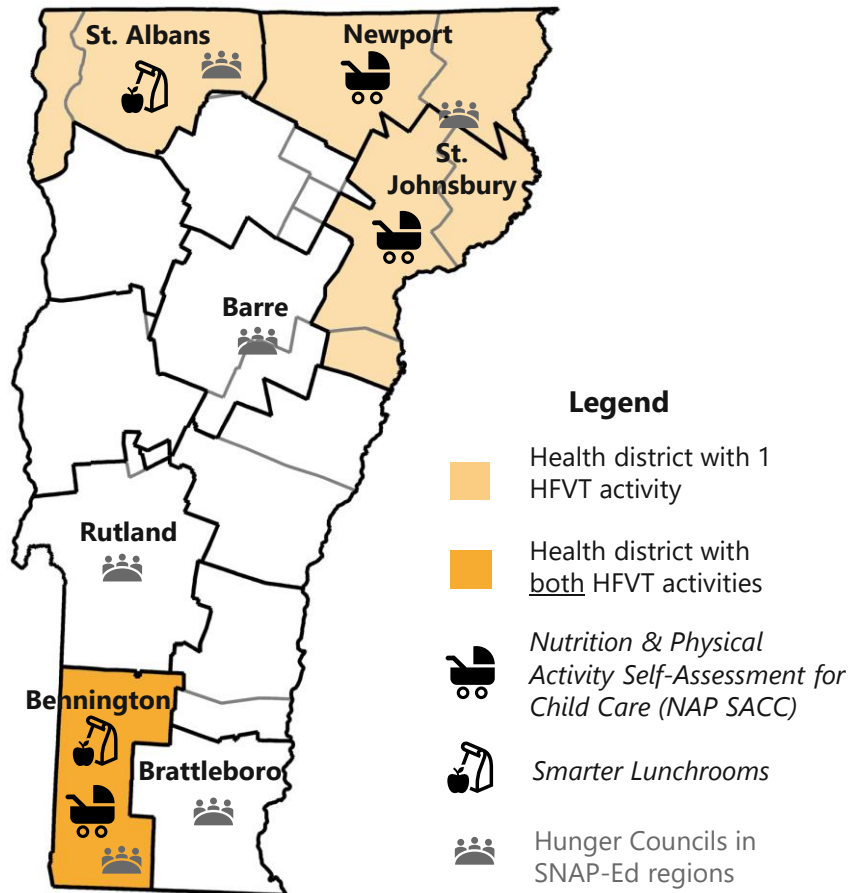
Hunger Free Vermont (HFVT) implements PSE strategies to promote physical activity and healthy eating among youth across the state. These include the *Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC)* and *Smarter Lunchrooms (SL)*. Both strategies faced challenges due to COVID-19 but were able to adapt to the needs of partner organizations: NAP SACC continued conducting virtual trainings and developed a new fully virtual recruitment method. Due to COVID-related school closures, many SL activities were put on hold. But HFVT staff continued to provide resources and assistance to schools planning for the '20-'21 school year. HFVT also continued to convene regional Hunger Councils, which are multi-sector collaboratives seeking to address food insecurity in their communities. Hunger Councils continued to meet frequently during the pandemic to respond to community food needs.



Photos by Hunger Free Vermont

# WHERE HUNGER FREE VERMONT WORKS

HFVT worked with two school districts and four childcare programs in four SNAP-Ed regions across the state to improve nutrition and physical activity among children and infants. HFVT also convened six Hunger Councils that serve all seven SNAP-Ed regions.



# HUNGER FREE VERMONT PSE FINDINGS

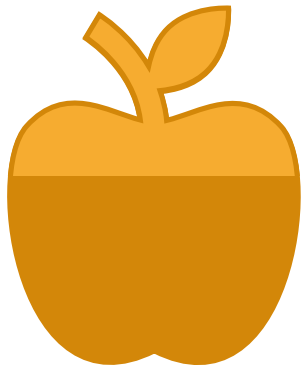
16 PSE changes were completed across all sites in FY21, with 4 more in progress



PSE change

Results from **FY21 Hunger Free Vermont Annual Report to VDH**

## Smarter Lunchrooms



**2** In Progress

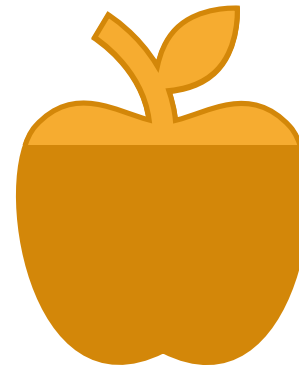
**6** Completed

Goal: 6 completed

*Examples of PSE changes:*

- Supported meal kit and bulk meal distribution efforts by communicating with households and developing cooking and storage guidance as needed
- Informed families of ongoing free school meals and other available food benefits

## NAP SACC



**2** In Progress

**10** Completed

Goal: 12 completed

*Examples of PSE changes:*

- Adopted new strategies for involving parents in nutrition education, such as sharing recipes kids enjoy and discussing food access at pick-up and drop-off
- Expanded nutrition and gardening curriculum in classrooms
- Increased opportunities for physical activity

# HUNGER FREE VERMONT IN ACTION: SMARTER LUNCHROOMS

## *Smarter Lunchrooms in the Franklin Northeast Supervisory Union*

Through the *Smarter Lunchrooms (SL)* initiative, HFVT staff worked with the Franklin Northeast Supervisory Union (FNESU) to identify four PSE changes during the '20-'21 school year. Although the COVID-19 pandemic impacted FNESU staff capacity, Hunger Free Vermont staff were able to support FNESU in implementing several PSE strategies successfully: families of remote students were provided a combination of reimbursable grab-and-go prepared meals and meal kits and FNESU partnered with Healthy Roots, a county Farm-to-School organization.

One of FNESU's biggest pushes in FY21 was engaging the community in school meals and other food benefits. FNESU developed a social media outreach plan to let families know that school meals were available and beneficial. They also distributed monthly menus to families and school staff and informed families of other available food benefits such as Pandemic EBT (P-EBT), which provides monetary benefits for families of remote learning students who would normally receive free or reduced-price meals at school.



Photos by *Hunger Free Vermont*  
Logo by *Franklin Northeast Supervisory Union*



# HUNGER FREE VERMONT IN ACTION: NAP SACC

## Implementing NAP SACC at Mountain View Childcare

Mountain View Childcare was recruited in FY21 to implement PSE changes through the *Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care* (NAP SACC) initiative. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all recruitment efforts, meetings, and training sessions were conducted virtually. With the help of HFVT staff, Mountain View Childcare identified three PSE changes to focus on. One strategy they implemented successfully was using the evidence-based Tiny Tastes curriculum to introduce nutritious foods to children under three.

Much of their focus has been on providing gardening and food cycle education. Mountain View Childcare partnered with Vermont Harvest of the Month to provide seasonal taste tests and expose children to new fruits and vegetables. They are also exploring ways to adapt existing early childhood curriculum about the food cycle and partner with their local waste processing plant to educate children about composting.



Posters by Vermont Harvest of the Month

# HUNGER FREE VERMONT IN ACTION: HUNGER COUNCILS

## *Responding to evolving regional needs through Hunger Councils*

In FY21, Hunger Free Vermont convened 68 Hunger Council meetings, vastly exceeding their goal of 28 meetings. Comprised of members representing various sectors within each SNAP-Ed community, Hunger Councils met regularly to share information and respond to evolving food access concerns. As the COVID-19 pandemic continued to progress, Hunger Councils grappled with numerous program changes, including the ramp-down of the statewide Everyone Eats food access program and eligibility restrictions for emergency shelters. Councils strove to balance these and other statewide issues with local and regional issues that needed to be addressed. After more than a year of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, Council staff worked to maintain public awareness of ongoing food insecurity while continuing to meet the needs of those experiencing food insecurity. Hunger Councils will be instrumental in adapting and responding to the evolving food access needs of Vermonters.



Photo by Hunger Free Vermont

### Top Sectors Represented in Hunger Councils



State/local  
Government



Agriculture &  
Emergency Food  
Services



Non-profit  
Organizations



Child & Family  
Services



Education



Photo by Kevin Davison *Unsplash*

# Conclusions and Recommendations

# APPROACH TO DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions and recommendations in this section were informed by PDA's evaluation approach, which includes:

- An emphasis on **use** and **practical value** of evaluation findings.
- The use of **mixed methods**, including quantitative and qualitative data, to enrich evaluation findings.

This section summarizes key takeaways from the FY21 evaluation and identifies one COVID-19 adaptation, one success, and one opportunity for each partner's evaluation. This is the second year PDA has worked on this report and the second year SNAP-Ed has been operating during the COVID-19 pandemic, so some recommendations have carried over from the FY20 report and new ones were added as appropriate.

PDA looks forward to discussing these conclusions and recommendations with VDH and the implementing partners.



Photo by Robert Kalinagil on *Unsplash*

# KEY TAKEAWAYS



The SNAP-Education program had a broad reach through direct education, PSE change strategies, and social marketing across its seven priority regions and beyond.



Formal partnerships with other organizations in the state are used to align the goals and activities of Vermont agencies working on federal food assistance and physical activity programs.



The four implementing partners continue to work toward established targets for reach, PSE changes, and attitude/behavior changes; nearly all goals were attained this year, but more work remains to increase survey response rates.



The COVID-19 pandemic continued to require adaptation from implementing partners, who rose to the occasion and devised new, creative ways to make progress towards their goals.

# COME ALIVE OUTSIDE



## **Adaptation:**

Leveraged strong partnerships with schools to collaborate with busy teachers/administrators.



## **Success:**

Expanded reach to a new audience in Windham County, where 1,300 passports were distributed through local partnerships.



## **Opportunity:**

Continue exploring new and innovative methods for collecting data that will yield higher response rates and valid responses.

# UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT EXTENSION



## **Adaptation:**

Piloted the Text4HealthVT direct education campaign to reach participants safely and frequently.



## **Success:**

Surpassed goals for increased fruit and vegetable consumption, physical activity frequency, and food resource management strategies.



## **Opportunity:**

Consider additional data collection to measure medium- to long-term behavior change.

# VERMONT FOODBANK



## **Adaptation:**

Converted recipe demonstrations to recipe kits containing instructions and bundled ingredients that participants could easily try at home.



## **Success:**

Exceeded goals for direct nutrition education and PSE strategies implemented.



## **Opportunity:**

Consider more formal evaluation of social marketing strategies.



# HUNGER FREE VERMONT



## **Adaptation:**

Developed completely virtual recruitment process for childcare homes and centers to continue program activities safely.



## **Success:**

Leveraged Hunger Councils and Smarter Lunchrooms infrastructure to inform families of ever-changing food access benefits.



## **Opportunity:**

Consider incorporating qualitative data collection to more deeply understand the impact of programmatic activities.

# STATEWIDE RECOMMENDATIONS



Strategically use qualitative data collection to enrich findings.

While it is helpful to use quantitative data to display findings and trends, some intentional qualitative data collection could enrich quantitative findings. Qualitative data collection methods might include focus groups or key informant interviews and could also be used to bring in additional voices of program participants.



Leverage evaluation as partners continue adapting to COVID-19.

As the pandemic continues, partners have had to continue adapting to an ever-changing landscape of amended safety guidelines and food benefits. Evaluation can be used to help partners develop data-informed plans to adapt their programming and help them see lessons that have emerged during a time of adaptation and change.



Review and revisit current PSE strategies being implemented.

Evaluation and data can help partners better understand how PSE strategies are being implemented at program sites and explore the influence of site-specific context in implementation and effectiveness of PSE strategies. Furthermore, evaluation planning and data can be used to help select future PSE strategies.