



SNAP-Education, or **SNAP-Ed**, equips individuals and families with the skills they need to make lasting, healthy changes for themselves and their families. SNAP-Ed helps children and families with low incomes make healthier food choices and stretch their grocery dollars. It also supports local farmers and food retailers and works in communities to make healthy choices easier.

**SNAP-Ed NM** has a broad reach with programming in nearly all NM counties and in many tribal communities.

**SNAP-Ed NM** is a statewide coalition of programs providing nutrition education, promoting healthy fresh foods, and working with schools, local growers, senior centers, farmers markets and other organizations to increase access to healthy foods :



Eat Smart to Play Hard



Cooking with Kids



Kids Cook!



CHILE Plus

**SNAP-Ed NM**



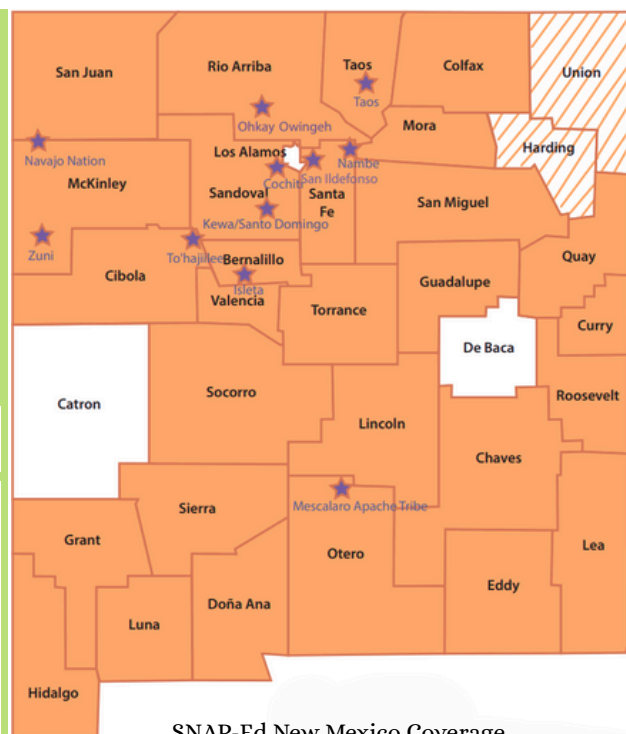
Healthy Kids Healthy Communities



Ideas for Cooking and Nutrition



Love Your Health



SNAP-Ed New Mexico Coverage

## What happens if SNAP-Ed NM goes away?

- Low-income children in New Mexico will lose the opportunity to learn about, taste, and cook healthy fresh foods, starting healthy habits early
- Adults will not get to learn about growing their own foods or eating healthy on a budget
- Families will lose out on information and encouragement to practice healthy lifestyle behaviors at home
- Seniors won't benefit from nutrition education and recipes that can help reduce chronic diseases
- School gardens will stop growing food
- Local farmers will lose business related to Farm to School, Farm to Preschool, and Farm to Senior Center programs
- Efforts to establish and promote school salad bars, healthy fundraisers, and other opportunities to encourage healthy eating will be lost
- Food insecurity will increase from the inability to collaborate in initiatives like the Food and Hunger Initiative and New Mexico Grown

SNAP-Ed programming is funded and guided by the US Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Food and Nutrition Services. To learn more, visit the USDA website at

- <https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/state-snap-ed-programs/new-mexico>

Or the Association of SNAP Nutrition Education Administrators (ASNNA) website at

- <https://asnna.us.org/>



## Stories from the Land of Enchantment

The SNAP-Ed New Mexico implementing agencies, Cooking with Kids, the NM Department of Health, New Mexico State University (NMSU), and the University of New Mexico (UNM), have shared some stories from their work and quotes from participants on the impact of SNAP-Ed New Mexico on children, families and communities.

### UNM CHILE Plus – a SNAP-Ed NM program

The Child Health Initiative for Lifelong Eating and Exercise (CHILE) Plus collaborates with Head Start centers statewide to support healthy eating and physical activity among Head Start children and their families. One center, Zuni Pueblo Head Start, also incorporates the Zuni language program and teaches about growing traditional foods. As children are repeatedly introduced to new foods, they also learn the Zuni words for those foods. This collaboration supports Zuni language revitalization, and the goal of children growing into strong and healthy adults who are connected to their culture and community.



Head Start teacher training, 2024

*“The children enjoyed seeing the different types of squash, also seeing the different textures and colors as well... We also talked about how they grow, where they grow, and the different ways you can eat it.”*

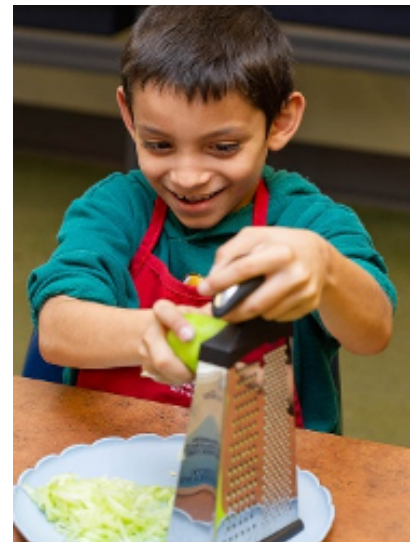
*–Zuni HS teacher*

### Cooking with Kids – a SNAP-Ed NM program

Cooking with Kids educates and empowers children and families to make healthy food choices through hands-on learning with fresh, affordable foods. The program works in school classrooms and cafeterias, providing nutrition education and opportunities to cook, to over 7,000 children in Northern New Mexico.

*“In Cooking with Kids, I learned that you don’t have to be a chef to be able to cook a good meal that is healthy for you. My favorite part of Cooking with Kids is how I learn about different foods that I would not think of trying!”*

*–Student, age 11, Tony E. Quintana Elementary School (Española Public Schools)*



Española elementary school student  
Participating in Cooking with Kids

*“Both of my kids enjoy bringing home the recipes and sharing their days when it’s a Cooking with Kids day. They love telling me about the new foods they tried. I enjoy being able to volunteer, and learning new foods I’d never try or know about. Thank you for bringing new foods and ideas for dinner. I appreciate they are affordable and easy to make. Great job!”*

*–Parent, Kearny Elementary, Santa Fe Public Schools*

## NM DOH's Healthy Kids Healthy Communities (HKHC) – a SNAP-Ed NM program

Healthy Kids Roosevelt County coordinator, Caron Powers, worked with partners in Portales to establish a school garden seven years ago and has expanded it each year. She collaborated with the owner of Portales' only garden shop at the time, Curt Jaynes, who advised her on crop timing and garden location, and provided planting tips. Joe Ortega, a teacher, agreed to build the raisedbeds for free. Caron also solicited discounts and donated supplies from local businesses, talked to the city about including the garden in its Clean and Beautiful Grant, and applied for a community grant from Wal-Mart. Another key component was finding a garden champion at the school, who



James Elementary School's awardwinning garden

helps with planting days and summer watering. HKHC leveraged all of these partnerships and resources to ensure a successful and sustainable school garden for the students, families, and staff at James Elementary!

## Kids Cook! – a SNAP-Ed NM program

Kids Cook! provides nutrition and food education through hands-on experiential learning for elementary and middle school students and their families. The program strives to inspire families to bond over cooking and eating together, be more physically active, and to share their knowledge with their communities. One parent shared how this SNAP-Ed NM program impacted them:



APS students enjoy a Kids Cook! cooking lesson

*"Before I volunteered with Kids Cook! I served my family boxed meals. I was too tired, too busy, and I hated cooking. Being a regular volunteer at my son's school I had the opportunity to participate in Kids Cook multiple times for multiple classes. I got to experience all the ways cooking could be fun, over and over. It wasn't as hard as I thought. I'm happily cooking for my family now, serving my kid things I never thought he'd eat, and my family is exploring new foods. If I could shout it from the rooftops I'd tell everyone how amazing Kids Cook is and how it changed our lives. Thank you so much for helping me be a better mom!"*

*-Parent to a student at Bellehaven Elementary*

## NMSU's Ideas for Cooking and Nutrition (ICAN) – a SNAP-Ed NM program

SNAP-Ed NM provides flexible education tailored to the needs of its audience. A mother and schoolteacher in Albuquerque, NM reached out to NMSU's ICAN, a SNAP-Ed NM program, for help with improving her family's well-being. She was keen to shake her habit of picking up fast food when her evening time was scarce. An ICAN nutrition educator responded with the Create Better Health curriculum, which teaches fast, healthy meal creation on a budget. Because of her limited time, ICAN staff met with her and her family through the Zoom online platform, and tailored a curriculum to her needs. In addition to food recipes that included healthy proteins like yogurt, the educator incorporated yoga and dance exercises.



Amie Steen, ICAN Nutrition Educator, cooks in Chaves County



## NMSU's Ideas for Cooking and Nutrition (ICAN) – a SNAP-Ed NM program

SNAP-Ed NM helped change a family's lifestyle and helped a mother tackle her daily demands with new energy and creativity. All it took was a little adaptation to ensure the program can meet participants wherever they are.

*“The meat that I do buy goes farther because I have other proteins.”*  
-Parent and schoolteacher

## UNM's Eat Smart to Play Hard campaign – a SNAP-Ed NM program

Eat Smart to Play Hard (ESPH) is a campaign that encourages elementary school children to eat fruits and vegetables and engage in physical activity by making it fun. One of the many SNAP-Ed NM program's success stories involves a 5th grade student named Emma. Described by a teacher as a “very troubled girl that was well known for behavior issues at school”, Emma was bullied and self-conscious because of her weight. When the ESPH program was implemented at her school, she committed to following the 4-week program. ESPH does not mention weight or weight loss. Instead, it focuses on eating fruit and vegetables and enjoying fun physical activities. However, Emma saw it as an opportunity to make a positive change in her life. She and her family began cooking healthy ESPH recipes and increasing their physical activity at home. Within several weeks, her peers and teachers noticed encouraging changes in her behavior and began offering her complements and positive reinforcement. Her P.E. and homeroom teacher noticed an improvement in her classroom performance. After the program ended, she vowed to continue eating healthy foods and being active to improve her health and well-being for life. As it did for Emma, SNAP-Ed NM programming has repeatedly demonstrated impact on the health behaviors of children and families.



Kids enjoying ESPH activities

*“I lost ten pounds, and I feel better”.*  
-Elementary school student

[Note: The student's name was changed to protect her privacy.]

## UNM's Love Your Health – a SNAP-Ed NM program

Love Your Health is a SNAP-Ed NM program implemented with older adults participating in senior center congregate meal programs. Love Your Health promotes nutrition, physical activity, cooking healthy meals at home, and mental health by supporting community engagement. One day this past year, Love Your Health hosted a smoothie bike party for seniors. The smoothie bike uses physical activity (pedaling the bike) to make smoothies with a variety of fruits and water. Yogurt can be added for protein. While other seniors were lining up to get on the bike, Grandma Neva, who is in her 90's and had limited mobility, was excited about the opportunity to ride the bike. A SNAP-Ed NM team member recognized that Neva was excited and approached her to ask if she wanted to participate. She did! Because of her limited mobility, senior center staff assisted Neva onto the bike and she was able to pedal and blend her own smoothie. She was so excited and didn't want to stop riding.



Grandma Neva pedals to make a fruit smoothie

*“I am going to find a way to do more of this at home!”*  
-Grandma Neva, Laguna senior center participant

