

Steps to Health

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed)



What is Steps to Health?

North Carolina State University's SNAP-Ed Program is **Steps to Health**. Steps to Health educates and inspires limited resource North Carolinians to eat smart and move more through nutrition and food resource management education programs targeting elementary-aged children, adults, older adults, families, and Latino families.

Steps to Health is delivered by county-based educators across North Carolina. Steps to Health educators are:

- **Members** of the community they support
- **Trained** by university faculty to influence changes in behavior and impact the lives of those they teach
- **Skilled** in using hands-on, interactive teaching methods
- **Committed** to delivering research-based instruction
- **Dedicated** to reaching diverse, low-income populations

What is SNAP-Ed?

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) is the nutrition education arm of SNAP. Funded through the US Department of Agriculture and delivered nation-wide, it brings together federal, state, and local resources to improve the likelihood that families enrolled in and eligible for SNAP will make healthy food choices within a limited budget and choose physically active lifestyles.



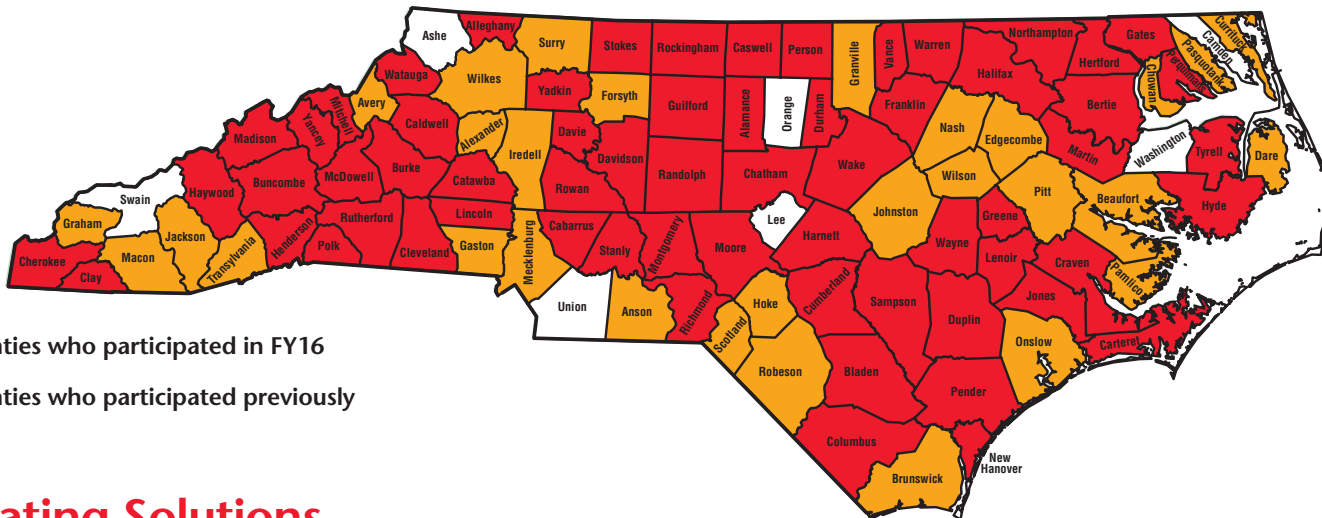
Defining the Problem

Obesity and related chronic diseases are prevalent among North Carolinians. With **2/3** of adults overweight or obese, North Carolina ranks **13th** in the nation for obesity, and **9th** and **17th** highest for adult diabetes and hypertension, respectively. Poor eating practices and physical inactivity are not limited to adults. Children are following closely in their footsteps, with only **1 in 4** eating recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables and almost half spending more than 2 hours watching television every day.

The prevalence of food insecurity in North Carolina is higher than the national average.

1/4 
children in NC live in households that lack access to adequate food.

3/10 
kids in NC rely on SNAP to meet their nutritional needs.



■ Counties who participated in FY16
■ Counties who participated previously

Cultivating Solutions

Beginning in 2007, Steps to Health has improved diets, nutrition-related behaviors, and physical activity levels of thousands of North Carolinians. During this time, Steps to Health educators, in collaboration with NC Cooperative Extension, made **379,808** education contacts, reaching **50,018** participants within **93** of North Carolina’s 100 counties.

Direct education programs are multi-session to provide repetition and aid in the retention of information presented. Sessions are interactive and multi-sensory to better facilitate learning. Session components include: taste tests, cooking demonstrations, games, discussion, physical activity, songs, and goal setting. Participants

receive take-home materials to promote behavior change outside of the classroom.

Steps to Health enhances direct education by providing support for policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) change at Head Start and childcare centers, elementary schools, congregate nutrition sites, senior centers, and faith communities. All sectors of society, including individuals and families, educators and health professionals, communities, organizations, businesses, and policymakers, contribute to the food and physical activity environment in which people live, learn, work, and play. Direct education combined with PSE changes are more effective than either strategy alone for preventing overweight and obesity.

Steps to Health Works

HIGHLIGHTED FY16 IMPACTS

- **93% of preschool children** are more willing to try fruits and vegetables.
- **74% of elementary school children** eat more fruits and vegetables.
- **55% of children and youth** are more active.
- **47% of adults and older adults** are more active.
- **65% of child care centers and elementary schools** made at least one change in their policy, systems, or environment.
- **70% of Summer Meals site managers** said Steps to Health increased participation and retention at their site.

“During lunch my students get excited seeing fruits and vegetables they discussed and tasted during the program!”

Classroom teacher, Catawba County

“At the end of each class, my family discussed what we learned. My children are more willing to be physically active and are trying new vegetables.”

Family participant, Columbus County

“I enjoyed this program because it has given me the ability to make better food choices.”

Adult participant, Rutherford County

“My child usually complains a lot when I tell him a food is good for him. But after the program, when I ask him to try something healthy, he pops it right in his mouth.”

Parent of participating student, Caldwell County