

SNAP-ED New Mexico Works in Tribal Communities

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Research Center

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SNAP-Ed New Mexico Programs

Healthy Kids New Mexico is a project of the New Mexico Department of Health and state and local partners, which creates healthy environments and programs to give kids what they need to play well, eat well, learn well, and live healthy and full lives.



Ideas for Cooking and Nutrition, or ICAN, is free, fun, hands-on nutrition education. ICAN's mission is to inspire New Mexico's limited resource youth and adults to make healthy food and lifestyle choices.



Kids Cook!® is a multicultural nutrition and food education program, providing hands-on experiential learning for elementary and middle school students and their families.



SNAP-Ed at Las Cruces Public Schools strives to expand opportunities for both exposure to and consumption of nutritious foods as well as improve school nutrition and physical activity environments.



SNAP-Ed New Mexico Programs

The Child Health Initiative for Lifelong Eating and Exercise (CHILE) Plus program is the dissemination of the original CHILE intervention. CHILE Plus continues as an evidence-based, multidisciplinary nutrition education and obesity prevention program among American Indian and Hispanic children enrolled in Head Start programs across rural New Mexico.



Cooking with Kids educates and empowers children and families to make healthy food choices through hands-on learning with fresh, affordable foods from diverse cultural traditions.



Eat Smart to Play Hard uses a social marketing framework to reduce obesity and prevent chronic disease in children, families, schools, and communities across New Mexico by making it enjoyable and fun to eat healthy and exercise.



Funded by SNAP-Ed

Survey Summary



In April 2021, the University of New Mexico's Prevention Research Center (UNM PRC) Evaluation Team surveyed six implementing agencies conducting SNAP-Ed New Mexico programming, including Cooking with Kids, Kids Cook!, Las Cruces Public Schools, the New Mexico Department of Health, New Mexico State University, and the UNM PRC.

The agencies were asked about their work with tribal communities.

There are 23 tribes located in the state of New Mexico including the Navajo Nation, 3 Apache tribes, and 19 Pueblos. According to data from the US Census Bureau, approximately 11% of New Mexico's population is American Indian/Alaska Native.

Survey results show that SNAP-Ed implementing agencies worked with 9 out of the 23 tribes in New Mexico, including Cochiti, Isleta, the Mescalero Apache Tribe, the Navajo Nation, Ohkay Owingeh, Santa Domingo, San Ildefonso, Taos, and Zuni.

Survey results showed that 71% of implementing agencies worked directly with tribal communities in some capacity during the 2020-2021 fiscal year. Four tribes, Zuni, Ohkay Owingeh, Santa Domingo, and San Ildefonso, partnered with multiple implementing agencies providing different programming (e.g., direct education, social marketing, and policy and environmental changes) or working with different populations (i.e., school-aged children, adults or seniors).

Survey Summary (cont.)

The majority (60%) of the programs working with tribal communities have developed materials for a specific tribal population or in a tribal language.

A total of 24 program staff, 7 contracted partners, and 105 non-contracted partners worked to implement programming in tribal communities. Of these, 4 program staff, 2 contracted partners, and 42 non-contracted partners working with the SNAP-Ed program were from tribal communities.

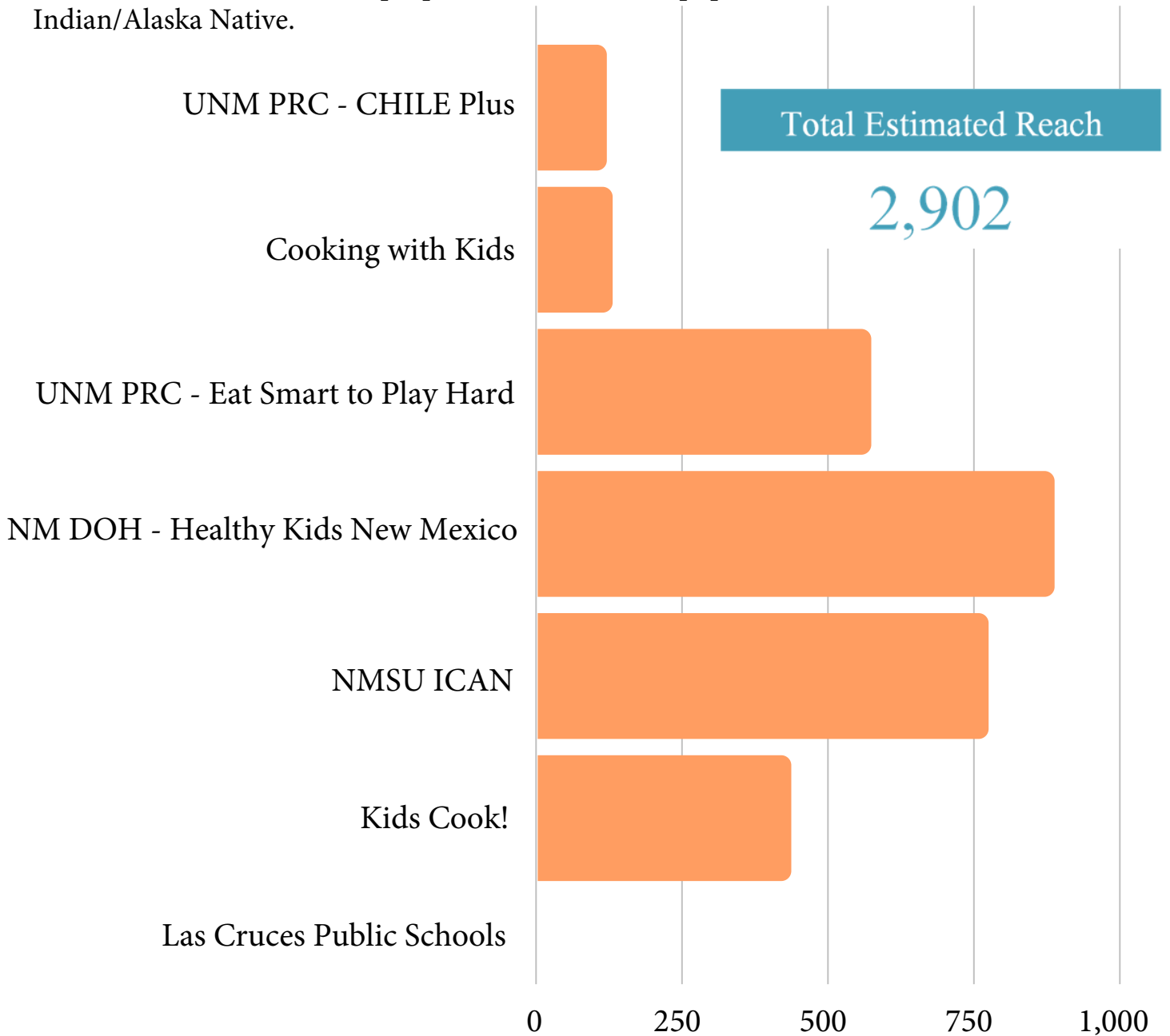
The majority of SNAP-Ed programs working in tribal communities served elementary school children (86%). Programs also reached older adults/seniors (43%), adults (23%), high school students (23%), middle school students (23%), and preschool children (23%).

Barriers: Respondents cited a lack of tribal language materials, not having a tribal staff person, lack of cultural sensitivity training opportunities, and lack of reliable internet access as some of the main barriers and challenges to implementing SNAP-Ed programming in tribal communities.



Tribal Reach

Data on the number of Native Americans reached were provided by each program. For Native Americans reached in the school setting, if exact numbers were not available, estimates were calculated based on the proportion of the school population that identified as American Indian/Alaska Native.



Estimated Number of Native Americans reached during FFY 2020-2021

Success Story



During the past year, SNAP-ED NM implementing agencies successfully pivoted to reach families across New Mexico with virtual nutrition and physical activity programming, partner meetings and work on policy, systems and environmental changes in communities. Examples include providing recipes, cooking kits with ingredients, and virtual Family Cooking Nights; conducting virtual Seed-to-Supper gardening classes; revising curricula for teachers to provide activity lessons virtually; and, working with schools to strengthen wellness policies. One example, highlighted here, is the implementation of Eat Smart to Play Hard (ESPH), the SNAP-ED NM social marketing campaign, in the tribal community of Zuni (www.ashiwi.org).

In 2020, the Zuni Youth Enrichment Project (ZYEP) and Shiwi Ts'ana Elementary School (STE) responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by staying committed to Zuni youth and getting creative with virtual learning. ZYEP (www.zyep.org) is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing enriching activities for Zuni youth, and annually partners with STE to provide physical activities, nutrition, and traditional dance for students. A big catalyst for creativity and innovation this year was the ESPH campaign. ESPH encourages youth to eat more fruits and vegetables by appealing to their values of fun and play.

This was the third time that ZYEP and STE partnered together to roll-out ESPH, and like every year, the program was implemented to support the needs of the school, staff, and 580 students from pre-K to 5th grade. Due to COVID-19 and virtual school, STE needed virtual activities to enrich and encourage students, and two STE classes (Physical Education & Library) had curriculum plans that could be complemented and supported by the components of ESPH.



Success Story (cont.)



Ms. Lynelle Pablito took on the “Eat Smart” aspects of the program in Library Class, reading books to children about food and nutrition while ZYEP staff showed ESPH recipe demonstration videos to students and encouraged them to “eat smart” and stay hydrated. Ms. Shanell Leekya led the “Play Hard” component in PE class, using the ESPH Fun Book Activities as a structure for teaching basic exercises and muscle groups, and allowing ZYEP staff to demonstrate and join the students in each PE class. The ESPH program ended with a virtual “Fun Day”, where STE Specials teachers and ZYEP staff had silly dance-offs, games, and action-based storytelling with students. Adult participants were very sore, but it was truly a fun day.

ESPH achievement was measured by participation and attendance in Library and PE classes. Following the program, 81 students received medals for their efforts, 45 received ribbon awards and another 80 received prizes for participation. The campaign potentially reached over 550 students each week for over 4 weeks with nutrition and physical activity Zooms, videos, education, and encouragement, for a grand total of over 2,200 nutrition education contacts. Post-semester surveys showed that STE students reported increased enjoyment of learning about nutrition and that eating fruit and vegetables was more important to them after ESPH. Teachers and students continued to talk about healthy eating in Library and to use ESPH water infusion bottles. Additionally, PE students continued to use their ESPH activity items and backpacks.

Success Story (cont.)

Although challenging in many unexpected ways, the virtual implementation of ESPH at Zuni was made possible because of the incredible coordination, collaboration, and commitment between ZYEP, STE, and the ESPH staff. In addition, the enthusiasm and participation from Zuni students was very fun and inspiring and brought the ESPH program to life! Virtual ESPH was beneficial for students and staff alike, and provided opportunities for the school community to come together.



We would like to recognize Jessica Quinlan, Nutrition Coordinator with ZYEP, and thank her and the unstoppable staff of ZYEP as well as the motivated STE teachers, Shanell Leekya and Lynelle Pablito, for making this happen. We are also very thankful to Principal Jonathan Davis for supporting the ESPH program. This is just one example of the partnerships and collaborations that make SNAP-ED NM work!

