Since 1995, the Oklahoma SNAP-Ed program, under the auspices of Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, has worked with low-income families and youth improving their diets and food related behaviors. Additionally, families increase their ability to manage food budgets and related sources such as SNAP benefits (previously food stamps) in order to not run out of food by the end of the month. In 2015, SNAP-Ed reached 2,109 adults and 21,140 youth directly and nearly 6,226 family members indirectly.

DEFINING THE PROBLEM
Oklahoma’s statistics on hunger and food insecurity are startling. Oklahoma consistently ranks as one of the most hungry states, with 1 in 4 children at risk. In addition, more than 17% of the population is considered food insecure.

INVESTING IN THE SOLUTION
Statewide the SNAP-Ed program leverages federal and state funds and provides approximately 85 job opportunities to local citizens, which contributes more than $2 million to the state economy in salary and benefits. The program operates in 42 counties across Oklahoma.

REACHING DIVERSE POPULATIONS
At least 50% of all SNAP-Ed adults are minorities.

MINORITY

13% African-American
15% American Indian or Alaskan Native
11% Hispanic
2% Other
9% Multiple races identified
50% White

NON-MINORITY

50%

2015 IMPACTS: OKLAHOMA SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM - EDUCATION (SNAP-Ed)

Debra Garrard-Foster
State Community Nutrition Education Programs Coordinator
Oklahoma State University, Nutritional Sciences
Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service
301 Human Sciences Building, Stillwater, OK 74078
debra.greene_garrard@okstate.edu (405)744-6283
Why It Works

In addition to funding, fully staffed county Extension offices are key contributors to the overall success of SNAP-Ed. Extension Educators support the Nutrition Education Assistants (NEAs) in day-to-day program activities and provide consistent access to research-based information. Also, they assist NEAs in continuing the Extension tradition of forming strong partnerships with community agencies to address the needs of low-income families. The partnerships provide education and services that are mutually supportive without the duplication of efforts and resources.

SNAP-Ed strives to hire NEAs with a strong understanding of the barriers many limited-income families face in achieving a healthy diet. As paraprofessionals, the NEAs are skilled in using hands-on interactive teaching methods which enable them to influence changes in behavior and impact the lives of those they teach.