

ASNNA Race, Health, Social Equity Committee presents

GUIDING PRINCIPLES TO EMBED EQUITY IN SNAP-ED

Centering equity and social justice in SNAP-Ed is everyone's responsibility. Equity means fairness and justice in process and impact for all regardless of racial, cultural, economic, or any other identity. Whereas equality provides one-size-fits-all solutions, equity recognizes that we do not all start from the same place and must therefore acknowledge and make adjustments to systemic imbalances as well as differential redistributions of support according to individual needs. These guidelines are intended to provide direction and support to SNAP-Ed agencies throughout their ongoing equity-centered efforts to reimagine how SNAP-Ed executes its work. When we say "community," we mean those closest and most deeply affected to the barriers or issues we are working to overcome as well as local community-based partners that further enable us to do this work.

STARTING WITH STRENGTHS

Starting with strengths means adopting a posture that assumes communities have inherent assets and infrastructure to address their own needs. This means defining individuals and communities first and foremost by their assets and aspirations BEFORE their challenges and deficits.

IMPACT OVER INTENT

Intent is what we think or feel, what we are hoping to achieve through some action; Impact refers to the results of your words or actions and how those are experienced, felt, perceived, or understood by another person. SNAP-Ed administrators and implementing organizations prioritizing impact over intent means regularly engaging in exploratory dialogue in order to assess impact. It means that, regardless of the intentions in any program, interaction, or situation, the impact is more important.

AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Authentic engagement is consistent and persistent engagement with the community for the purpose of establishing a foundation of friendship, trust, capacity building and power sharing. This is an inclusive process for connecting, informing, designing, implementing, evaluating, and sustaining nutrition security, physical activity, and systems change programs BY, WITH, AND FOR local communities.



INTEGRITY, TRANSPARENCY, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Integrity is when words, behaviors and actions are aligned with a set of moral and ethical standards of excellence. Accountability involves holding individuals and organizations responsible for executing their power ethically and appropriately. Transparency involves promoting information disclosure and shared, yet confidential, access to information in ways that empower all stakeholders to be informed and involved. All of these are essential for building and maintaining a foundation of trust with individuals and communities.

CENTERING-PEOPLE

Centering people means recognizing the various identities of SNAP-Ed individuals, respecting and valuing differences, and creating spaces of belonging, accessibility, and psychological safety. It also means prioritizing the value, knowledge, agency, and expertise of SNAP-Ed eligible residents in our communities.

CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Addressing food security and overall community wellness is a complex endeavor that will require the coordination and collaboration of a variety of stakeholders, especially with those indirect to the food system, using their collective expertise and resources to enhance community strengths and opportunities and to address the issues and barriers as identified and prioritized by communities.



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These principles and reflexive questions are for individuals and institutions to reflect on and assess to what extent they are embodying these principles and advancing equity within their own teams, their programming, and in their communities. When we say "community," we mean those closest and most deeply affected to the barriers or issues we are working to overcome as well as local community-based partners that further enable us to do this work.

CENTERING-PEOPLE

- How have we prioritized the voices of those most impacted?
- To what extent have we shifted decision-making to community?
- To what extent do we provide culturally appropriate (beyond translation), trauma-informed care?
- What other support whole-person wellness resources have we provided our community members?

AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- To what extent have we built community capacity to enable them to lead and advance?
- To what extent have we shifted decision-making power to community?
- Am I moving at the speed of trust within the community or am I pushing an agenda?
- To what extent is community involved as co-creators in planning, implementation, defining success, and sustainability?
- To what extent have we prioritized a mutually beneficial relationship? What value do we extract and what value do we return?

STARTING WITH STRENGTHS

- To what extent have we framed our work around community assets and strengths first?
- To what extent have we allowed community to describe or identify their existing strengths and definitions of success?
- To what extent have we used person-centered, asset-based language in all forms of our communications (formal and informal)?
- How have we lifted up, supported, and invested in existing community assets and resources?

IMPACT OVER INTENT

- In what ways have we acknowledged historical/current institutional racism and oppression?
- How often do we ask for, receive, and prioritize feedback from community members?
- Have we asked for and resolved existing tensions or conflict? How have we promoted community healing?
- How is community benefit at the center of my intentions and how have we assessed community perceptions of these efforts?

INTEGRITY, TRANSPARENCY, & ACCOUNTABILITY

- To what extent have we created a diverse and inclusive workplace environment, including retention and parity plans, policy-making and power audits, and continued professional development?
- What processes have we put in place that create a meaningful feedback loop between community members and SNAP-Ed program staff and administrators?
- What information have we shared honestly and transparently with community in regards to infrastructure, funding, decision-making, and program processes?
- What parts of our program plans reflect our accountability to community, in addition to USDA?

CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

- Who is missing from the table where decisions are made and where and how programming is implemented?
- What non-traditional partnerships have we developed or maintained?
- What do we do on a regular basis to cultivate and strengthen these diverse partnerships?
- How have we built capacity to facilitate partnerships and play a supportive role?
- How have we created an environment where community partners want to work with us?