

BETTER LIVING FOR TEXANS (BLT)

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed)

TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION

FY 2024 Program Brief

Extending Knowledge | Providing Solutions

1,821,870 TOTAL REACHED

through Direct and Indirect Education, PSE activities, and Social Marketing



Relevance... Health disparities among low-income populations are well documented and frequently have dietary intakes that do not meet current dietary and physical activity guideline recommendations for Americans.

In Texas... 34% of adults and 22% of youth are either overweight or obese, which increases the risk for diabetes, hypertension, and poor overall quality of life. It is estimated that one in eight Texas families experiences food insecurity, meaning the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food is limited or uncertain.

Response... BLT is the SNAP-Ed nutrition education program within the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Extension agents, educators, and volunteers provide evidence-based **Direct Nutrition Education**, engage in **Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) Change Initiatives**, and implement **Social Marketing** efforts for adults and youth who receive or are eligible for SNAP benefits. In collaboration within their communities, Extension agents and educators plan and identify appropriate audiences to deliver BLT programs in English and Spanish to:

- Increase fruit and vegetable consumption
- Adopt healthier eating patterns
- Increase physical activity
- Increase access to fruits and vegetables through gardening programs
- Adopt food resource management skills to reduce food insecurity
- Improve food safety practices

In FY 2024, **183 counties** partnered with over **314 community partners** to provide in-person and virtual BLT programs at no charge to participants. *Community partners and programming sites include county Extension offices, schools, churches, libraries, community centers, parks and recreation programs, community agencies and organizations, low-income and transitional housing authorities, food banks, pantries, and food distribution sites.* BLT is grant-funded through the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Services and the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. In FY 2024, AgriLife Extension was awarded more than **\$7.8 million** to deliver BLT programs, which covered materials and resources, travel, salaries, and benefits.

BLT VISION

Creating opportunities, changing lives

BLT MISSION

We provide research and evidence-based nutrition, health and wellness knowledge to empower individuals, families, and communities to make positive changes for healthier lives.

CORE PROGRAM AREAS



NUTRITION



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



GARDENING

BETTER LIVING FOR TEXANS (BLT)

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Education (SNAP-Ed)

Direct Education engages with the community directly through in-person or virtual nutrition education programs. These interventions teach the knowledge and skills needed for healthy nutrition and physical activity choices within a limited budget. BLT offers **14 evidence-based curriculums** for different ages and covers topics like nutrition, physical activity, and gardening.

- **61,875 adults and youth** reached through direct education
- **16,883** different sessions conducted
- **1,098** unique sites across Texas
- **1,759,995 SNAP-Ed eligible contacts** through indirect education like newsletters, health fairs, marketing events, food distributions, social media, TV and radio segments, and coalition meetings or events with local stakeholders

Direct Education Results

- Participants reported increasing the frequency of vegetable consumption per day (*average times per day*) **by approximately 40%**
- Participants reported increasing the frequency of fruit consumption per day (*average times per day*) **by approximately 41%**
- **72% of participants** reported using MyPlate to make food choices after the program
- **85% of participants** reported using nutrition labels to make food choices after the program
- **40% of participants** met guidelines for moderate physical activity after the program
- After completing the garden program, **81% of participants** rated their knowledge of growing fruits and vegetables as Good or Excellent

**Data were pooled across 14 BLT curricula. Results are based on participants completing and self-reporting data from pre and post surveys.*

BLT Participants in Direct Education

60% Female 40% Male / 45% Hispanic 55% Non-Hispanic / 37% Adult 63% Youth

Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change Initiatives (PSE) are multi-level interventions aiming to improve the environments in which people live, learn, work, play, shop, and eat.

1,292 Total PSE changes adopted and 50,049 reached through using, adding, and maintaining school and community gardens for nutrition education, and distribution of produce or materials for communities or home gardens.

Social Marketing campaigns combine education, marketing, and public health approaches to deliver messages through multiple channels.

Celebrate Texas Plates Campaign was designed to encourage healthier eating patterns through the celebration of the many cultures in Texas with a nutritional calendar and multimedia efforts.



"My picky eaters were trying the different veggies/fruits, and the students could reiterate what we learned about plants." Ms. Smith, Tarrant County



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