



NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Social Services

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Study Finds CalFresh Education Increases Children's Interest in Healthy Eating

Sacramento – At a time when more Californians than ever are receiving CalFresh nutrition assistance, new research indicates that education leads children to make healthier eating choices. The [CalFresh Program](#) (formerly known as food stamps) helps to improve the health and well-being of qualified households and individuals by providing resources to buy food to meet their nutritional needs.

“Nutrition education is an important part of CalFresh assistance,” said Will Lightbourne Director of the [California Department of Social Services](#). “Classrooms are an excellent place to discuss and reinforce making healthy food choices.”

The research conducted by the [University of California Cooperative Extension](#) (UCCE) targeted schools in Santa Clara County where more than 50 percent of students receive free or reduced price school meals. Results of the study show that 94 percent of students learned to identify healthier food options and a majority reported choosing fruits and/or vegetables in the cafeteria or during classroom parties more often by the end of the school year.

Teachers, youth program leaders, and others who work with children were trained to deliver UCCE CalFresh nutrition education curricula designed to increase fruit and vegetable consumption, increase variety in food choices, and promote healthy lifestyles for youth. This effort provides CalFresh nutrition education curricula to 57 qualifying low-income schools and agencies who reach 4,500 children.

CalFresh education impacted teachers' behaviors as well, with 84 percent of the teachers and after-school leaders reporting their own personal behavior had changed by using the program in their classroom.

Funding for UCCE CalFresh nutrition education is provided by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) (SNAP), with oversight from the California Department of Social Service.

The California Department of Public Health is also a partner that administers valuable nutrition education to the CalFresh and CalFresh eligible population of California.

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