

# Working in PEARS: CDPH SNAP-Ed LHD Success Story Instructions

California Department of Public Health (CDPH)

CDPH SNAP-Ed

The following instructions are designed to assist local health departments (LHDs) write and submit Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education (SNAP-Ed) success stories using the [Program Evaluation And Reporting System \(PEARS\)](#). Success Stories are due at the end of each federal fiscal year. LHDs may submit success stories at any time during the year. At minimum, one success story per LHD is required during each federal fiscal year (submitted via PEARS by September 30). In addition to utilizing PEARS, LHDs are also encouraged to submit the success stories to [SNAP-EdConnection@fns.usda.gov](mailto:SNAP-EdConnection@fns.usda.gov). LHDs should work with their Project Officers to identify their strongest stories for SNAP-Ed Connection prior to submitting them. A collection of state [SNAP-Ed success stories from others](#) is available to review.

The purpose of a success story is to describe the progress and achievements made towards advancing policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) change strategies in support of making the healthy choice, the easier choice where people eat, live, learn, work, play, and shop. Success stories add an important qualitative element to program evaluation by capturing the impact of local SNAP-Ed efforts in a narrative format.

Each year, CDPH will choose and re-format a select number of LHD success stories to highlight and communicate a diverse array of California SNAP-Ed successes. Select stories will be shared on the [CDPH-NEOPB website](#), with the Western Regional Office (WRO) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and serve as an informational and educational resource for decision makers, stakeholders, and partners. For these reasons, CDPH is looking for well-written success stories that promote local SNAP-Ed efforts and illustrate a clear, concise and compelling story for a national audience.

## Getting Started

CDPH strongly recommends that LHDs first write the success story using Microsoft Word and use the spelling and grammar feature to make corrections prior to finalizing the text. Use Arial 12-point font and limit each success story to two pages of text (approximately 500-750 words). Once completed, copy and paste the success story in the Background and Body section in PEARS as instructed below. Here are a few tips to creating a well-written success story:

- Use the active voice instead of passive voice.
  - Instead of: The story *was written* by Bob.
  - Try: Bob *wrote* the story.
- When using an acronym for the first time, spell out the full phrase or name followed by the abbreviation or acronym in parenthesis.

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- Keep the reading level below 10th grade, preferably 6th - 8<sup>th</sup>.
- Use good grammar and check for typographical errors.
- Use bulleted lists whenever possible.
- Use short sentences and paragraphs.
- Avoid jargon.
- Use personal stories and/or statistics that illustrate the impact. Consider adding answers to “Who, What, Where, When, and How” of the story.
- We strongly recommend that the Project Director review and approve the success story before submitting the final version into PEARS.

If you have questions or need assistance, please contact your CDPH Project Officer.

## Working in PEARS

1. Program - Optional (Link this Success Story to one of your Program Activities)
2. Site or Organization – Optional (Choose the site or organization related to this success story, if applicable.)
3. Unit – Select county or city health department
4. Title – Use a creative title that will grab the reader’s attention. Convey action by putting the subject first.
  - Subject first; the who or what that is most important in the story
  - Use action words in the present tense
  - Focus on the solution – not the problem

Example: San Diego County Students Advance 12 School Health Improvements through PhotoVoice

Example: USDA Selects Ready, Set, Swim! Coachella Valley as California Success Story

5. Background – Use the following two headings to write this section.

### **THE NEED: Challenge**

State the need, challenge, or issue that the PSE strategy addresses. Include assessment information used to identify the issue and specify the target audience impacted.

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## **THE WORK: Solution**

Describe how the challenge was addressed, including how community members and partners were engaged and resources/assets leveraged. Please indicate the work that was completed with SNAP-Ed funds and if applicable, the work completed by unfunded partners. Include narrative on the innovative and/or evidence-based approaches used to address the challenge and how the appropriate PSE solution was identified (what was the rationale?).

6. Body – Use the following headings to write this section.

## **THE IMPACT: Results**

Describe findings as a result of the PSE change. Include statistics or pre vs. post results that demonstrate impact. If relevant, describe how the changes made impacted the lives of the SNAP-Ed population. Keep in mind that PSE work takes time; consider reporting progress made to date even if the PSE strategy is not fully implemented. If this is the case, describe the progress made in addressing the identified need.

## **Sustaining Success**

Describe how the impacts of the PSE strategy will be sustained, as well as built upon, beyond the current funding and resources. Include what partners and/or stakeholders will contribute to help in maintaining the PSE strategy.

**Contact Information:** (name, title, LHD, phone number, and email)

7. Favorite Quote - Optional (Note: there is a limit of 500 characters in this field)  
Provide a quote from a participant (target audience), partner, and/or stakeholder that conveys a positive message of how the PSE change has made an impact.
8. Key Words – Optional (Select all that apply from drop down menu).
9. Related Framework Indicators – Select all that apply from drop down menu.
10. Socioecological frameworks – Select all that apply. For your PSE Success Story, you should at least select “Environmental Setting”.

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11. Approaches – Select “Comprehensive multi-level interventions (a combination of direct education, PSE's, and social marketing)” for PSE Success Stories. If you create additional Success Stories for other aspects of your program, select all that apply.
12. File Attachments – Add any photos or other pertinent documents. Photos illustrating PSE activities are highly encouraged; however, photos containing SNAP-Ed participants or individuals featured in the photos must include a photo release. The Champion Model Release Form (photo release form) is available by request. Please email: [NEOPB\\_MediaPR@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:NEOPB_MediaPR@cdph.ca.gov) to obtain copies. For photos, please use the highest resolution possible on camera.

TIP! Your PEARS Success Story can be used to create a Word Cloud, a type of qualitative analysis that PEARS offers. PEARS creates the Word Cloud by counting how often a word (or phrase) is used throughout the Success Story and then generating an image of frequently used words. This can be a great addition to a success story product.