



Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Newsletter

Issue 123 | March 2024



News and Updates

National Nutrition Month®

National Nutrition Month® is an annual campaign during the month of March created by the [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics](#) to bring awareness on the importance of making informed food choices and forming healthful eating and physical activity habits. This year's theme is "Beyond the Table," which highlights the farm-to-fork aspect of nutrition, from food production and distribution to navigating grocery stores and farmers markets.

Check out all the great resources from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics including social media graphics and messages, eating healthy handouts, fun activities, and much more [here](#)!

Access these additional resources to help you eat healthy and build healthy habits.

- ❖ [MyPlate](#)
- ❖ [CalFresh Healthy Living](#)
- ❖ [Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025](#)
- ❖ [Farmers' Market Finder](#)
- ❖ [Move Your Way](#)



Contents

News and Updates.....	1
National Nutrition Month®.....	1
Nutrition and Food Access Award	2
Mental Health Toolkit.....	2
Food Fuels Futures: Expanded SNAP Eligibility Reduces Hunger Among College Students	3
Recipe of the Month	3
Webinars.....	4
Funding Opportunities	5
What We're Reading	5
CalFresh Healthy Living Trainings	7

Nutrition and Food Access Award

[Alliance for a Healthier Generation](#) has partnered with Del monte Foods for the 2024 America's Healthiest Schools awards.



America's Healthiest Schools celebrates schools for implementing evidence-based practices to support the physical, mental, and social-emotional health needs of their learning community. Schools function best when students and educators are happy and healthy. Alliance for a Healthier Generation's annual recognition program honors schools for the key role they play in advancing the health and well-being of students, staff, and families. Schools can apply for recognition that:

- ❖ Implement strategies to maximize school meal participation
- ❖ Meaningfully collaborate with teachers on nutrition education
- ❖ Partner with community organizations to improve families' nutrition security

All awardees will be featured in the national list of America's Healthiest Schools and receive a digital award package to help schools share their health achievements with their school community. Check out this [short video](#) on how to apply. The application deadline is April 16, 2024. Learn more and [apply here](#).

Mental Health Toolkit



Nutrition plays a vital role in our overall health and more specifically our mental health. Our mind is a precious organ that needs to be fueled by nutritious foods to [avoid deficiencies and ultimately mental health illnesses and disorders, such as mood disorders like depression](#).

Mental health illness affects many individuals so much so that 50% of mental health conditions begin by age 14 and 75% present by age 24. The [LA County Department of Public Health](#) acknowledges this and created a mental health toolkit for both parents and guardians and teens to help address these issues. The mental health toolkit for parents and guardians, available in both English and Spanish, is tailored to help guide parents and guardians on how to approach mental health challenges their teen may be facing. The mental health toolkit for teens is tailored for youth and provides relevant information and approaches on how they can navigate their own mental health challenges. The teen toolkit also provides guidance for friends who want to support a friend experiencing mental health challenges. Both toolkits provide resources as well to navigate these challenges and find professional help if needed.

For more information on the Mental Health Toolkits, please [click here](#).

Food Fuels Futures: Expanded SNAP Eligibility Reduces Hunger Among College Students

[Food Research & Action Center](#) (FRAC) released a new brief titled *Food Fuels Futures: Expanded SNAP Eligibility Reduces Hunger Among College Students*. The research brief sets forth reasons why SNAP student eligibility expansions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic were so vital to college students and why decision-makers should build on these lessons and eliminate the “work-to-eat rule” so that more college students can focus on learning rather than being distracted by hunger. To inform this brief, FRAC conducted interviews with students on the challenges in understanding their eligibility, providing sufficient documentation of their work hours and earnings, and verifying their eligibility with state agency eligibility workers. Download the report and access the social media toolkit to help spread the word [here](#).



Recipe of the Month

Grapefruit Avocado Salad

Serves: 2 **Serving Size:** ½ cup

Ingredients:

- ❖ 1 cup diced pink grapefruit segments
- ❖ ¼ cup green onions, green and white parts finely chopped
- ❖ 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- ❖ 1 tablespoon diced jalapeno
- ❖ 1 teaspoon lime zest
- ❖ 1 tablespoon lime juice
- ❖ 2 teaspoons sugar (optional)
- ❖ ¼ cup chopped cilantro
- ❖ ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ❖ ¼ cup diced avocado



Instructions:

1. Wash hands with warm water and soap. Wash fresh fruits and vegetables before preparing.
2. Combine grapefruit, green onions, garlic, jalapeno, lime zest, lime juice, sugar, cilantro and salt in a small bowl. Mix well to combine.
3. Gently fold avocado into mixture. Serve immediately.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: 110 calories, 240 mg of sodium, 18 g carbohydrates, 3 g fiber, 1 g protein, 3.5 g total fat.

Find [this recipe](#) and other healthy recipes at [AZ Health Zone](#).



Webinars

Produce Prescriptions: Blazing the Trail For Better Health

March 19/11:00 am

“Food as Medicine” is gaining in popularity among healthcare professionals and policymakers. Learn the latest about how produce prescriptions are blazing the trail for better health. Register [here](#).

Beyond Baby’s Highchair: Improving Infant and Toddler Nutrition Security

March 20/10:00 am

The first 1,000 days of life, the period from pregnancy through a child’s second birthday, represents a critical window for establishing healthy dietary patterns, fostering a responsive feeding environment, and helping to reduce the risk of chronic disease. Join the National Association of County and City Health Officials to learn about recently published resources by national partners related to the first 1,000 days nutrition. Register [here](#).

Legislation, Lobbying & Leveraging Elected Officials for Food Recovery

It’s easy to think you don’t have time, energy, staff or budget for creating impact through governmental relations. But no matter how big or small your staff and budget, you can - and *should* - make sure you have a proactive plan for working with officials. Join Food Rescue Hero to learn about tax laws regarding lobbying for 501(c)(3)s, what impact you can have, why it matters at a local level, and how to create a tangible plan. Register [here](#).

How to Make Your Own Biodegradable Plant Pots and Sow Seeds Successfully

March 21/10:00 am

This webinar from Michael and Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living will demonstrate how to make compostable plant pots from repurposed items and teach you the basics on how to start vegetables from seed. Register [here](#).

Embedding Healthy Food Access in Food Banks & Pantries

To celebrate National Nutrition Month, join More Than Food Consulting to discuss how health is embedded in charitable food and explore new ideas for promoting healthy food access across food banks and pantries. Register [here](#).

Nutrition Intervention Among Formerly Chronically Homeless Adults in Permanent Supportive Housing

March 28/11:00 am

Dr. Hamilton from The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston will present findings from a pilot implementation of a nutrition-focused community health worker intervention in permanent supportive housing to reduce food insecurity and improve nutrition outcomes. Register [here](#).

Maximizing Participation in Summer Meals and Summer EBT

April 11/12:00 pm

Join the Food Research & Action Center for a webinar on promising practices for maximizing participation at summer meals sites as well as in the new, permanent Summer EBT program. We will hear from advocates and stakeholders on their outreach plans and strategies for leveraging both programs for Summer 2024 and beyond. Register [here](#).



Funding Opportunities

Healthy Living Community Grant Program

Close Date: April 1, 2024

The Healthy Living Community Grant Program is awarding \$5,000 grants to groups/organizations that can demonstrate not-so-ordinary, sustainable and collaborative approaches to promoting healthy living through good nutrition, physical activity, cancer and diabetes prevention or smoking cessation. Learn more [here](#).

Community Level Innovations for Improving Health Outcomes

Close Date: May 15, 2024

The Office of Minority Health is soliciting applications for projects to demonstrate that community-level innovations that reduce barriers related to social determinants of health can increase use of preventive health services and make progress toward Leading Health Indicator targets. Learn more [here](#).



What We're Reading

Study Reveals SNAP Benefits Could Boost Medication Adherence in Food-Insecure Populations

BNN

In a new study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, researchers say that people who use SNAP benefits between 10 and 12 times per year are more likely to adhere to their medication regimens compared to those who do not use benefits. [Read here](#).

New UCLA Data Equity Center Aims to Ensure Data Expertise Is Available to Those Who Need It

UCLA Center for Health Policy Research

The Data Equity Center will provide no-cost assistance to organizations and agencies across the United States by leveraging the experience, skills, and knowledge of the UCLA CHPR along with dozens of additional experts in survey and data science. Read [here](#).

Examining Dollar Stores: Health, Community, and Food Access

Food Tank

A new report from the Center for Science in the Public Interest assessed eaters' perception of dollar stores and found that these businesses can be important fixtures in communities but expressed barriers in low-quality products and limited healthy food choices. Read [here](#).

Thrive Market Announces SNAP-EBT Acceptance

Starting February 26, SNAP-EBT will be accepted on Thrive Market. All EBT cardholders who join Thrive Market as new members are eligible for a free membership. Read [here](#).

Low-Income Food Program Could be Coming to an End

LAist

California has matched fruit and vegetable purchases at farmers markets for low-income residents for seven years. The program may soon end. Read [here](#).

Universal School Meals Help All California Children Thrive

California Budget & Policy Center

California's universal school meal program ensures all students have access to nutritious meals at school regardless of family income. What are the benefits of universal school meals and how does this program help fight hunger? Read [here](#).

The Case for Universal Basic Food

Next City

Op-ed: Moving toward a system that guarantees access to nutrient-dense food would nourish health, justice and community. Read [here](#)

.



CalFresh Healthy Living Trainings

Training	Date/Time	Format	Registration
Smarter Mealtimes Movement: An Early Start to Healthy Eating	Mar 20/9:30 am	Virtual	Register here
Making the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice PSE Learning Collaborative	Mar 28; Apr 12; Apr 26; May 10; May 23; Jun 07/9:00 am	Virtual	Register here
Emotional First Aid for CFHL	Apr 05; Apr 19/10:00 am	Virtual	Register here
Farmers Market Initiative Informational Webinar	Apr 8/2:00 pm	Virtual	Register here
Food as Identity, Community, and a Reflection of Values: An Introduction to Culturally Competent Nutrition Education Delivery and Design	Apr 15/10:00 am	Virtual	Register here
Light Bulbs to Garden Bulbs In-Person Garden Training	Apr 16; Apr 17/8:30 am	In Person	Register here

Visit the [CalFresh Healthy Living Training page](#) (hosted by Leah's Pantry) for the latest training-related information and calendar of all scheduled trainings and events. Please seek approval from your Project Manager and Contract Manager prior to travel.

If you would like to submit content or have any questions or comments about the Nutrition and Physical Activity Program newsletter, please contact Tania Marquez at tmarquez@ph.lacounty.gov.