

## What are Environment-Based Nutrition Interventions (EBNIs)?

When developing successful nutrition interventions, there are two main categories of intervention: environment-based and individual-based. Environment-based nutrition interventions (EBNIs) create an environment supportive of healthy nutrition behaviors. The interventions take place in a variety of community settings and through many channels – interventions focus on where consumers & residents are eating, socializing, learning, working, shopping, etc. They may include:

- Mobilizing community resources for nutrition and food assistance,
- Influencing policy and standard practices,
- Developing and implementing social marketing campaigns,
- Altering the food supply,
- Intervening where food decisions are made, or
- Establishing a case management/coordination and referral system.

### This is What We Do Know About EBNIs

- Very different from what we usually do.
- Most EBNIs don't ever tell people how to eat - instead they change things so it's easier for people to eat healthy.
- The target audience does not come to you to get the message; you take the message to them.
- Most of your time is spent on organizing and coordinating.
- Nearly all of your time working on the intervention will be spent out of the office.
- EBNIs entail participating in local planning meetings, coalitions, and partnerships to influence decision-makers.
- Media may be a key component of planning EBNIs.

## Examples of EBNIs

### Develop Social Networks

- Offer tastes of healthy foods at a grocery store or encourage healthier food choices at social functions like potluck dinners at church.
- Coordinate a Healthy Eating Challenge among the 5 big grocery stores in your community.

### Influence Policies

- Require food sanitation training for day care providers.
- Require new legislation to earmark money for nutrition education initiatives for low resource families.
- Encourage and support an employer to cover nutrition counseling to employees as a healthcare benefit.

### Alter Physical Environments

- Add 100% juices to vending machines or remove vending machines from schools.
- Set up a lactation room in the workplace or at a conference.

- Put water fountains in parks to encourage more water consumption.

### Build a Community Supportive of Healthy Behaviors

- Make more healthy foods available at the concession stand during athletic events.
- Establish a community garden.
- Provide Farmers Market vouchers to low-income seniors.

### Strengthen Traditional Nutrition Programs and Services

- Create a "Healthy Meal Section" in the grocery store where all the food items and recipes for a dinner would be featured.
- Have 3 vegetable side dishes and 2 fruit options in the company cafeteria.
- Author a weekly nutrition column in the newspaper to reinforce healthy nutrition behaviors.

# Environment-Based Nutrition & Physical Activity Interventions

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## Resource List

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- Accelerating Community Transformation – Health Forum Community Health Initiatives – increase capacity of community partnerships and demonstrate measurable improvements in community well-being. [www.healthforum.com](http://www.healthforum.com)
- Advancing Community Public Health Systems in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – Emerging Strategies and innovations from the Turning Point Experience. <http://nacchoweb.nacho.org>
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