

Followup to The Time is Right for Strong Advocacy on Capitol Hill: Lessons and Insights from Policy Insiders webinar on 3/15/2017

- 1. Are there some published articles that we should reference or share with legislators that shows positive outcomes from nutrition education on health for kids or families**

Here is a great brief from the Tisch Center: <http://www.tc.columbia.edu/media/media-library-2014/centers/tisch-center/Nutrition-Ed-in-Federal-Programs-w-in-text-citations.pdf>

- 2. Are you saying that supporting a particular regulation as opposed to supporting a bill is not lobbying?**

Correct – regulations are not legislation. Legislative proposals are not law until they are passed and signed so any activity leading up to that where someone is taking a position, or urging others to take a position, is lobbying. But once the law is passed and signed, then the agencies (like USDA/HHS) has the task of implementing the law and they generally do that through the regulatory process. Once in the regulatory realm, anyone can (and should) weigh in. And that is not lobbying. It is fine to take a position on regulations, or provide input as to how a reg can be strengthened, and that does not fall into lobbying.

- 3. I'm with SNAP-Ed and have been working closely with other community partners. I'm often asked how stable our funding situation is considering the new presidential administration- I try to explain our approach is to educate our lawmakers on the importance of our programming but I'm not able to be very reassuring because so much is unknown right now. Do any of you have suggestions on how to field those questions from community partners?**

I think the best thing to say is that we need everyone's voice right now to support programs and funding that we value. We are in uncertain times for all federally funded programs. You can say that there is strong bi-partisan support for SNAP-Ed, but we still need a diverse array of voices telling their legislators that this is important to your community.

Im sorry I don't have a more direct answer but at this point we still have a lot of work to do as advocates.

When this question comes up for us I just remind them that we have existed in IN since 1994 with SNAP-Ed and 1974 as EFNEP. That isn't necessarily an assurance, but it does say that we've made it through other issues. Federal funding, is always up for grabs every year, but we are working to do our best to make sure policy leaders understand the importance of our project and the impacts of reduced funding to our state's neediest population group.

4. Melissa, do you include information on funding source(s) on your leave behind? I had my screen minimized and couldn't see details well.

We do include a statement on our materials "Purdue Extension Nutrition Education program is a SNAP-Ed and EFNEP funded initiative." It's important for anyone that has any of our materials to be able to identify what funding made it possible.

5. I find the biggest barrier to advocacy is tied to my struggle with the imposter phenomenon. Have any of our speakers struggled with this? If so, how do you overcome this in a way that promotes advocacy?

Just to clarify, I think you mean you as the advocate feel like the imposter(?). If so, my boss always says bring a buddy and have that person talk about your program, and you talk about your buddy's program. That may be an easy way to open up the conversation. 😊

If you are saying that the staff/legislator is the imposter(?). Well that may be the case LOL! But it is your job as a citizen to provide them the information they need to make the decisions they are responsible for making.

6. What kind of empirical evidence do representatives look for when they decide whether or not to support a new initiative?

My first thought is to check their twitter/facebook account to see what they talk about most. Each member of Congress wants to make a difference in their community and wants to be liked by their community members. They typically will tailor their message based on what feedback they get from their constituents. So make your voice heard!

That being said, anything that you can highlight that shows return on investment is great! Changes in body mass index, changes in behavior that may lead to decreased health care spending, **JOBS** in the community.

7. There are so many issues of concern, which ones are most important to advocate for or against at this point? Is there a real possibility of the nutrition standards for school meals to be eliminated? When talking with USDA, they said that it is so important that we as experts vote in on the new Dietary Guidelines because so much of USDA policy is based on evidence-based research and they need input from us. Does SNEB send out Action Alerts with an outline providing the facts we need to know and share with legislators - in their weekly email messages to us?

SNEB, and the Academy monitor legislation and will call to action our members to write Congress when there is a credible threat. Drawing attention to legislation that doesn't have support from other members of Congress could have the opposite effect we want. Right now it is important to talk about the value of these programs in a way that will resonate with your individual legislator. It is also

important talk about – in the case of meal and snack standards, that the train has left the station, schools are serving healthy foods, and kids are enjoying them. TO make another change would be disruptive to the food industry who have worked hard to meet the updated standards. It would be a waste of taxpayer funds to roll them back.

8. what exactly should we focus our energy on the ACA?

The House of Representatives have put forward a bill, this week, that would replace the ACA. This bill will have to be voted on by all 435 members in the House of Representatives. It may be time to express your feelings on this bill to your legislators.

Here is the Academy's stance: [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Announces Opposition to American Health Care Act](#)

