**PEAS FAQs**

Updated October 17, 2019

**What is the PSE Evaluation Approaches Study (PEAS)?**
The PSE Evaluation Approaches Study (PEAS) is a FFY20 pilot project to test feasibility of various environmental scans and tools for schools and food bank settings. The primary goal is to understand which tools work best for Washington State SNAP-Ed. Participation in PEAS is voluntary, and open to any local agencies implementing PSE projects in schools or food bank settings.

**When will it start?**
Planning and preparation for PEAS began in FFY19. Tools will be tested in the first and second quarters of FFY20, and analysis completed afterward.

**What factors will be included in the evaluation?**
The data gathered from the tools this year will form a baseline or snapshot of the school or food bank environment in FFY20. When we use the tools again in the future, we’ll then be able to compare results and see how the environment has changed over time. Eventually, we would also like to collect individual-level data to understand how PSE changes impact the individuals who come into contact with these changes. With this type of data, we could better understand whether the presence of a particular type of PSE change (e.g., Smarter Lunchrooms design) is correlated with a particular behavior (e.g., increase in fruit and vegetable consumption).

**What will it evaluate? Change? Awareness?**
The tools we have selected are designed to provide a snapshot of the school or food bank environment, and can be used to measure changes over time. We will be able to see what policies, environmental supports or systems are in place when we complete tools this year, and will be able to compare changes when we use the tool for a second time. Perhaps a policy that was in place this year is maintained over time, or an environmental support that did not exist when the tool was used this year has since been implemented. Using these kinds of tools will help us understand the outcomes of our PSE efforts.

**Will there be multiple avenues for data collection?**
For FFY20, PEAS will focus on schools and food bank settings. In the future, we would like to explore using similar types of tools in other settings. Feedback from the pilot will be used to inform testing in other settings.

We are also interested in understanding the impact of our PSE efforts on the individuals who come into contact with these changes. We are exploring ways to collect information that would tell us about changes in individuals’ awareness or behaviors, and how this relates to the PSE changes we are implementing.

**How many individuals will need to complete each survey per site?**
This depends on the tool – for example, the SPAN-ET requires that two staff members complete the tool at each school. On the other hand, the SLAQ is completed by partners and could vary in the number of people needed to provide the information.
What are my responsibilities? Will there be reminders about them?

Requirements for participation in PEAS include:

- Training for selected tool
- Testing selected tool
- Debrief with the SNAP-Ed Evaluation team
- Debrief with other local agencies using the selected tool

Participation is completely voluntary and volunteers can opt out at any point. The SNAP-Ed Evaluation team will provide reminders throughout the pilot – these reminders will be included in weekly updates to the SNAP-Ed Leadership Team as well as emails to PEAS participants. If you’re participating in PEAS and have ideas about how you’d like to receive communications, please feel free to reach out.

How can I use this data?

The information generated from these tools provides a snapshot of the school or food bank environment that can be used to support program planning immediately, as well as measure changes over time. Each of the selected tools is divided into different sections, which are scored individually and then summed to create a composite score. This allows you to get a broad sense of the school or food bank environment then take a deeper dive into section scores to see what’s going well and where there may be opportunities for improvement. PEAS training webinars will provide additional recommendations for using this data and sharing it with your partners.

Will new evaluation tools allow for adaptation when in use with partners?

That is part of what we are trying to determine through PEAS. The SNAP-Ed Evaluation team will be debriefing with PEAS volunteers to learn what is and isn’t working well. We’ll also be working to better understand if there is information that needs to be collected frequently to measure PSE change, or if there are some sections on the tools that may only need to be used in certain settings or every few years. Taking the time to pilot these tools and learn from you all about how they work in real-world settings will help us identify the best tools to move forward with – or the necessary adjustments to ensure that the selected tools are effective.

The surveys are quite long - will our partners really be willing to spend time on them?

The time and effort needed to complete these tools is part of what we are piloting in this phase. Most of these tools have been used by other agencies both in and outside of Washington, or have been adapted from existing tools. These tools are meant to help both you and your partners, to see what areas might be good targets for PSE interventions, and be able to measure change in those areas. During this pilot, the SNAP-Ed Evaluation team will debrief with PEAS volunteers to understand what worked well and what was difficult. That input will factor into the decision of which tools to use statewide.

Are you available for training or support for PSE evaluation in other settings?

Absolutely. The SNAP-Ed Evaluation team is always available to help design and support evaluation efforts throughout the state. PEAS tools were selected because around half of Washington SNAP-Ed PSE work happens in food banks and schools. We plan to keep developing evaluation strategies for other settings and projects, and are always be happy to receive input from you and your partners on what kind of settings and strategies you are interested in.