



Georgia State Physical Activity and Nutrition (G-SPAN) Initiative

Policy Systems and Environmental Change Strategies

The G-SPAN initiative, led by the Georgia Health Policy Center and coordinating partners, is focused on aligning statewide action for chronic disease prevention through evidence-based policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) change strategies.

G-SPAN's efforts in physical activity, nutrition, breastfeeding, and early care and education are designed to result in sustainable PSE changes. Often, evidence-based programs will contribute to PSE change, but a program is an activity or an intervention that has a clear start and stop and is not sustained over time. A definition of P, S, and E and examples of each are listed below:

Policy Change = Written rules or guidelines that should be followed.

Policy Examples:

- A charitable food organization adopts healthy eating research guidelines to support distribution of a subset of healthy foods offered to pantry clients.
- A community establishes a complete streets policy to integrate people and place in the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of transportation networks.
- A child care learning company with multiple locations requires all sites to incorporate one locally sourced, in-season food or beverage item into their menu each month.
- A worksite modifies their employment manual to ensure breastfeeding and milk expression is supported among all employees. [Example policy: Wisconsin.](#)

Systems Change = Procedures or processes (written or not) that are adopted and that impact all the people in an organization, institution, or network.

Systems Examples:

- An early care and education provider establishes a menu planning process that includes a taste test of all new items to expose toddlers and preschoolers to new foods and beverages and reduce food waste.
- A manufacturer establishes a work coverage structure for new mothers that allows an employees' workstation to be managed by another team member while they express breastmilk to support sustained breastfeeding.



- A county parks and recreation site prices healthier vending snacks and beverages at lower amounts to promote selection of healthy choices.
- G-SPAN provides technical assistance to county government and local community partners including professional learning for submission of a federal funding application to support community design for physical activity.
- A charitable food organization establishes and maintains a section in each of their five pantries denoting foods that support improved management of chronic conditions such as diabetes and hypertension.

Environmental Change = A modification to a setting or system that supports health.

Environment Examples:

- Installation of garden beds at an early care and education site along with a plan to integrate gardening concepts into early care curriculum.
- When new schools are built, a county commits to installing a sidewalk that connects the school to local residential areas.
- A worksite establishes a room with comfortable seating, electricity, cold storage, and a scheduling process to accommodate new mothers who need to express and store breast milk.