

# Local Health Department CalFresh Healthy Living FFY 2022

## Brief 4: Multi-Year PEARS Data Review

Research Brief • July 2023

### Background and Overview

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic’s profound impact on communities and the way LHDs engage with them, this brief examines the trends observed in CalFresh Healthy Living interventions reported in PEARS from FFYs 2019-2022, including Direct Education (DE), Indirect Education (IE), and Policy, Systems, and Environment (PSE) change efforts.

There was a notable decline in CFHL interventions from 2019 to 2020, with DE and IE activities decreasing by 59% and 65%, respectively, and sites engaged in PSE work declining by 37% (Table 4.1). Interventions gradually increased each year between FFYs 2020 and 2022, though none have returned to pre-pandemic levels.

**Table 4.1**

*LHD DE, IE, and PSE implementation over time*

		2019	2020	2021	2022
DE	# LHDs	59	57	54	59
	# Activities	8,406	3,423	2,853	3,973
IE	#LHDs	60	58	57	59
	# Activities	8,901	3,100	3,194	3,738
PSE	# LHDs	57	49	48	49
	# PSE sites	1,051	662	736	818

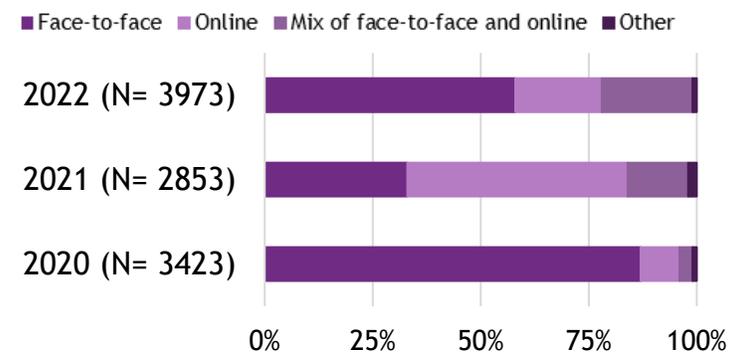
### Method of DE Delivery

The proportion of DE activities delivered online increased substantially after the start of the pandemic, from 9% in FFY 2020 to 51%

in FFY 2021, likely reflecting LHDs’ adaptation to pandemic shutdowns, distance learning, and social distancing requirements.

**Figure 4.1**

*Method of DE delivery, FFYs 2020-2022\**



\*DE delivery method not reported in FFY 2019

### Most Common DE and PSE Settings

The most common settings for DE and PSE interventions are consistently K-12 schools and Early Care and Education (ECE) facilities (Tables 4.2 and 4.3).

**Table 4.2**

*Percent of annual DE activities by setting\**

Settings*	2019	2020	2021	2022
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
K-12 schools	2,813 (34%)	1,616 (47%)	1,297 (45%)	1,46 (37%)
Early care & education facilities	1,675 (20%)	776 (23%)	747 (26%)	1,22 (31%)
Health care	312 (4%)	169 (5%)	218 (8%)	227 (6%)

\*Settings reflect those most common in FFY 2022

The proportion of DE activities delivered in K-12 schools and early care and education facilities increased by 30% from FFY 2019 to FFY 2020 (Table 4.2). This may reflect several factors, including modifications to guidance that went into effect in FFY 2020 requiring all LHDs to conduct interventions in settings in the learn domain, as well as local priorities to mitigate the negative impact of the pandemic on children’s diet and physical activity behaviors.

Food assistance emerged as a priority setting for PSE interventions during the pandemic, with the proportion of PSE sites in the food assistance setting increasing from just 1% in

2019 to 13% in 2020 (Table 4.3). Food assistance remained among the top 3 settings for PSE work in 2021 and 2022.

**Table 4.3**  
*Percent of annual PSE sites by setting\**

Settings*	2019	2020	2021	2022
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
K-12 schools	384 (37%)	197 (30%)	204 (28%)	246 (30%)
Early care & education facilities	124 (12%)	141 (21%)	148 (20%)	158 (19%)
Food assistance	14 (1%)	87 (13%)	177 (24%)	152 (19%)

\*Settings reflect those most common in FFY 2022

### PSE Changes Adopted

Examining the most frequently adopted PSE changes over time can provide context about local agency’s priorities (Table 4.4). Notable trends include:

- Efforts to increase food access in food assistance settings emerged among the top 3 most common types of PSE changes adopted in FFYs 2021 and 2022, reflecting LHDs’ commitment to addressing pandemic-related increases in food insecurity.
- Gardens in the K-12 school setting were among the top 3 most common types of PSE changes adopted across all four years, representing 13-16% of all PSE changes.

**Table 4.4**  
*Most common PSE change topics reported over time*

2019		2020		2021		2022	
PSE sites with changes adopted							
N							
939		487		581		705	
Top 3 types of PSE changes adopted across all settings							
N (%)							
Gardens in K-12 schools	123 (13%)	Healthfulness of foods/beverages in K-12 schools	68 (14%)	Access to food and nutrition assistance programs	101 (17%)	Gardens in K-12 schools	110 (16%)
Behavioral economics in small food stores	90 (10%)	Gardens in K-12 schools	64 (13%)	Gardens in K-12 schools	88 (15%)	Access to food and nutrition assistance programs	95 (13%)
Wellness policies in K-12 schools	87 (9%)	Smarter Lunchroom strategies in K-12 schools	55 (11%)	Behavioral economics in food assistance sites	72 (12%)	Structured physical activity in ECE facilities	80 (11%)