

A Research-Based Resource for Sustaining and Strengthening Local Wellness Objectives and Activities

PURPOSE

The purpose of this project was to develop a resource for school nutrition (SN) professionals that focused on communication, leadership and monitoring/evaluation activities that lead to successful sustainability and strengthening of wellness initiatives.

METHOD

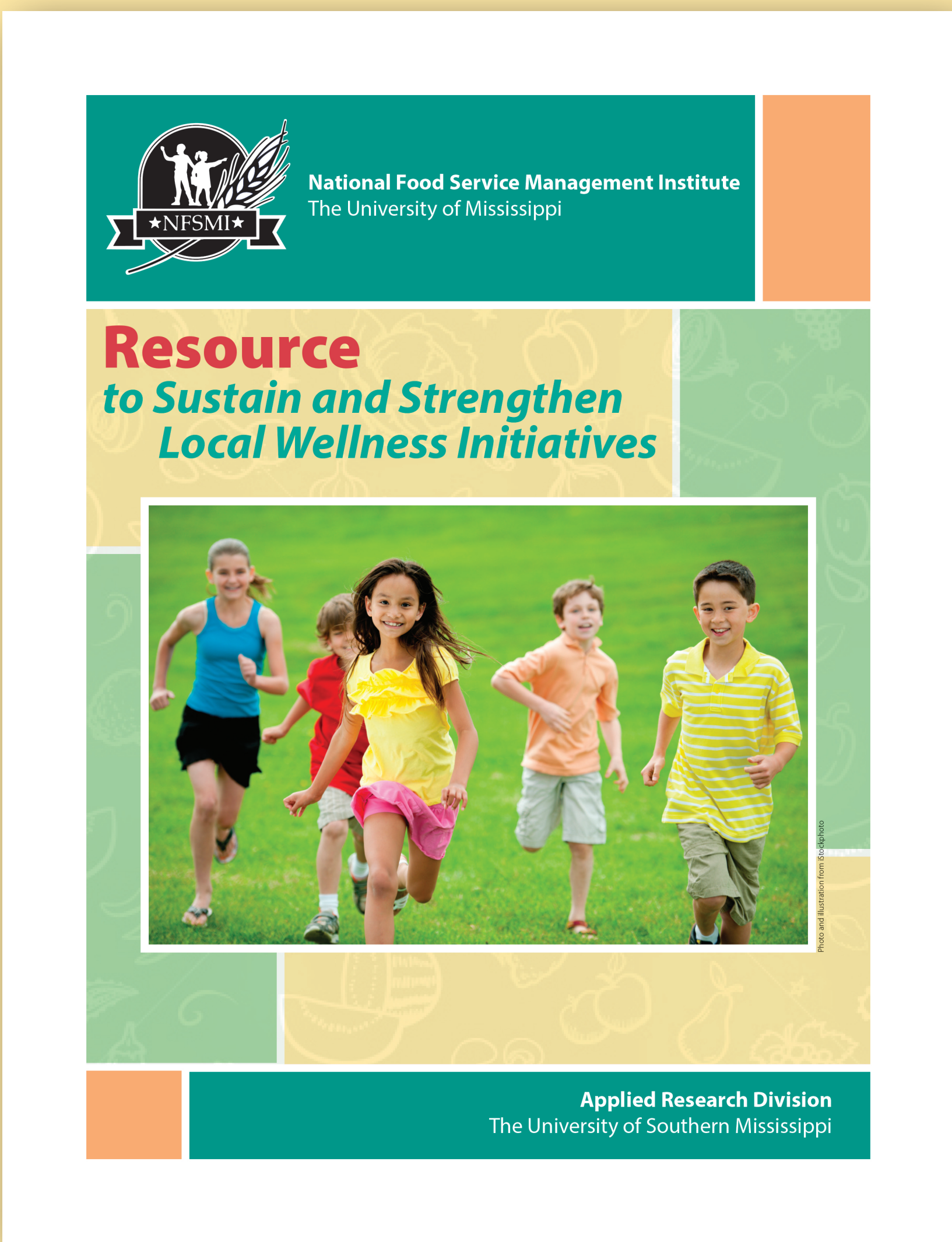
- ▶ An expert panel of SN professionals, school personnel, and federal/university researchers with experience in evaluation of SN and Local Wellness Policy (LWP) programs identified and confirmed potential characteristics for a resource to help school districts monitor and evaluate components of their LWP.
- ▶ A national panel confirmed the characteristics in an electronic survey.
- ▶ The confirmed characteristics were used to guide the format and content of the resource.

RESULTS

- ▶ The *Resource to Sustain and Strengthen Local Wellness Initiatives* can be used to guide evaluation efforts and describes the evaluation process in a series of eight action steps:
 - Step 1: Select an objective/activity to evaluate
 - Step 2: Select your measurement type
 - Step 3: Determine what you will measure
 - Step 4: Select a data collection tool
 - Step 5: Collect your data
 - Step 6: Analyze collected data
 - Step 7: Determine what your results mean
 - Step 8: Communicate your results
- ▶ Each step includes background information, tips, best practices, and space to develop an action plan.
- ▶ An example evaluation of an objective is followed from selection (Step 1) to communicate your results (Step 8).
- ▶ Other components: glossary, resource links, examples of factors to measure and data collection tools, evaluation math, and examples of presentation slides.

The web-based resource is available at

<http://www.nfsmi.org/documentlibraryfiles/PDF/20130228111227.pdf>



APPLICATION OF RESULTS:

- ▶ The resource is both a training aid and a structured guide to developing an initial evaluation action plan for a school district.
- ▶ The format allows users to progress through the evaluation process, conducting evaluations that are focused on the local policy needs and communicating the results of the evaluations to a range of stakeholders.
- ▶ Use of the resource allows for sharing and review of planned activities and focuses on continuous improvement of the LWP.



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STEP 2 ☒ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Select your measurement type

You can measure your activity several ways. The way that you measure your activity determines the type of information that you get.

Process measures tell you about resources that you are using. These are important later when you show how you have used your current resources or communicate needs for additional resources.

Outcome measures tell you what happens when you implement an activity. If this is a new activity that you are trying out, you will have an outcome measure; this measure will give you an idea of whether the activity is likely to be successful for your school site or district.

If you have an activity that is ready to be fully implemented, you will want to make an **impact measure**; this measure will tell you how much of your population you have reached and/or how close you are to your goal/objective.

Outcome measures and impact measures are similar. The difference is looking at the total potential participants (impact) versus looking at the activity of only those who participate (outcome).

Example

Activity to evaluate: Before- and after-school walk around the track

Potential process measures:

- Resources used for implementation of the activity
- Facility use: total time and number of times in a week that the track was made available before and after school

Potential outcome measures:

- Number of students who are able to participate
- Minutes of walking time for students

Potential impact measures:

- Number of students who participate compared to the number of potential participants
- Number of students who walk an average of 15 minutes/day compared to the number of potential participants

DEFINITIONS

Impact measure: Measurement that reflects the extent of change in the total student/staff/community population; examples include the total level of participation by students/staff/community, the percentage reached of a target measure, etc.

Outcome measure: Measurement that evaluates a result of an activity; examples include number of miles walked by a student or faculty member, change in endurance, number of whole grain servings selected from a line, etc.

Process measure: Measurement that evaluates resources that are available to use; examples include personnel time, facility use, class sessions, supplies, etc.

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BEST PRACTICE

In most cases it is useful to select both a process measure and either an outcome or impact measure. This allows you to communicate both resource use and progress toward your goal/objective.

ACTION PLAN

Activity that you will evaluate:

What type(s) of measures will you use?