



Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program

EFNEP Social Media Committee

Social Media Administration Model

There are many things one should consider when creating a plan for implementing social media in your program. This document provides pros and cons for a variety of administration models to help identify the best approach for beginning and sustaining a social media initiative while maintaining program integrity. This resource was developed to provide social media guidance to EFNEP and SNAP-Ed implementing agencies and includes feedback from members of the EFNEP/SNAP-Ed Social Media Committee who have successfully executed social media initiatives using the administration models outlined in this guide.

There is no one-size fits all approach for social media, and we hope this information is helpful in identifying which model will work best for your state, community and target audience. If you have questions, feel free to contact any member of the EFNEP/SNAP-Ed Social Media Committee who contributed to the development of the Social Media Administration Model document.

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Social Media Administration Models

When deciding how to implement social media, you will need to consider who will have responsibility for developing content, expanding and engaging the audience, and maintaining a consistent social media presence.

Social Media Committee

If staffing allows, having a committee manage social media responsibilities is another administration model. When the committee model is used the workload on each team member is lighter and less demanding. This model allows for continuity with social media when there is staff turnover. In addition, it is easier to start a social media initiative throughout the year instead of having to wait for a new grant cycle to create a new position to manage the social media.

When possible, engage professional staff that has knowledge of different subject matters such as physical activity or gardening. This can lead to a greater pool of content on a wider variety of subject matters to post on social media. In addition to quality content, experience has shown that having good visuals lead to better engagement with the audience. Therefore, including team members who are skilled in graphic design or video production is beneficial as it leads to high quality visuals. Since multiple staff are on the team, the committee model lends well to advance planning. Once topics for content are identified, a content calendar can be made identifying when content will be posted and who will be responsible for writing up the content.

The committee model has many benefits but there are also some disadvantages. With different team members writing the content to be shared thru social media, it may lead to too many different 'voices' and be harder to establish rapport with the audience. One way to make things more cohesive is to have one or two team members responsible for editing all of the content to help provide some consistency to how the content is worded. It can be more difficult to respond to current events and make changes to content when the content is pre-planned and different people write it. Thus, committee members need to communicate about changes to the schedule and be flexible with when content is shared. For the committee model to work well and tasks to get done the roles and responsibilities of each member need to be clearly communicated.

Roles and Responsibilities of Committee

One team member needs to provide leadership to the committee. The leader will keep the committee moving forward and ensure the work gets done in a timely fashion. In addition, the leader can make final decisions when needed.

Evaluation of social media is another important responsibility of the committee. The team member who is responsible for this task will need to understand how each type of social media can be evaluated and what tools are available to help with the evaluation. The person responsible for the evaluation will need to communicate the results to help the committee determine what changes to make in order to get the best engagement and usage from the audience.

With different people writing the content to be shared on social media the committee will need to determine if each person will post the content they write or if one person will post all content. Depending on what types of social media are used and the experience of the team

members with each typed, different people might be responsible for posting on one type of social media. Communication between the team members is essential to make the committee model work effectively.

Individual Social Media Manager

When you have an individual social media manager one person is responsible for all of your social media content development and management. There are some benefits and disadvantages to using this model of social media management.

With one person controlling the accounts managed and there is a cohesive writing style and, “voice” that can be observed on all social media platforms. In addition, one person will be responding to all questions and comments instead of multiple people trying to keep track of notifications, thus saving time. Ideas may run thin when there is one person managing all of the organization's social media accounts. Collaboration with colleges can help generate new ideas and keep the social media manager connected with events in the field.

Social media managers may find themselves answering questions or replying to comments on weekends and nights after work which leads to undefined work hours. Creating content for multiple social media pages is time-consuming and technical work. Social media managers are not only responsible for creating written content they have to have the skills necessary to take and edit photos, videos, and create appealing and relevant graphics. Some may not be proficient in all of the skills required and may require training. It becomes one person's full time job to create, edit and post content for multiple social media accounts. If the social media manager resigns it may cause turmoil for the next employee, unless detailed directions and instructions are passed forward to the next employee.

When looking for someone to fill an individual social media manager role the candidate should possess; graphic design, time management, origination, communication photo/video shooting and editing skills. The candidate should also be creative and have excellent and written and verbal communication skills.

Geographic Location- Multiple Localities

Depending on your social media goals, staffing resources, and desired degree of paraprofessional involvement, your social media project may consider administering multiple, locally-focused social media profiles instead of state-wide. There are a number of reasons why this approach may perform better in reaching the target audience and connecting with local community partners and stakeholders.

Ultimately, the success of enticing participants to engage with EFNEP on social media falls to the paraprofessionals in the field, who promote and demonstrate the value of connecting with EFNEP on social media to their clients. This is the crucial first step in growing a new social media project. While not the only component of success, an active and growing audience provides the [social proof](#) to new potential followers that your content and online community has value. Locally focused social media profiles have the benefit of increasing paraprofessional buy-in to promote and support the social media project in your state.

Additionally, in the [formative research on the use of social media in EFNEP](#), participants expressed a desire for trust and to know the person administering the social media profile. By inviting paraprofessionals to co-administer locally focused social media profiles, participants will have already developed the trust and personal relationship in-person, and be more interested in continuing that connection with EFNEP online.

Paraprofessionals bring a unique perspective and connection with the target audience that is beneficial to providing relevant content that participants are interested in and asking about. Tapping into this expertise can drive content creation that meets the needs of the target audience and quickly respond to trends and current issues in the four core areas of EFNEP. Paraprofessionals are also tuned into their local communities in a way that is not possible for state-level professionals, and can help spread awareness of local news and events relevant to the EFNEP program.

It is important to note that the formative research also found that participants preferred evidence-based and up-to-date content, while at the same time limiting the number of people sharing these messages. When sharing administrative responsibilities with paraprofessional staff, it is recommended to be clear about who is creating the content and what their qualifications are. This can be accomplished by including a short biography of the profile administrator(s) on each social media profile, as well as during promotion of the social media project to participants. Having a clear division of responsibilities between paraprofessional co-administrators and professional-level social media managers is important to well functioning locally focused social media profiles. This division of responsibilities also functions as a safeguard against paraprofessionals acting outside their scope of practice and expertise, as well as spending too much time on social media instead of their primary responsibility of in-person programming.

Partnering with paraprofessionals on locally focused social media profiles has many benefits, but there are also risks associated with this increased level of involvement and publishing capabilities. Therefore, social media project managers need to take steps to address these risks *before* inviting paraprofessionals to co-administer social media profiles. First and foremost, all social media efforts by paraprofessionals must be done in coordination with social media project managers with clear communication of the division of responsibilities between professional and paraprofessional administrators. It should be the responsibility of professional staff to create informational content to share on social media. Paraprofessionals should focus on locally relevant content, such as success stories from programs, pictures from programs (with proper permission), or community events that are related to the work of EFNEP.