



OUR CAPABILITY

Since 1993, CANFIT has been at the heart of the movement to improve healthy eating and physical activity environments for adolescents in low income communities and communities of color. From grassroots to government, we work with community-based and youth-serving organizations to identify local solutions and support the development of culturally competent policy and practices. CANFIT is a leader in building community leadership and stimulating change at multiple levels, from individual behavior to public policy. Our unique approach to partnering with communities builds capacity and leadership, while helping to advance sustainable change in low income communities and communities of color.

Our mission is to work with communities and policymakers to develop culturally resonant policies and practices that improve food and fitness environments for adolescents in low income communities and communities of color.

At CANFIT, we meet people where they are. We understand youth culture and know how to bring healthy eating and physical activity into the lives of young people. We offer hands-on, culturally resonant technical assistance tailored to meet community needs.

CANFIT primarily focuses on low income, African-American, American Indian, Latino/Hispanic, Asian American and Pacific Islander adolescents. Many of these historically underserved populations have limited access to affordable, healthy foods and safe places for physical activity.

CANFIT has impacted hundreds of community-based organizations by providing training and technical assistance to strengthen the organizational capacity of providers and the youth themselves. This technical assistance facilitates discovery of strategies that will ameliorate the nutrition and physical activity conditions in communities. This capacity-building model has been recognized by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Center for American Indian Research and Education, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, all of which have contracted with CANFIT to create and implement culturally appropriate training programs. Additionally, CANFIT was the recipient of the 2002 and 2003 Dannon Institute Award for Excellence in Community Nutrition and the 2003 Robert Wood Johnson Community Health Leader award.

CANFIT's Unique Qualifications

- Providing **training, technical assistance and consultation** to youth serving organizations, non-profit organizations, funders, government entities, consultants, and others working to improve nutrition and physical activity in low-income communities and communities of color.

For over two decades, CANFIT has provided training, technical assistance and consultation to hundreds of organizations. These entities have included after school programs, educational facilities, foundations, CANFIT grantee organizations, policy-making bodies, professional organizations, military groups, health care institutions, community health workers, health care providers, promotoras, media, parents, and city, county, state, and national government agencies.

CANFIT is proficient in conducting on-site assessments of both school-based and community-based after school programs. Assessment tools, such as the *CANFIT Cultural Needs Assessment Guide*, *After School Program Site Assessment Tool*, and *CANFIT Healthy and Affordable Food Access Survey*, have been developed and piloted with both school-based and community-based programs. CANFIT's expertise in this area has resulted in contracts and grants with such organizations as the United States Department of Agriculture, The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation and The California Endowment.

CANFIT regularly functions as a source for information and resources on nutrition and physical activity to the public; specifically on obesity prevention, health at every size (HAES), child and adolescent nutrition, working with youth, after school program policies, health disparities, food justice, ethnic-specific materials, and advocacy issues.

Educational materials developed through CANFIT have been utilized by a variety of programs. For example, in 2004, one of the *CANFIT Connection* newsletters was chosen to be used in testing for the Florida Department of Education Content Standards (Volusia County Schools). The Native American Food Pyramid developed through a CANFIT grantee was chosen by the Girl Scouts Research Institute to be included in a leader's manual and by the U.S.D.A. to be included in a 2004 calendar. The P.H.A.T. Multi-media Package was used as a model in the Chicago Housing Authority Summer Food Service Program (Illinois Nutrition Education & Training Program). Excerpts from *CANFIT's Recipes for Success* curriculum were chosen for inclusion in *Programs for Promoting Physical Activity Among African-Americans* being developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Human Kinetics). A recipe from *Filipino-American Nutrition and Fitness* developed through a CANFIT grantee was chosen by the U.S. Office on Women's Health to be included in their *Body Works Toolkit Recipe Book*. Again, these requests demonstrate the wide spread influence and national reputation that CANFIT has developed.

- Conducting **regional training workshops** for youth organizations and service providers.

CANFIT's Recipes for Success workshops are an interactive, hands-on experience designed for youth providers who work with low-income, multi-ethnic youth. Since the workshop was developed in 2000, over 3000 people have been trained. The workshop features nutrition and physical activities and games that have been tested and proven effective with adolescent audiences. Participants learn effective strategies for improving the nutrition and physical fitness status of the youth they serve. Workshop evaluations have consistently been exceedingly positive. The reputation of these workshops has also resulted in CANFIT being awarded grants by the Louis R. Lurie Foundation and Kaiser Permanente to provide these workshops in the Tenderloin District of San Francisco and throughout northern California.

Comments from evaluations completed by past participants include:

- "Well organized and relevant, practical activities."
- "Excellent format and materials."
- "Staff enthusiastic, good modeling."
- "All the activities were valuable to my work and can be used."
- "Great workshop! Nice format. Great and useful info."
- "Thank you for providing us with so much excellent information."
- "Wonderful and engaging workshop. Easy to incorporate ideas into programming."
- "I thought the workshops were excellent overall. I know that I will be leaving this conference wanting to make nutrition a key issue at my after school program and watching what I eat."



- **Presenting** nationally and internationally on a range of topics, including youth development, obesity prevention in communities of color, and effective strategies for adolescent health programs.

CANFIT has hosted statewide training conferences and the National Middle School Conference bringing together culturally diverse and competent trainers who have experience implementing youth nutrition and physical activity projects. CANFIT is also nationally recognized for presentations at hundreds of state and national meetings and conferences on the nutrition and physical activity issues of low-income, ethnic youth with consideration to youth development theory and practice. Just a few of the hundreds of organizations where CANFIT presentations were made include:

- *American & California Public Health Associations Annual Meetings;*
 - *Coalition to Lower Obesity in Chicago's Children;*
 - *Robert Wood Johnson Foundation;*
 - *U.S. Office of Women's Health;*
 - *Society for Nutrition Education Annual Conference;*
 - *The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;*
 - *UCLA Coalition on Asian American Nutrition and Physical Activity;*
 - *National Association of Latino Elected Officials;*
 - *American Dietetic Association Annual Meeting;*
 - *W.K. Kellogg Foundation;*
 - *NAWHO National Diabetes Summit;*
 - *CDC Community Transformation Grants Faculty;*
 - *New Zealand Government.*
- Offering support, trainings and technical assistance on **effective youth engagement strategies.**

CANFIT serves as the **Youth Engagement Technical Assistance Lead** for 9 communities as part of the National Food and Fitness Initiative of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. These communities include Oakland, Seattle, Philadelphia, Boston, Holyoke, New York, Detroit, Northeast Iowa and the Tohono O'odham Nation in Arizona. Between 2008-2012, CANFIT staff were instrumental in planning, implementing, and evaluating four national Kellogg Food and Fitness youth convenings.

CANFIT also assessed youth engagement in these communities with respect to youth development, food systems, the built environment and cultural competency and performed specific youth engagement workshops with adults and youth from TOCA of the Tohono O'odham Nation, Oakland's HOPE Collaborative, the King County Food and Fitness Initiative, the New York City Food & Fitness Partnership/Flip the Table Youth Council in Brooklyn and PUFFA of Philadelphia.

From 2009-2010 through the **MO Project**, CANFIT has **successfully engaged over 500 youth** in communities across California hosting youth media convenings in Merced, Chula Vista, Kettleman City, Santa Ana, Richmond, Arvin, Ceres and Long Beach.

In 2011 as part of the **MO Youth e-Advocates** project and in partnership with the California School Health Centers Association (CSHC), CANFIT trained and performed workshops for youth teams at the school based health centers of John Marshall, Belmont and Manual Arts High School in the Los Angeles area. In 2012, CANFIT provided similar trainings for youth from 3 Building Healthy Communities Initiative Sites: Eastern Coachella Valley, Richmond and South Kern.



CANFIT has provided youth engagement support and trainings for the following statewide initiatives: Healthy Eating Active Communities (HEAC), the California Convergence, the Central California Regional Obesity Prevention Program (CCROPP) and the Network for a Healthy California.

CANFIT also was given the opportunity to lead youth trainings and workshops for: Building Healthy Communities in City Heights, South Sacramento's HEAL Zone as part of the Kaiser Permanente HEAL Initiative, the City of Rancho Cucamonga's Youth Council, CCROPP in Stockton, Latino Health Access (LHA) in Santa Ana, Chula Vista's After School Collaborative and Oakland School Based Health Centers.

- Developing, evaluating and disseminating effective, culturally appropriate nutrition and physical activity **educational materials and tools.**

CANFIT has developed numerous educational materials since its inception. Six of the most popular are the *CANFIT Super Manual*, the *P.H.A.T. Multi-Media Package*, the Spanish-language *Recetas para el Exito* (Recipes for Success) manual, *Healthy Afterschool Snack Guide*, *ACTIVE8* and the *99 Ways Toolkit*.

The *CANFIT Super Manual* is a comprehensive 135-page document designed to enable youth service providers to incorporate nutrition and physical activity into their everyday programming. The Super Manual includes everything from basic background information to detailed lesson plans, handouts, and recipes. Program ideas, tips on evaluation, assessment tools, curriculum standards, and 25 different nutrition and physical activity lesson plans comprise the Super Manual.

Promoting Healthy Activities Together (P.H.A.T.) is a multi-media package based on CANFIT's adolescent-focused Hip Hop Campaign. A DVD takes a unique look at nutrition and physical activity issues from the perspective of youth, local hip-hop talent, and sports celebrities and includes a 40-minute instructional hip-hop dance routine. A music CD features seven original tracks and a 10-minute workout mix. Finally, a guidebook rounds out the package with 36 pages of information, resources, and activities.

The Spanish-language *Recetas para el Exito* (Recipes for Success) manual is a practical "how-to" guide for those wanting to create a nutrition and physical activity project for adolescents. It can be downloaded free from the CANFIT web site.

The *Healthy Afterschool Snack Guide* provides menus using foods that can be easily obtained at convenience stores and that fall within the federal reimbursement rate budget. The guide also contains two-week sample cycle menus, shopping lists and 26 healthy snack recipes.

CANFIT's *ACTIVE8* (activate) is an 8-step guide that helps youth providers: 1) incorporate "simple, yet appropriate" physical activities, and 2) create a positive physical activity culture through improving policies in your after school, community and/or neighborhood.

The *99 Ways Toolkit* is an interactive booklet that provides everything from nutrition and fitness lesson plans to shopping menu tips to strategies to involve parents and community members -- *all to help make after school program and communities healthier places for youth and families.*

CANFIT also provides a plethora of resources on its web site that organizations can download and use immediately to incorporate nutrition education and physical activity into their programming.

- Designing **innovative, culturally-specific nutrition and physical activity projects, community interventions, and social marketing campaigns** including:
 - ***Adelante con Leche Semi-descremada Campaign*** (1999) - The goal of CANFIT's first bilingual (Spanish/English) community nutrition campaign was to motivate Latino youth and their families to switch from drinking whole or 2% milk, to drinking 1% or fat-free milk. The comprehensive community campaign utilized paid Hispanic radio, print advertising, and television; 1% milk tastings at local supermarkets, health and medical clinics, middle and elementary schools; and presentations and displays at local and major community events in East Los Angeles. Based upon sales report data, the *Adelante* Campaign resulted in a 200% increase in 1% milk sales.
 - ***Promoting Healthy Activities Together (P.H.A.T.) Hip Hop Campaign for African American youth in the San Francisco Bay Area*** (2002). The P.H.A.T. campaign utilized a community-based approach which embraced music, dance, emceeing, and other elements of hip-hop culture (in community centers, schools, after school programs and other organized settings) to deliver messages about healthy eating and physical activity.
 - ***Project REAL (Redefining Excellence, Activity, and Leadership)*** Campaign for Asian American and Pacific Islander youth in the San Francisco Bay Area (2003). Adolescents created "digital stories" about healthy eating and physical activity in their communities using technology, photographs, visual art, and other materials from their own lives. In addition, participating organizations received funding and technical assistance for implementing a physical activity promotion project specifically for the youth they serve. The lessons learned from implementing Project R.E.A.L. are captured in a resource guide, and in educational materials for parents.
 - ***MO Project*** (2008) - Across California, CANFIT trained 400+ youth to use media to advocate for healthy eating and physical activity changes in their community. MO Project videos were used in school board and city council meetings; shared with legislators and elected officials; became part of healthy corner store and joint use campaigns; and delighted and informed audiences at state and national conferences.
 - ***MO Youth e-Advocates*** (2011) - took MO Project a step further as youth engaged in "e-Advocacy" - using online tools (such as Facebook or Twitter) to communicate health messages, and influence their peers, community and elected officials to make change. CANFIT worked directly with youth teams to expose them and their adult allies to the fast-evolving world of "online campaigning". Through a series of workshops and trainings, CANFIT and its partners built the youth teams' capacity to plan measurable online and offline communication goals, enabled them to teach other youth how to advocate online most effectively, and helped garner momentum for increased youth involvement in addressing nutrition and physical activity-related local and statewide policy change efforts.
 - ***After School Physical Activity Learning Community*** in partnership with the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) After School Program Office (2011-2012). The PA Learning Community created a network of after school physical activity advocates across the district that learned PA activities, shared best practices, and discussed and advocated for environmental and structural changes to improve physical activity.
- **Advocating for policies** that enhance nutrition and physical activity in after school and community settings.



CANFIT advocates on local, state, and national levels for policies that enhance nutrition and physical activity in after school programs, especially those in ethnic communities. CANFIT staff serve on a variety of local, state and national steering committees, advisory boards, and work groups that are responsible for policy development. The following policy documents developed by CANFIT can be downloaded from CANFIT’s website under “Publications”:

Promoting Health and Preventing Obesity in After School Programs: Critical Issues to Consider, examines opportunities for after school programs to help address the physical activity and nutrition needs of middle school-aged youth of color.

Policy Recommendations on Nutrition and Physical Activity in Middle Schools, After School Programs, and Communities outlines policies that can be implemented either legislatively or institutionally.

Days of Dialogue: Obesity and Diabetes Prevention in Communities of Color, summarizes a series of community convenings held across California.

Communities of Color Issue Briefing Paper: Addressing the Obesity Epidemic discusses social and environmental contributors that affect communities of color in the obesity epidemic. It also proposes nutrition and physical activity policy solutions and stresses that in addition to developing effective programs, policy responses are essential to combating obesity as well.

The ***CANFIT Snack Policy Brief*** provides policy recommendations for After School programs in light of the 2009 child nutrition program re-authorization legislation.

Expanding Opportunities for After School Physical Activity examines the neighborhood structures that are already serving youth and assesses how they might become engaged in community health initiatives that strengthen or expand physical activity opportunities for young people.

After School Physical Activity describes the present landscape of physical activity for youth in California and recommendations for After School Programs.

After School Physical Activity Guidelines Matrix gives programs a sense of how to easily implement California PA guidelines.

CANFIT is a project of the Tides Center, which serves as its fiscal sponsor. The governing body of CANFIT is a group of culturally diverse community experts and former grantees from across the state. This group is collectively known as the CANFIT Collaborative, and is responsible for planning, program development, assessment, fiscal oversight, and grant and scholarship review.