P184 Promoting Healthful Beverage Choices among Households Enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

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Objective: To implement a multi-component campaign that promotes healthful beverage choices and reduces the intake of sugary drinks.

Theory, Prior Research, Rationale: The goal of this program is to increase the likelihood that parents will monitor and limit their children's intake of sugary drinks. To achieve this goal, a multi-component campaign was developed based on the principles of social marketing and the social-ecological theory.

Description: Rethink Your Drink Nevada includes a direct-mail intervention to eligible SNAP households; provision of patient educational materials to primary health care providers and dentists; and a print media campaign. Digital resources include a newsletter, website and Facebook page. Target audience was SNAP households with one or more children between the ages of 6 and 12.

Evaluation: The findings presented here focus on the mail survey results of 1,000 randomly-selected SNAP households regarding the direct-mail intervention conducted in Washoe County, NV. Among parents who had reportedly read "some or nearly everything" of the materials (66%), most found them interesting to read (87%), indicated they had learned something new (69%), and had used one or more of the suggested strategies (94%). They were also more likely to monitor and limit their children's intake of sugary drinks compared to those parents' who did not recall receiving the materials or read none or very little of them ($p < .05$).

Conclusions and Implications: These findings suggest that a direct-mail intervention may be effective in changing parents' behaviors that serve to reduce children's intake of sugary drinks. In addition, sending educational materials via the United States Postal Service remains a viable option to reach SNAP households with nutrition information.

Funding: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education

P185 PSE Approaches to Expand Reach in SNAP-Ed Programming

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Objective: To identify opportunities to expand policy, system and environmental (PSE) approaches to

strengthen SNAP-Ed programming in Florida and increase the number of participants adopting healthier behaviors.

Rationale: By implementing PSEs in low-resource communities, residents have an increased opportunity to adopt and sustain nutrition and physical activity habits.

Description: Expanding from 37 to 51 Florida counties, the University of Florida/IFAS Extension Family Nutrition Program (FNP) (Florida's SNAP-Ed program) reached 64% more SNAP-Ed participants overall through direct nutrition education and PSE changes in FY16. By focusing on specific settings, FNP increased collaboration with local partners and stakeholders and expanded its PSE change efforts. In order to accomplish expansion, FNP mobilized two specialized teams, Farm to School and Community and Public Health, to implement strategies in each of these areas. Target audience was SNAP-eligible residents in communities across the state of Florida.

Evaluation: In FY15, FNP reported 95 partners throughout the state, which increased to 942 partners in FY16. FNP also implemented a total of 183 PSE approaches in FY16, reaching 310% more Floridians than in FY15. These efforts were tracked through monthly reporting on specific indicators from the SNAP-Ed evaluation framework. PSE approaches included implementing community and school gardens, engaging school wellness committees, participating in community health coalitions, and improving access to fresh produce.

Conclusions and Implications: Identifying opportunities to support nutrition education at existing sites and collaborating with community partners in new settings can strengthen SNAP-Ed programming within communities.

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P186 SNAP Benefits Go Beyond Food Access: The Impact on Cost-Related Medication Nonadherence for Older Adults

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Objective: One in five older adults engage in cost-related medication nonadherence (CRN), which can result in hospitalizations and adverse health outcomes, and rates are higher for those at-risk of hunger. This study sought to examine whether participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) may help older adults better afford their medications, plausibly by reducing out-of-pocket food expenditure.

Study Design, Setting, Participants, Intervention: Using data from the 2013-2015 U.S. National Health

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Interview Survey and Propensity Score Matching, we create matched intervention and comparison groups of adults age 60 and over. The treatment group (n=1,717) comprises SNAP participants, and the comparison group (n=3,329) includes eligible non-participants.

Outcome Measures and Analysis: The outcome is a binary variable for engaging in CRN, and the treatment is SNAP participation. Probit regression models are used to determine the impact of SNAP on CRN while controlling for a wide array of sociodemographic and health-related factors.

Results: SNAP participants are 3.1 percentage points less likely to engage in CRN than eligible non-participants (p=0.06). This effect is magnified for the subgroup of older adult SNAP participants at-risk of hunger, who were 5.8 percentage points less likely to engage in CRN than their counterparts (p=0.04).

Conclusions and Implications: Approximately 42 percent of eligible older adults participate in SNAP. Health systems and payers have a vested interest in connecting low-income older adults with food assistance programs given the direct connection between food insecurity and poor health outcomes, and now strong evidence that SNAP participation can help older adults afford their prescription medications.

Funding: None

P187 SNAP-Eligible Families Encounter Multiple Economic, Social, and Environmental Barriers to Fruit and Vegetable Consumption

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Objective: Low-income households devote fewer dollars per person to the purchase of fruits and vegetables (FV). Eating FV in place of more energy-dense foods is associated with body weight management and reduced risk for many chronic diseases. Social marketing (SM) interventions have shown to influence health behavior, thus, Ohio SNAP-Ed is developing a SM campaign to increase FV demand and consumption among the target population. This study's purpose was to explore dietary patterns and motivations/barriers to FV consumption among Ohio SNAP-eligible families to inform campaign development.

Study Design, Setting, Participants: Cross-sectional, mixed methods approach using focus groups and an online survey. Participants were primarily SNAP-eligible adults at or below 185% poverty with children living in the home.

Outcome Measures and Analysis: Family characteristics (e.g., income, ethnicity, number of children in

household); behaviors related to purchasing, preparation, and consumption of FV; motivators and barriers associated with eating FV. Focus groups were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using thematic analysis techniques in NVivo. Three trained researchers coded survey responses and distilled collective findings into thematic observations.

Results: Thirteen themes emerged, including the prevailing influence of cost, family member taste preferences, and shelf life on food purchases. Nearly half (48.1%) of the target population felt that they eat "enough" fruits and vegetables, despite reporting intake levels well below USDA recommendations.

Conclusions and Implications: The economic, social, and environmental barriers to FV consumption identified by Ohio SNAP-eligible adults justify a need for innovative SM strategies to enhance existing SNAP-Ed programs. Consideration of such barriers will ultimately guide and strengthen the design of a SM campaign.

Funding: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Education

P188 Summarizing Common Achievements, Challenges, and Lessons Learned of USDA Farm to School Grantees

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Objective: Farm to school programs involve efforts to bring locally produced foods into school cafeterias; facilitate hands-on learning activities such as school gardening, farm visits, and culinary classes; and integrate food-related education into standards-based classroom curriculum. This research summarizes common achievements, challenges, and lessons learned of USDA Farm to School Program grantees.

Study Design, Setting, Participants, Intervention: USDA's Office of Community Food Systems (OCFS) annually funds school district involvement in farm to school through its Farm to School Grant Program. From 2013 to 2016, USDA funded 300 projects in all 50 states including 152 school districts or charter school programs in 42 states and territories.

Outcome Measures and Analysis: Staff in OCFS performed a qualitative analysis on final reports submitted by 83 school districts that received a USDA Farm to School grant between 2013 and 2015. Themes were grouped by achievements, challenges, and lessons learned using USDA's farm to school curriculum which includes 12 separate planning and implementation modules.

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