P50 Assessment of Purdue Extension's New Digital Social Marketing Campaign Designed to Reach Low-Income Indiana Residents

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Background (Background, Rationale, Prior Research, and/or Theory):

In Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2017, Purdue Extension launched a statewide digital social marketing campaign, "Easy As: Eat, Gather, Go," to reach low-income Indiana women with children, the primary target audience of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed). The campaign promoted fruit and vegetable consumption, family mealtime, and physical activity. The overarching strategy of the campaign was to build and promote a website that contained information for eating healthy on a budget. Purdue Extension contracted with Altarum to conduct an outcome evaluation of the campaign.

Objective: To assess reach and awareness of Purdue Extension's social marketing messages among the target audience.

Study Design, Setting, Participants, Intervention:

Altarum employed a cross-sectional, multi-mode data collection protocol of web and paper surveys, drawing from a representative sample of low-income Indiana residents. In total, 1,172 surveys were returned.

Outcome Measures and Analysis: All statistical analyses were performed on the whole sample as well as subgroups. Confidence intervals were calculated to estimate significant differences among respondents at the $\alpha = 0.05$ level.

Results: More than one-quarter (29%) of respondents reported exposure to the campaign. Slightly more than one-third (34%) of female respondents with a child age 10 or younger were exposed to the campaign. Respondents who reported participating in one or more assistance programs were significantly more likely to have been exposed to the campaign than respondents who did not (33% and 25%, respectively). Younger respondents, ages 18 to 24, were significantly more likely to have been exposed to the campaign than older respondents, ages 55 to 64 (49% and 24%, respectively). If any respondent had a child under age 18, their exposure (33%) was significantly higher than all others (24%).

Conclusions and Implications: In FFY 2017, Purdue Extension successfully launched a new social marketing campaign recognized by one-third of the target population surveyed. Exposure to the campaign was significantly higher among limited-resource and younger respondents.

Funding: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program—Education.

P51 Barriers and Facilitators to Implementing Parent Strategies to Improve Vegetable Intake Among Low-Income Children

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Background (Background, Rationale, Prior Research, and/or Theory):

Vegetable intake among children is below recommendations despite positive benefits. Addressing parental barriers and facilitators to implementation of behavioral strategies to increase child vegetable intake may help increase frequency of use.

Objective: To qualitatively assess barriers and facilitators for low-income parents to implement behavioral strategies to increase child vegetable intake at meals consumed at home.

Study Design, Setting, Participants, Intervention:

Parent-child dyads ($n = 44$) participated in six weekly adapted Cooking Matters for Families sessions at community centers throughout the Twin Cities Metropolitan area. Most participants were women 30–39 years, racially/ethnically diverse (40% Hispanic, 27% African American), and had low/very low food security. After meal preparation and nutrition education segments, a behavioral strategy was introduced to parents (1/week). Parents discussed how each strategy could be used at home and how the previous week's strategy was implemented. Discussion questions focused on barriers and facilitators to using the strategy.

Outcome Measures and Analysis: The discussions were audiotaped and transcribed verbatim. A codebook was developed and used to code transcripts via NVivo software. Inductive thematic analysis was applied to identify barriers and facilitators to using strategies.

Results: Potential for food waste was a barrier to using a bigger spoon to serve vegetables, using a MyPlate to indicate an adequate amount of vegetables, and serving two vegetables. Time was a barrier when extra steps were required, such as serving vegetables first or serving two vegetables; however, saving time was a facilitator for having the child help prepare vegetables. Child vegetable liking was identified as a barrier or facilitator for most strategies. Other barriers and facilitators included cost, access to vegetables, family meal frequency, and ages of family members, especially other children. Strategies that were easy to implement (i.e. bigger spoon) were considered helpful for increasing child vegetable intake.

Conclusions and Implications: Behavioral strategies for low-income parents intended to improve child vegetable intake should be easy, time-efficient, and cost-effective.

Funding: USDA.

P52 Children's Perspectives on the Summer Nutrition Program

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Background (Background, Rationale, Prior Research, and/or Theory): The Summer Nutrition Program (SNP) provides free meals to children ages 18 and younger in low-income areas during the summer. Many SNP sites offer additional components to support the children, such as enrichment activities and free books. Attending SNP sites also gives children the opportunity to socialize with others during the summer. Little is known about the children who attend SNP sites and their perspectives on the program.

Objective: To gain an understanding of the types of children who participate in the SNP and their perspectives on the program.

Study Design, Setting, Participants, Intervention: Interview-administered surveys were conducted with a convenience sample of 55 children at 11 SNP sites from the Food for the Summer Program in Chapel Hill and Carrboro, North Carolina in August 2017.

Outcome Measures and Analysis: Children rated and provided feedback on program components, reported whether they participated in certain activities, and indicated if they had made new friends through the program. Participant demographics were also recorded.

Results: Participants ranged in age from 4 to 14 years old, with a mean age of 7.91 ± 2.75 years old. Approximately half of the children were girls. Twenty-five percent of children reported liking the food and 75% reported it being okay. Thirty percent of children reported liking the activities, while 70% said they were okay. Children provided feedback on favorite foods and activities, as well as items they would like to see offered. Eighty percent of children took free books and 93% read those books. Over 80% of children reported making new friends through the program.

Conclusions and Implications: Children can provide valuable feedback on the SNP, and this feedback should be taken into account in planning menus and selecting activities. Additional research is needed on how to engage older children in the program.

Funding: Community Engagement Fellowship from the Carolina Center for Public Service at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

P53 Development and Pilot Testing of a Community Based Participatory Research Obesity Prevention Program on College Campuses

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Background (Background, Rationale, Prior Research, and/or Theory): College students are at risk for unhealthy dietary behaviors, increased stress levels, and decreased physical activity. Development of healthy life-style patterns in adolescence is correlated with reduced risk of obesity later in life.

Objective: To describe the process of using Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) to develop and pilot test a health promotion intervention designed to prevent unwanted weight gain among "at risk" first-year college students.

Study Design, Setting, Participants, Intervention: CBPR partners, including faculty researchers ($n = 31$), student researchers ($n = 154$), Extension professionals ($n = 11$), and college students ($n = 83$), from 12 universities identified program objectives and behaviors to target for health promotion on college campuses. Partners used identified objectives and behaviors to develop a social marketing intervention and a pilot/feasibility test of the intervention that was delivered over 24 weeks at four intervention universities, while no change occurred at four control universities. During and following implementation, partners and a student-led multistate social marketing committee adjusted the intervention and compiled materials into a comprehensive toolkit.

Outcome Measures and Analysis: The pilot test was assessed in formative and process evaluations for key stakeholder acceptability and feasibility through weekly collaborative partner meetings, tracking social marketing engagement, weekly reports from campus coordinators (event attendance, supplies/cost, and perspectives of strength, weaknesses and modifications needed), toolkit evaluation surveys completed by student researchers and college students ($n = 10$), and town hall campus meetings.

Results: An acceptable and feasible comprehensive toolkit was the final output from all data collected and analyzed, which was based on the elements of diet, physical activity, and stress management. The toolkit provides a systematic approach to assessing student health behavior and priorities, objectively measuring campus healthfulness, providing health promotion activities, using social marketing to promote health, and advocating for environmental change.

Conclusions and Implications: CBPR can be used successfully to develop an obesity prevention intervention on college campuses. The effectiveness of the CBPR developed intervention to prevent unwanted weight gain needs to be evaluated in a randomized controlled trial.

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