Objective: To better understand attitudes related to access, availability, and consumption of SSBs by conducting virtual focus groups among youth in North Carolina.

Study Design, Setting, Participants: Youth ages 11-17 in communities with a high proportion of SNAP eligible households were selected to participate in virtual focus groups during the summer of 2021. Semi-structured focus groups were used to explore youth perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors around SSBs and SSB messaging.

Measurable Outcomes/Analysis: Focus group discussions centered around general health perceptions; SSB perceptions and behaviors; information sources and messaging preferences; and reactions to previous SSB campaign materials and messages. A thematic analysis was used to summarize knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions around SSBs and advertising preferences.

Results: Thirty-six youth participated across 4 focus groups. Parents/caregivers influenced youth the most when it came to making beverage choices. Positive SSB opinions included liking the taste and the association with special times and social events. Negative opinions focused on associated health risks (diet-related chronic disease and poor oral health). Some youth acknowledged SSBs were not healthy but suggested they could be consumed occasionally. Very few participants mentioned any benefits from SSBs; those that mentioned benefits stated they provided energy, replaced electrolytes, and tasted good. Youth suggested SSB campaigns focus on short- and long-term health consequences. Youth saw advertising about health topics through a range of channels; however, youth were mixed on whether they paid attention.

Conclusions: Findings provide several key insights that can contribute to the development of messages aimed at curbing SSB consumption. For example, focusing on catching youth attention, and sharing short- and long-term health consequences of high SSB consumption resonated with youth, but occasional SSB intake was not seen as consequential.

Funding: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Education.

Apps and Social Media Applied to Nutrition Education

O13 Photo-Based Food Journaling and Self-Reflection on SMART Eating in Adults

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Background: Photo-based food journaling as means to improve SMART (Small, Measurable and Achievable dietary changes by Reducing fat, sugar and salt consumption and Trying different fruits and vegetables) eating is still elusive in Sri Lanka.

Objective: To explore the effectiveness of photo-based food journaling on meal tracking experience, self-reflection, and self-assessment of SMART eating of adults using a meal tracking app developed in the Sri Lankan context named ‘SnaT’ (Snap & Track).

Study Design, Setting, Participants: A sequential explanatory mixed-method was used. Data were collected via a telephone survey focusing on the food consumption pattern, perceived benefits, and barriers for photo-based food journaling from a conveniently selected group of adults (n=25) through snowball sampling technique. SnaT included about 180 commonly consumed Sri Lankan food items with app outputs showcasing under 7-major food groups, with photo capturing to enhance the self-reflection on meals.

Measurable Outcome/Analysis: The participants were asked to maintain a three-day photo food diary manually and by meal tracking using the ‘SnaT’. The pre and post-food consumption changes were analyzed using significance testing while evaluating the benefits and barriers to photo-based food journaling and acceptance of SnaT.

Results: Participants (n=25; mean age=24±6.08; females=80%; graduates=56%) show a significant increase in healthy food consumption [fruits and vegetables (P=0.00), legumes (P=0.001), fish, meat and poultry (P=0.00), eggs (P=0.00), and milk (P=0.001)] and a significant decrease in unhealthy food consumption [salt (P=0.025), sugar and sweet food (P=0.00)]. Improved self-awareness on meals was identified as the major benefit of photo-based food journaling while forgetting to capture photos before eating was identified as the main barrier. However, SnaT was widely accepted (21/25; 84%) as an easy and accessible novel tool to replace manual photo-based food journaling in the Sri Lankan context.

Conclusions: SnaT as a meal tracking application was well received. Though, further evaluation of acceptance of SnaT in different demographic groups by restructuring the app to include features of digital nutrition education to promote healthy eating should be warranted.

Funding: None.

O14 Digital Nudging as a Trigger for Healthy Eating Among Young Adults

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Background: A diet rich in fruits and vegetables is associated with a myriad of health and nutritional benefits. Although the use of digital nudging concepts to improve health behaviors are popular in other countries, in Sri Lanka, such research is scanty.

Objective: To evaluate the effectiveness and acceptance of a text and email messaging digital nudging concept Continued on page S8
O14 (continued)

named ‘5-a Day Punch’ to improve fruit and vegetable consumption among young adults.

**Study Design, Setting, Participants:** Young adults (n = 91, age 18-30), were conveniently selected and later randomly divided into two groups as intervention (int) and control (cnt), based on equal gender and age distribution. Then a 4-week ‘5-a Day Punch’ with two messages per week was assigned to the int group while the cnt group only received a brochure containing the same messages in the first week of the study.

**Measurable Outcome/Analysis:** Pre and post fruit and vegetable consumption patterns were identified in both groups using a pretested computer-based Food Frequency Questionnaire.

**Results:** Before the nudge, participants had consumed a mean 230.5g and 251.8g of total fruits and vegetables per day in the int group (fruits; 111.2g, vegetables; 119.3g) and cnt group (fruits; 103.6g, vegetables; 148.2g) respectively. After the nudge, the amounts consumed changed to, 340.5g per day and 309.4g per day respectively (int group: fruits; 111.2g, vegetables; 119.3g) was reported, the nudging resulted in greater fruit consumption (P = 0.029) in the int group compared to their counterparts. The majority (int group) 84.4% (38/45) accepted text and email messaging have prompted them to incorporate more fruits and vegetables into their diet.

**Conclusions:** Text and email messaging appear to be an acceptable and effective way to promote healthy behaviors among young adults.

**Funding:** None.

O15 Short Social Media Intervention Can Be as Effective as School Intervention in Changing Adolescents’ Snack Consumption

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**Objective:** Development and evaluation of the educational intervention ‘Užina za 5!’ using social media to influence healthier choices of beverages and snacks.

**Use of Theory or Research:** In adolescence, autonomy in snack choices increases. It is necessary to create educational interventions that promote healthier choices which could be via social media, as they have become an indispensable part of adolescents’ lives. The DESIGN procedure is a scientific-based framework that was used to create the educational intervention based on the knowledge-attitude-behavior model and social cognitive theory.

**Target Audience:** High school students (15-19 years old).

**Program Description:** At one high school in Osijek, 3 classes (n = 49) were randomly selected to participate in an intervention designed as a 2-week challenge (20 posts) in private Facebook groups. The other 3 classes (n = 44) participated in a school-based intervention consisting of two lectures (45 minutes) two weeks apart. Both types of educational interventions in which adolescents learned about the principles of healthy eating and food traffic light label were designed and delivered by a nutritionist.

**Evaluation Methods:** To evaluate the effectiveness of the digital intervention, the results of the pre/post online nutrition knowledge questionnaire and the results of the quantitative beverage and snack food frequency questionnaire for adolescents were compared with the results of the school-based intervention using two-way ANOVA with replication.

**Result:** Although both interventions increased nutrition knowledge, the school-based intervention had the greater effect (Δ1.5 vs. Δ0.8; P = 0.014). The ratio of healthy beverages (Δ1% and Δ3%; P = 0.08) and food (Δ-4% and Δ-2%; P = 0.57) did not differ after the interventions, but both interventions significantly reduced frequency and quantity of adolescents’ healthier and unhealthier food and beverages consumed as snacks.

**Conclusions:** Social media showed potential in nutrition education for adolescents. Future research should focus on other social media and longer intervention duration to assess whether they can supplement or replace school-based interventions.

**Funding:** None.

O16 Understanding Barriers and Facilitators to Virtual Culinary Nutrition Instruction for Youth

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**Background:** The COVID-19 pandemic caused Family-Cook Productions to re-design its evidence-based curriculum, Teen Battle Chef (TBC), to be taught virtually in a feasible format that allows culinary skill development that could result in positive behavior changes.

**Objective:** Examines barriers and facilitators to achieving a well-delivered and well-received, live, virtual format for an evidence-based, teaching kitchen program for youth.

**Study Design, Settings, Participants:** Twelve adolescent cohorts received a virtual version of TBC April to August 2020 (n = 145) Quantitative and qualitative process data examined participation barriers and facilitators, progress in gaining cooking skills, the use of the Framework for...