

Abstract

Objective

To measure awareness of Ohio Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP-Ed) social marketing campaign, *Celebrate Your Plate (CYP)* and assess healthy behaviors of low-income Ohioans in areas exposed to the campaign, using intervention and comparison groups. The goal of the CYP campaign was to achieve the behavior change of increasing fruit and vegetable consumption.

Target Audience

Low-income Ohioans residing in the southeast and northeast quadrants of the state with known children living in the household.

Theory, Prior Research, Rationale

Ohio SNAP-Ed works to improve the health and wellbeing of audiences with limited resources through direct education and community interventions. The USDA SNAP-Ed Plan Guidance recognizes that multi-level interventions, such as social marketing are necessary to have an impact on nutrition and physical activity related behaviors.

Study Design and Participation

Low-income Ohioans residing in the two quadrants were randomly selected for a telephone survey. Data were collected at three time points between May and September 2018; post-implementation in one quadrant (553 collected), and pre-(542 collected) and post-implementation (553 collected) in the other.

Conclusions and Implications

Ohio SNAP-Ed successfully launched a multi-modal social marketing campaign in 2018 recognized by nearly one-fifth of low-income Ohioans. *CYP* was particularly effective in reaching Ohioans participating in assistance programs and may increase their readiness to increase fruit and vegetable consumption.



Pictured: Convenience store poster

Overview

In Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2018, Ohio SNAP-Ed launched a social marketing campaign, *Celebrate Your Plate (CYP)*, with the goal of increasing awareness of the importance and ease of eating fruits and vegetables. The campaign was rolled out in phases, aligned with the four quadrants of the state. The multi-modal campaign was designed to provide information and tips for eating healthy on a budget. Digital and print materials were developed for dissemination through various channels, as well as website featuring recipes, cooking and shopping tips and community resources. Ohio SNAP-Ed contracted with Altarum to conduct an outcome evaluation of the campaign.

Objective

The purpose of the outcome evaluation was to measure awareness of Ohio SNAP-Ed's social marketing messages and assess healthy behaviors among low-income families with children in Ohio.

Methods

Altarum drew a representative sample of low-income Ohio residents earning approximately \$30,000 - \$35,000 per year or less with known children in the household from a purchased list. Telephone surveys were conducted at three separate time points: Quadrant 1 (Q1) post-campaign implementation and in Quadrant 2 (Q2) pre- and post-implementation. Results from the Q1-post and Q2-post surveys were combined to gain more statistical power to detect differences between exposure groups. Metrics were identified from the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework to assess the target audience's healthy eating intentions and readiness; food resource management skills; exposure to the social marketing campaign; fruit and vegetable consumption; self-reported health status; and food security status.

Data were weighted to represent SNAP recipients in the quadrants. All statistical analyses were performed sample as well as subgroups. Comparisons between quadrants, demographics and campaign exposure were made using 95% confidence intervals to determine significant differences.

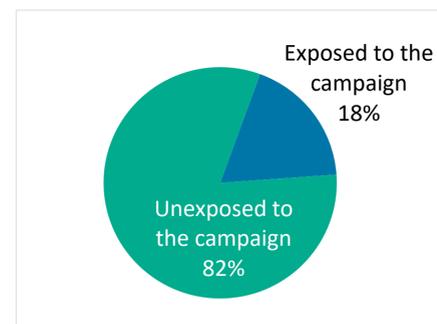


Pictured: Measuring spoons

Results

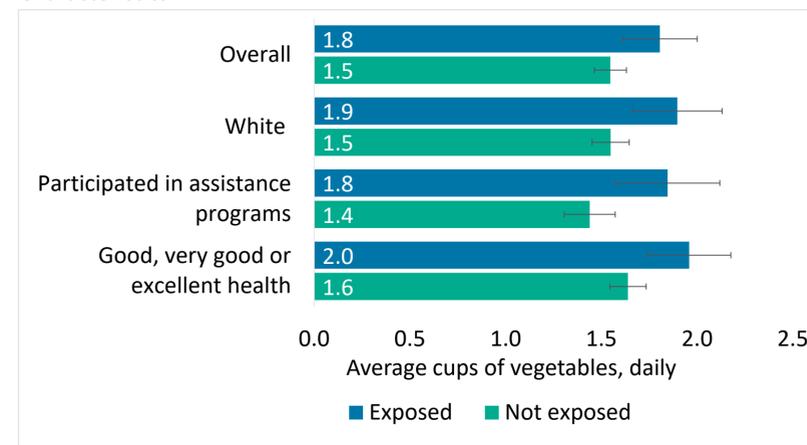
Post-implementation, 18% of low-income Ohioans were exposed to *CYP* (Figure 1). While there were little demographic differences between exposed and unexposed Ohioans, those exposed to the campaign were significantly more likely to have participated in an assistance program in the last year than those who were unexposed (63% and 44%, respectively).

Figure 1. Exposure to the Campaign, Post-Implementation



Ohioans exposed to the campaign ate more fruits and vegetables daily than those unexposed, although this was not significant (Figure 2). Exposed residents who were white, participated in food assistance programs, or reported *good, very good, or excellent* health consumed significantly more vegetables on an average day than their unexposed counterparts. Among assistance program participants, campaign exposure was significantly associated with higher readiness to increase vegetable consumption.

Figure 2. Average Daily Vegetable Consumption Among Low-Income Ohioans Post-Implementation, By Exposure Level and Select Demographic Characteristics



Reported barriers to eating healthier were cost, health reasons, dislike, and being too busy to shop for, cook or prepare healthy foods. Actions taken after campaign exposure included thinking about making healthier food choices, buying and eating more fruits and vegetables, and planning healthy meals for their family.



Pictured: Recipe card



Pictured: Website

Conclusions

Ohio SNAP-Ed successfully launched a social marketing campaign in FFY 2018 that was recalled by almost 1 in 5 low-income Ohioans surveyed. Exposure was highest among those who had participated in one or more assistance programs within the past year. While low-income Ohioans are generally falling short of fruit and vegetable recommendations, campaign exposure may be associated with higher levels of fruit and vegetable consumption, although more data may be needed to determine this significantly. Results suggest that people exposed to the campaign messages may have increased readiness to make dietary changes with regard to fruit and vegetable consumption compared with those unexposed to the campaign, particularly among assistance program participants. These positive results indicate that the social marketing campaign has the potential to encourage behavior change among the target audience.