

A Follow-Up Outcome Evaluation of Alabama SNAP-Ed's Social Marketing Campaign

Authors:
 Brent Walker, MS, RD (*Altarum*)
 Rebecca Hofer, MPH (*Altarum*)
 Brenda Wolford, MS, RD (*Altarum*)
 Katie Funderburk, MS, RD (*ACES*)
 Sondra Parmer, PhD (*ACES*)
 Barb Struempfer, PhD (*ACES*)

Abstract

Background

In 2017, Alabama Cooperative Extension System at Auburn University (ACES) contracted Altarum to conduct outcome and formative evaluations of its *Live Well Alabama* social marketing campaign. Based on Altarum's findings, ACES updated the three core messages and accompanying images for its billboard campaign that relaunched in early 2018.

Objective

To measure campaign exposure and assess dietary and health behaviors among selected Alabama Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) parents.

Study Design, Settings, Participants

Altarum conducted an outcome evaluation using measures from the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework. An updated telephone survey was utilized to collect data from parents of third grade Body Quest students in spring 2018.

Measureable Outcome/Analysis

Descriptive statistics described the sample population and outcome variables. Significant differences between groups were estimated using 95% confidence intervals. Differences between the 2017 and 2018 evaluations were noted.

Results

A total of 366 surveys were completed. About half (51%) of respondents were exposed to at least one billboard message, a significant increase from 2017 (38%). Repeated exposure to billboards was strong with 39%, 41%, and 56% of all exposed respondents reporting seeing the Fruit and Vegetable, Physical Activity, and Water billboards five or more times, respectively. Exposed respondents reported that viewing the billboards led them to drink more water (38%); eat more fruits and vegetables (37%); think about making healthier food choices (33%); plan healthy meals (32%); and buy more fruits and vegetables (31%). Respondents exposed to billboards consumed significantly more cups of fruit than those unexposed (1.7 and 1.3 cups, respectively) and were significantly more likely to report consuming water two or more times per day than those unexposed. Similar to 2017 results, lack of time was reported as the primary barrier to increasing vegetable consumption and physical activity.

Conclusion

ACES successfully revised and relaunched its billboard social marketing campaign in 2018 that was recognized by over one-half of the surveyed target audience.

Overview

In 2016, ACES designed three billboards to incorporate three *Live Well Alabama* messages into its existing statewide social marketing campaign. ACES contracted with Altarum in 2017 to conduct process and outcome evaluations of the campaign. Based on Altarum's findings, ACES revised the campaign's three core messages and relaunched the campaign in early 2018. The campaign themes remained the same; however, the messages and accompanying images were modified based on target audience feedback.



Objective

Altarum was contracted to measure campaign dose and reach and to assess the attitudes, behaviors, and intentions related to diet and physical activity of the audience surveyed.

Methods

Altarum employed a cross-sectional evaluation approach. Data were collected via telephone interviews. The sampling universe consisted of parents of third grade Body Quest students throughout Alabama. A total of 366 surveys were completed. Measures included short- and medium-term indicators from the *SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework*.

Data Analysis

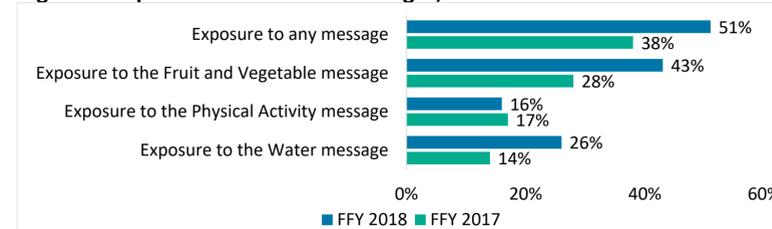
Using IBM SPSS 25 software, univariate descriptive statistics were produced to describe the sample population and the outcome variables. Confidence intervals were calculated to estimate significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) among survey respondents. Findings from the 2017 and 2018 evaluations were compared and differences noted.

Results

Exposure

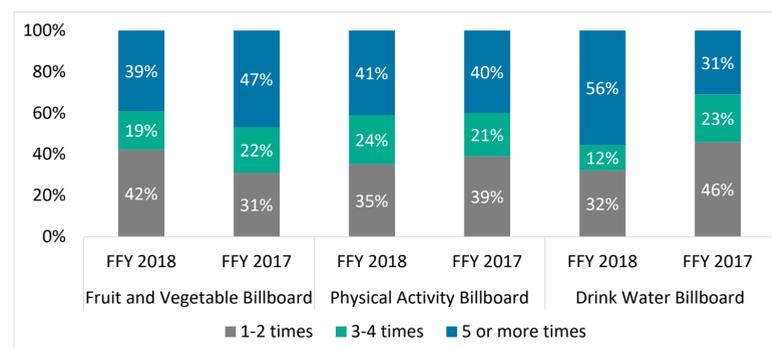
More than half (51%) of survey respondents were exposed to at least one of the billboard messages, a significant increase from 38% in 2017 (Figure 1). There were no significant differences in exposure based on demographic characteristics. The Fruit and Vegetable and Water billboard messages were seen by 43% and 26% of respondents; both increased significantly from 2017 (28% and 14%, respectively).

Figure 1. Exposure to Billboard Messages, 2017-2018



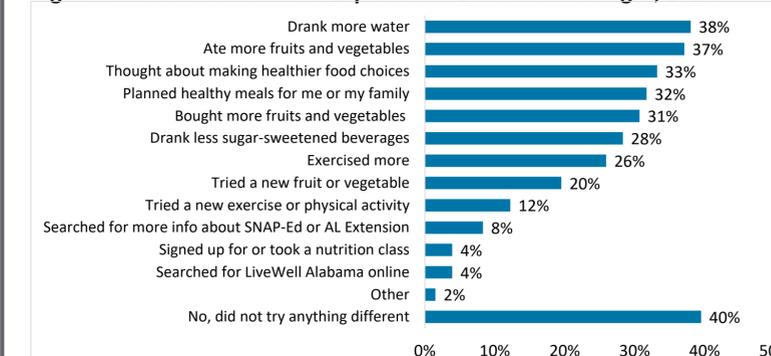
Repeated exposure is an important factor for the success of a social marketing campaign. Repeated exposure was highest for the Water billboard with over half (56%) of exposed respondents recalling seeing it five or more times, a large increase from 2017 (31%). Respondents also reported repeated exposure to the Physical Activity (41%) and Fruit and Vegetable (39%) billboard messages (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Repeated Exposure to Billboard Messages, 2017-2018



As shown in Figure 3, exposed respondents reported that viewing the billboards led them to drink more water (38%), eat more fruits and vegetables (37%), think about making healthier food choices (33%), plan healthy meals (32%), and buy more fruits and vegetables (31%).

Figure 3. Actions Taken After Exposure to Billboard Messages, 2018



Dietary Habits and Physical Activity

Respondents reported consuming an average of 1.5 cups of fruit and 1.6 cups of vegetables daily, consistent with 2017 findings. However, respondents exposed to billboards consumed significantly more cups of fruit than those unexposed (1.7 and 1.3 cups, respectively). Similar to 2017 findings, black or African American respondents reported consuming significantly more average cups of fruit than white respondents (1.7 and 1.3 cups, respectively). As in 2017, respondents reported being too busy, not liking the taste, and expense as the top three barriers to consuming more fruits and vegetables. A majority (85%) of respondents reported that they drink water "2 or more times per day" and those exposed to any of the billboard messages were significantly more likely to report that they consume water "2 or more times per day" compared with those unexposed (92% and 78%, respectively). Close to 2017 findings, about one-third of respondents reported exercising 0-1 day (32%) or 2-3 days (33%) in the week before the survey. Lack of time was again reported as the most common barrier to increasing physical activity levels.

Conclusions

ACES successfully revised and relaunched its billboard social marketing campaign in 2018 that was recognized by over one-half of the surveyed target audience, a significant increase from 2017. Respondents exposed to the campaign reported engaging in healthier behaviors compared with those who were unexposed. Future recommendations include retaining core elements of the campaign and addressing barriers to healthy eating and physical activity.