

SNAP-Ed Webinar Series: Adapting SNAP-Ed to COVID-19

Webinar #2

Measuring and Evaluating Impact

August 4, 2020

University of Georgia SNAP-Ed

How do you ensure you're reaching qualifying SNAP-Ed participants via your on-line activities?

Eligibility is determined by the residential zip code of the participant and/or their participation in federal public assistance programs (e.g., SNAP, WIC, Free-or Reduced School Lunch and Breakfast, TANF, CACFP, Head Start, Medicaid, etc). If a participant's residential zip code falls 1) within a community where >50% of the population earn an income \leq 185% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) OR 2) within 1 mile of a qualifying school where at least 50% of the students receive free or reduced school lunch and breakfast programs, or the participant endorses receiving any federal public assistance, then the participant is deemed SNAP-Ed eligible in our system.

Can you say more about how you link eLearning to the food markets and food pick up?

Fulton Fresh Mobile Market was created to educate residents living in communities designated as "food deserts" on the importance of the consumption of fresh and in-season produce. Participants receive fresh produce after attending a nutrition education session. The nutrition education component of the program has been provided by UGA SNAP-Ed program assistants in the past with face to face interactive sessions. This year the program quickly made arrangements to provide the program as a curbside outdoors pick-up option. Participants are expected to complete one of the Food eTalk modules prior to attending one of the weekly distribution events. The UGA SNAP-Ed state office collaborates with the local county staff and provides the necessary documentation about users and respective evaluation measures.

When recruiting participants using social media platforms how do you determine them to be SNAP-Ed eligible? (for Food eTalk)

We geofence ads on Facebook and Google to individuals and zip codes falling within certain low-income ranges. Then, when a participant creates a profile on our website, we ensure eligibility using two criteria described above.

What are the retention rates for the Food eTalk and Food eTalk BetterU programs?

Here are some preliminary results from FFY2020:

- About 84% of people who create a profile on Foodtalk.org are SNAP-Ed eligible
- About 95% of eligible participants have started the modules.
- About 25% of users who start Food eTalk complete all 6 lessons.
- About 34% of users who start Food eTalk: Better U complete all 4 lessons.

I remember, during the first SNAP-Ed Connection session, that UGA mentioned that the Food eTalk intervention measures MT indicators - how does this work if post-surveys are being conducted after one session (as opposed to after multiple sessions, which would give participants time to change their behavior)?

We do have a pre-test/post-test survey incorporated into the Food eTalk original 6 series and we report on these data when we have partners who take a more prescribed approach to promoting eLearning such that participants complete lessons over several weeks. In these cases, we can get a true pre/post response. However, many of our participants have time (an hour or more) and motivation to complete the program in one sitting. In these cases, a pre/post design to assess behavior change does not make sense and is not valid. That's why we also incorporated short, post-lesson surveys after each module to assess changes in knowledge, intention, and self-efficacy related to our targeted behavioral outcomes.

How are you assuring that online participants meets the FPL guideline recommendations?

We check if they live in a zip code where >50% of the residents earn \leq 185% of FPL. A participant can also demonstrate eligibility by endorsing receipt of any federal public assistance program. Meeting one or the other criteria results in "eligible" status.

What is the demographic composition of the clients you are serving with this program?

About 84% of people who create a profile on Foodtalk.org are SNAP-Ed eligible by meeting one or two criteria described above. We have not yet calculated other demographics for this fiscal year, but in the past we have reported an average age of 43.2 ± 14.2 years, 74% female, 51% white, 31% black or African American, 4% Asian, 6% AIAN, 5% Hispanic/Latinx, 3% other race.

What 7 questions do you use? Are those questions validated for assessing all of the ST and MT outcomes you report on? If so, how?

At both pre- and post-test for Food eTalk, participants are asked how often they ate more than one kind of fruit (MT1c)/vegetable (MT1d), how often they drank water (MT1g), regular sodas (MT1h), other sugary beverages (MT1h), and low-fat milk (MT1i), and how often they read nutrition facts labels (MT2b). Some questions come directly from validated surveys such as the "Food Behavior Checklist" while others are modified versions of validated questions from the SNAP-Ed Framework and Interpretive guide. For example, we edited a question about sugary drinks to create the question, "How often do you drink fruit punch, fruit drinks, sweet tea or sports drinks?" since our formative research suggests a large proportion of SNAP-Ed eligible Georgians consume added sugar from these beverages.

We assess ST indicators with post-module surveys asking about changes in confidence and intention to perform various healthy behaviors. We have not validated any of those questions.

When participants completed the lessons at their own pace, what constituted the interactive portion of the lessons?

The lessons all have interactive components - all of which are asynchronous (they are not interactive with an educator in live-time). Participants engage in interactive learning games and activities - including selecting a healthier food item to move into a grocery bag, interactive food label games, interactive game-based multiple choice activities, interactive portion control, sugar measurement, and healthier 'small shifts' activities.

What platform is used for the eLearning Dashboard?

Our web developer created the entire application using Ruby on Rails web framework. The dashboard (seen only by website administrators) is Rails rendered, integrated with Google Charts API.

How many sessions do participants have to complete to be considered a "completer" or a "graduate" of Food eTalk?

A "graduate" of Food eTalk has completed either all 6 lessons of Food eTalk (original) or all 4 lessons of Food eTalk: Better U. We also track users who complete all 10 lessons making up both curricula. However, we designed the programs to be flexible and adaptive to the individual user's learning style and needs. We think any interaction with our eLearning modules is important and meaningful. This is one reason we evaluate each module individually.

What is the minimum amount of time between sessions for participant data to be included in measuring MT indicators? What percentage of participants fall into that category?

It varies depending on the partner we are working with. For example, with our Fulton Fresh Mobile Farmers Market Participants, we will sequester participants who completed the eLearning lessons over the course of at least 5 weeks this summer to conduct any pre/post analyses. Because of the variability in the way participants complete our lessons, we focus on short term indicators for our SNAP-Ed reporting.

Do you report participants outside GA in your SNAP-Ed reach numbers?

Not on EARS, but we do track this metric.

You mentioned that you did not get useful data from the 24-hour dietary recalls. Can you describe what you mean by that a little more?

The data were low quality in that very few food items were listed with little to no details on type of food products, amounts, cooking method, condiments used, etc.

How do you address bias in participant responses to before/after module questions if they are seeing all of those questions during the post-survey?

Great point. Any survey we create is subject to bias. We use retrospective pretest questions in many of our post-lesson surveys because while these types of questions are still subject to interviewer bias, there is research supporting their use to reduce response-shift bias in self-

report surveys. This is especially true for assessing self-reported knowledge, attitudes and skills changes resulting from an intervention.

How much of UGA's platform was developed pre-Covid19 lockdown? What was the development process for what we see now?

All of the Food eTalk and Food eTalk: Better U platform was developed pre-COVID19. These programs were not developed in response to 'shelter in place' guidelines - rather they were developed to reach participants who had challenges/barriers to attending live classes due to things like limitations in childcare, elder care, transportation, and variable work schedules that make it hard to attend synchronous in-person classes. It just so happens that the two programs are already perfectly situated to accommodate 'shelter in place' guidelines, nothing about the actual interactive lessons/classes has changed.

Who videos your lessons? Media?

For Food eTalk, our UGA SNAP-Ed team conducted cooking videos, in collaboration with a video / media specialist at the University of Georgia College of Education. For Food eTalk: Better U, we hired our own UGA SNAP-Ed videographer/media expert to conduct the cooking videos (along with our registered dietitian). For our augmenting "Just in Time" video series - this was a collaboration among UGA SNAP-Ed team, UGA Center for Learning, and a local video production company.

Has UGA experienced any difficulties with program delivery due to limited wifi access for participants, spotty connections, or limited internet literacy (particularly navigating food e talk platform)?

Certainly there have been issues with connectivity, as there is with any online platform - however, we hear of very few of these issues. We were very intentional in the design of Food eTalk and Food eTalk Better U as to ensure they didn't require excessive bandwidth to use. There is also a very rigorous 'start and stop' feature in both programs so that if someone does get bumped off the Internet, when s/he logs back on, the program starts back where they left off. We have found our participants are quite resourceful in their access to the Internet - and there are many options for free WiFi access at public spaces like libraries, town hall, and eateries such as McDonalds and larger grocery store chains such as Kroger and Publix. Both programs are intentionally designed for people with low internet literacy - and the biggest challenge we hear from participants in this regard are about logging in, remembering passwords, completing the "eligibility" survey -- but once participants can get into the program we hear of very few issues navigating the programs.

What are the sample sizes for your Qualtrics surveys?

Sample sizes range from hundreds to thousands of responses.

Are Food eTalk participants sent an email with survey link after the class to complete or do they complete the surveys as part of the virtual class at the end of the session?

All Food eTalk and Food eTalk: Better U surveys are administered in Qualtrics. Participants are automatically directed to the surveys once they complete each module and then are shuttled back to our website where they can continue eLearning.

Remote learners of our traditionally in-person class, Food Talk, are sent the survey right before or during the remote class depending on the agent's preference.

Isn't the eLearning program very tailored to the Southern/Georgian community and may not be suitable for states outside of the South?

Food eTalk and Food eTalk Better U are tailored to Georgian families - in that featured foods (i.e., sweet tea, collard greens) and recipes (i.e., cornbread, black eyed peas, collard greens) are typical of the South. Additionally, the voice over throughout the program has a Southern accent. However, it is not so tailored that people in other parts of the country wouldn't understand the content or be able to simply 'swap out' certain foods (i.e., examples of sweet tea swapped with soda, or collard greens swapped with kale or spinach). We are planning to enhance the lessons to make them less Southern-focused pending external funding, but in the meantime, we are confident lessons could be used across the US.

Where can we get copies of evaluation tools?

Here is the address for our demo site: <https://demo.foodtalk.org/?>

Would it be possible for UGA to share any outcomes evaluation reports? It would be great to see the data behind the evidence base.

We shared Food eTalk evaluation data in the SNAP-Ed Toolkit (available at <https://snapedtoolkit.org/interventions/programs/food-etalk/>). Our FFY2019 Infographic was also shared in the presentation.

May SNAP-Ed in other states use the Food eTalk Curriculum?

Yes

Could you describe the features/characteristics of the social marketing campaign and how it integrates/complements the eTalk initiative? Have you examined the added benefit, if any, of combining the 2 approaches, e.g., DE and SM?

We run a robust social marketing campaign using 4 social media platforms: print media, email, texting, and mass media. Much of our social marketing content enhances content we deliver through direct education (both in-person and online) and also connects our priority audience to many resources on our website. Once there, visitors to our site can view recipes, blog posts, search for SNAP-Ed resources in their area, and, of course, sign up to participate in our eLearning initiative. We are planning to examine the additive effect of combining approaches in the future. Thanks!

What is the cost to a state SNAP-Ed program for using the e-talk program from Georgia?

We encourage you to visit our demo site. For specific information about the cost for your state, please send us an email (Edda Z Cotto-Rivera: ecrivera@uga.edu and Jung Sun Lee: leejs@uga.edu) to let us know about your interest. We will be able to discuss your specific needs.

Do they have to be eligible for both of those indicators? Are they considered "eligible" if they live in a county with at least 50% of the county 185% below the FPL but don't enroll in government funded programs? or vis versa?

Participants only have to be eligible by one of the two criteria. In your example, both scenarios would result in a participant being eligible.

University of Minnesota SNAP-Ed

Is the direct education at a distance using the Cooking Matters curricula?

- Yes, we are using the full CM curriculum and following the CM protocol for delivery. It is direct ed.
- We are using a team teach approach, it is hands on and we are providing the groceries for each participant as is a requirement of the course.

What was the power for the correlation analysis?

- The powers of the correlation analysis were low (.52~.58) for key relationships (e.g. weight loss and engagement, pre-existing distance learning experiences and engagement).
- There were high powers of the correlations between tech issues and weight loss and between tech issues and engagement (.85 and .94 respectively.)

With the Zoom classes, did you post pre and post questions on-line with a link or how did you present this to the participant? Thanks

- Pre-survey data was collected via SEEDS.
- Qualtrics was used to collect post-survey data. The link to the survey was posted in the Zoom chat towards the end of the lesson, as well as sent out via email or text (using Remind or What'sApp) based on participant preference.
- There is potential to customize the registration questions for Zoom, but Qualtrics & SEEDS are more mobile friendly and we wanted to collect data related to learner engagement and technical issues after each lesson.

Are you willing to share the entire list you use of public assistance programs for eligibility?

Getting to know you survey question for Public Assistance programs:

Family Resources (✓ all that apply)

- SNAP (EBT Card, Food Support)
- MFIP (Minnesota Family Investment Program)
- Reservation Food Distribution
- *****
- NAPS (Nutrition Assistance Program for Seniors)
- SSI (Supplemental Security Income)
- Food Shelf/Soup Kitchen
- Head Start
- Government Assistance Programs (General Assistance, Medical Assistance, MN Supplemental Aid)
- Public/Subsidized Housing
- *****
- Free/Reduced School Meals
- WIC

What are you doing with series interventions that started but were not completed? Do you plan that you will be able to report anything on the reach, demographics for those participants in EARS?

- For DE classes since we have the demographics, we'll report as always - just won't be as many sessions.
- For PSE, I'm assuming we'll report any that were in the implementation phase during the year. Will be fewer to report this year.

What are some common positive/negative feedback from participants with online lessons?

- Negative
 - Downloading Zoom as an app on a mobile device presented some challenges for participants, but with support from staff these issues were resolved relatively quickly
 - Some participants initially struggled with muting/unmuting, but with some coaching this was also resolved quickly
 - Some participants missed certain elements of in-person classes, such as recipe tasting, passing around props, general interaction before & after classes with other participants

- Positive
 - Participants have commented on the increased flexibility online lessons can provide (eliminates barriers such as transportation)
 - Some participants have mentioned they were grateful that they could continue attending classes even after Minnesota received its stay at home order, and that they could login from anywhere
 - While on Zoom, educators could easily show examples of how to use items in their home in creative ways -- recipes with 5 ingredients or less, using cans or other cupboard items as weights, etc.
 - With a co-teaching model, participants could benefit from the expertise and knowledge of two educators, both from an education standpoint, as well as additional help and assistance with the technology
 - A couple of participants mentioned that learning how to use Zoom for the directed classes allowed them to start using Zoom for other purposes -- church, connecting with family, friends, etc.

Has either program tried working w/ teachers to incorporate lessons w/ their upcoming online/virtual education?

Our school-based project team is currently working on developing 3 options for the Go Wild with Fruits and Vegetables for teachers:

1. Zoom classes taught by our Educators
2. Face-to-face
3. Train the trainer