

SNAP-Ed Educators Combine Direct Nutrition Education with Community-Based Healthy Food Access Partnerships: Lessons Learned from two Minnesota Communities



Introduction

Following changes to 2014 USDA SNAP-Ed Guidance¹, University of Minnesota-Extension SNAP-Ed Educators seek to increase healthy choices in the community by combining direct nutrition education with policy, systems and environmental (PSE) approaches. Two case-studies implemented in partnership with MN Department of Health Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) and community-based agencies show promising results toward increasing food access and food skills for low-income participants.

Methods

SNAP-Ed Educators and partners worked across the Spectrum of Prevention to support multi-level changes to the food environment to increase food access, affordability and availability for low-income families.

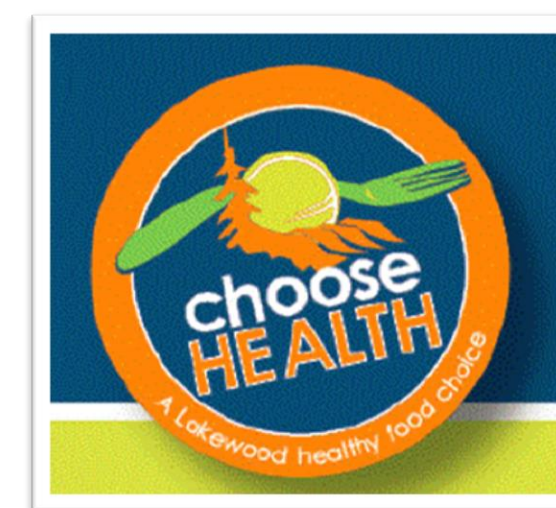
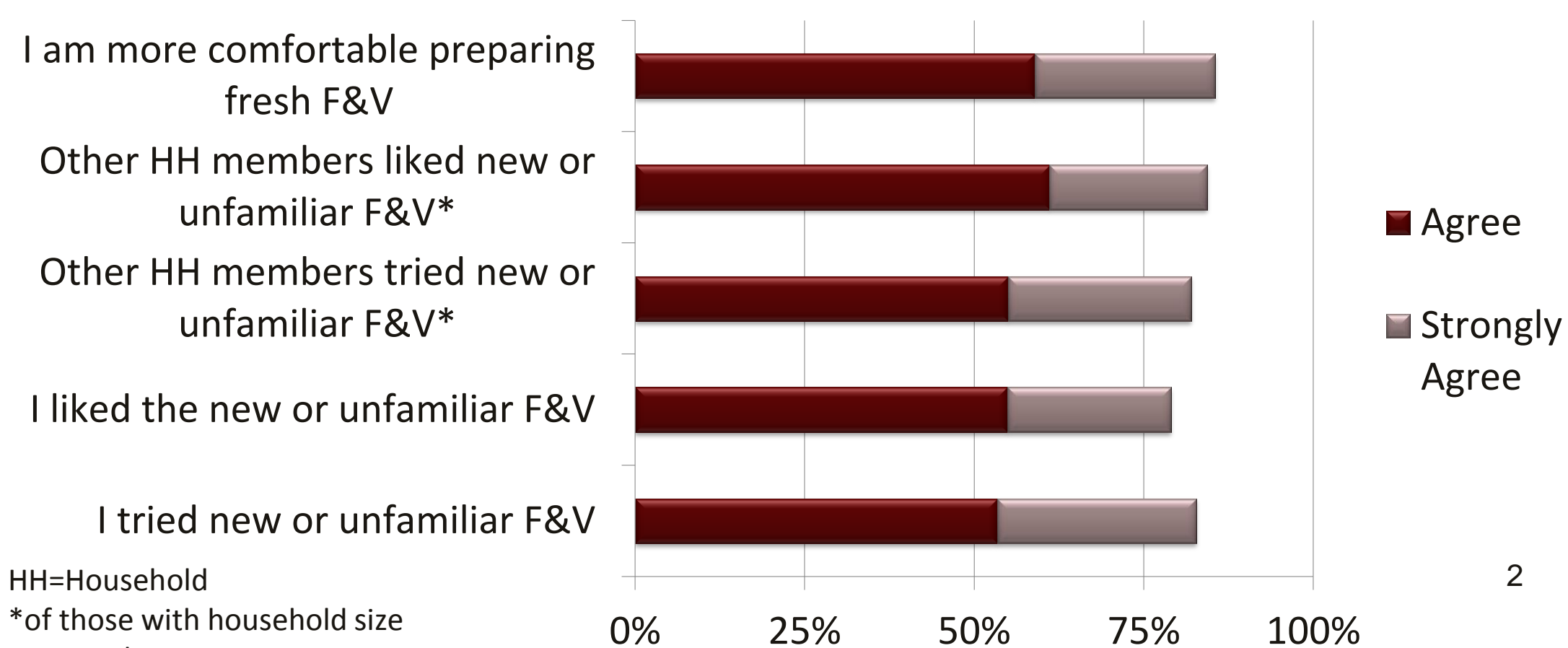
Conclusions

SNAP-Ed Educators leveraged partnerships across the Spectrum of Prevention to increase food access for low-income families in two communities. Strategic partnerships were created with SHIP, schools, hospitals, growers and community organizations to leverage assets and support for multi-level impact. Increased food access and availability was combined with nutrition and food skills education to help families increase consumption of fresh produce. Initial results suggest that direct education, combined with PSE changes at multiple levels have the potential to lead to positive behavior changes and better health outcomes for low-income populations.

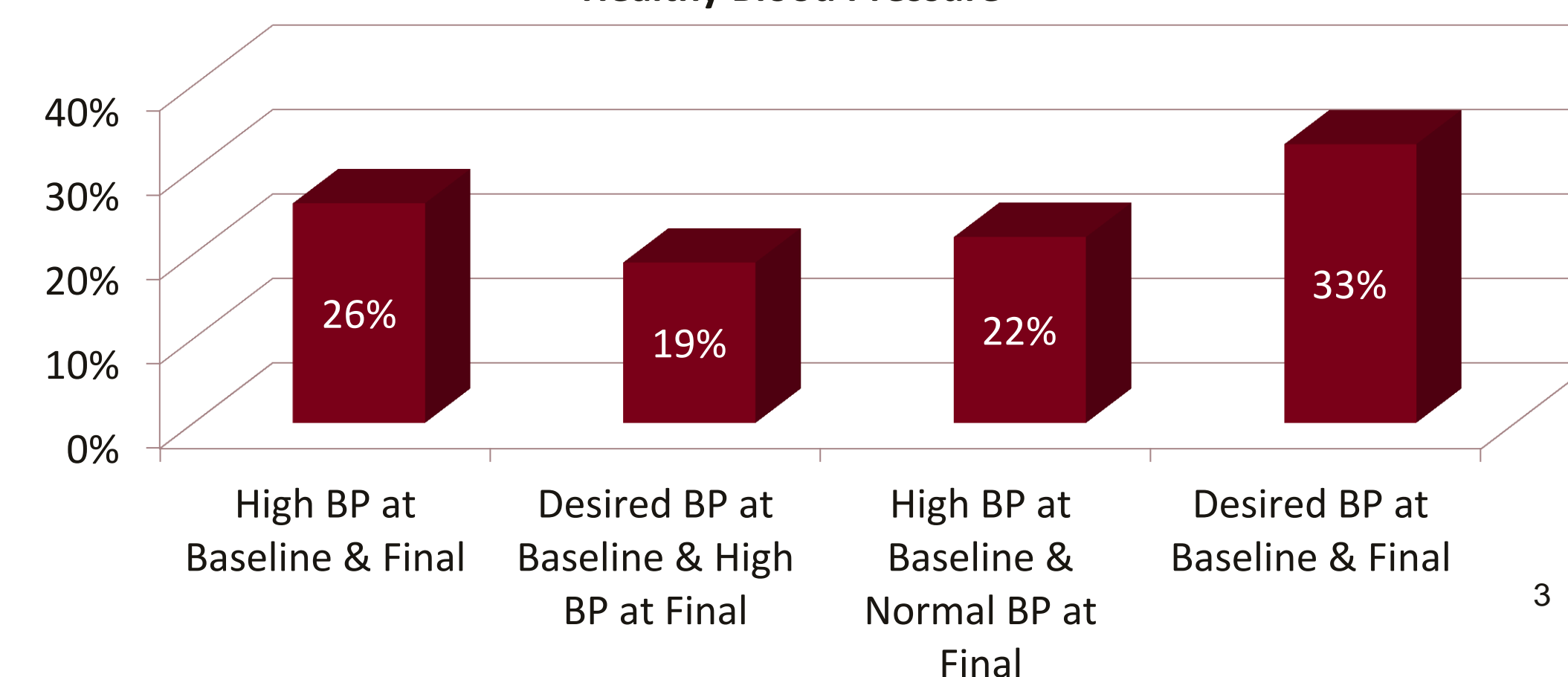


Healthy Communities Results:

Since receiving fresh produce (F&V=fruit and vegetable) from the food shelf...



Choose Health Results: 55% of Participants Improve (22%) or Maintain (33%) Healthy Blood Pressure



THE SPECTRUM OF PREVENTION



Sibley County FoodShare, Inc. has made accepting healthy foods a part of their mission to address hunger and food insecurity.

Sibley East School: garden is integrated into school curriculum, produce served and processed by food service staff.

Sibley County FoodShare, Inc.: has created new policies for what is accepted for donation, and donation drop-off practices to accommodate fresh items.

Healthy Communities Partners: UMN Extension SNAP-Ed, Public Health for Meeker, McLeod and Sibley Counties, Sibley East High School, Sibley County FoodShare Inc., Community-Based Organizations .

SNAP-Ed staff provide training to food shelf volunteers on how to encourage clients to take and use fresh produce.

Community organizations purchase CSA's from the school to donate to the food shelf. Students' awareness of hunger, food insecurity and health has increased.

SNAP-Ed Educator provides nutrition and cooking classes to food shelf clients.

Choose Health possible future policies under consideration: require physicians to perform hunger screenings, creation of fruit and vegetable prescriptions, and addition of brick and mortar food shelf to the hospital.

Lakewood Health provides hunger screenings during patient visits. CSA's are distributed during farmers market hours provided by SPROUT to maximize access to fresh, locally grown produce.

Partners: UMN Extension SNAP-Ed, Todd County Public Health, Region 5 Development Commission, SPROUT, Lakewood Health, Sprout, Hunger Free MN, City of Staples, Prairie Bay.

Lakewood Health providers are given support to conduct food insecurity screenings and encouraged to refer patients to the Choose Health program.

SNAP-Ed Educators demonstrate healthy recipes using CSA produce during CSA pick-up hours. Lakewood Health employees encouraged to purchase shares for donation and personal use to reduce stigma associated with program.

SNAP-Ed Educators teach nutrition and cooking classes to CSA participants, and enroll qualifying participants in I Can Prevent Diabetes classes.

References
 1 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education Guidance. (2014). Retrieved September 25, 2015, from <http://snap.nal.usda.gov/snap/Guidance/FinalFY2016SNAP-EdGuidance.pdf>
 2 Bachman, Mary, MS CHES and Mary Krentz M.Ed. SNAP Ed Partnership With The Sibley County Food Shelf. MN Department of Health Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) and Sibley County SHIP. PowerPoint presented January 13, 2015. University of Minnesota Extension SNAP-Ed.
 3 Stockdill, Stacey. Choose Health: December 2014 Update. EnSearch for Hunger-Free Minnesota, 2015. Print. A Health And Hunger Project Funded By Hunger-Free Minnesota In Partnership With Region Five Development Commission, Lakewood Health System, SPROUT, Todd County, University Of Minnesota Extension, Prairie Bay And Ensearch.
 4 Valdivinos, Erica. 'The Spectrum Of Prevention: Developing A Comprehensive Approach To Injury Prevention'. Preventioninstitute.org. N.p., 2015. Web. 25 Sept. 2015.
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