



# Participant Outcomes Related to Five Key Nutrition Messages

## MN Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education (SNAP-Ed): 2009 Evaluation



Trina Barno, M.P.H.; Kathleen Lovett, M.Ed.; Shelley Sherman, M.P.H.; G. Ali Hurtado; KyuJin Yon, M.A.; Abby Gold, Ph.D.

### Behavior & Knowledge Changes

▪ **Physical activity**

For adult courses, a median of about 65% of participants reported behavior changes in their physical activity practices.

▪ **Promoting enrollment in Food Support (SNAP)**

This message was directed only to adults. No major changes resulted; most participants were already enrolled in SNAP.

▪ **Fruits and Vegetables**

Most adults and youth participants (60% to 100%) in the courses documented positive knowledge or behavior changes. With the teen participants, results were somewhat lower with 50% or more showing changes.

▪ **Whole Grains**

For adults, youth and teens, 50% or more of the participants reported positive changes.



▪ **Low-Fat or No-Fat Calcium Rich Food and Beverages**

The distribution of responses in this key message was high for knowledge and behavior changes. Changes in knowledge revealed high scores (80%).

### Effects of Class Size



The total number of participants was statistically related to the outcomes for intake of fruits and vegetables and calcium-rich foods.

**That is, when there were fewer participants in a class, more people showed positive outcomes.**

### Methods & Key Messages

In 2009, five nutrition messages were emphasized to all participants:

- Increase fruit and vegetable intake
- Increase physical activity
- Increase whole grain foods
- Increase low-fat calcium-rich foods
- Enroll in Food Support (SNAP)

Exit surveys were issued to :

**8,247 SNAP-Ed program participants from 585 courses who:**

- attended a series of two or more sessions
- met basic literacy criteria



Exit Surveys assessed **gains in behavior** for those who participated in five or more sessions.

Exit Surveys assessed **gains in knowledge** for those who participated in 2-4 sessions.



### Effects of Hours of Instruction

Pearson correlation analyses were conducted to examine the relationships between the number of hours of instruction and educational gains in the five key messages at alpha level = .05.



The results indicated that **when participants have a greater number of hours of instruction, they report more positive outcomes in certain key messages.**

The total number of instructional hours was significantly correlated with outcomes for **increasing physical activity** for adults (r=.23) teens (r=.41) and youth (r=.16).

In addition, for adults, the total number of instructional hours was significantly related to outcomes in increasing consumption of **whole grains** (r=.24) and **low-fat calcium-rich foods** (r=.25).

**The findings lead to important questions:**



- Did these concepts require more hours of instruction for explanation/ demonstration in order to elicit participant understanding?
- Was time needed for practice or to influence motivation levels to predicate behavior change?