

2021 VIRGINIA SNAP-ED ANNUAL REPORT



SNAP-ED PROGRAM OVERVIEW

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A LETTER FROM VIRGINIA SNAP-ED LEADERSHIP

Dear Stakeholders,

Our continued success lies with you – our partners. Thank you for your support of Virginia SNAP-Ed. We appreciate all the ways that you work with us.

We also want to applaud our employees and volunteers for their continued dedication to making a difference in their communities and adapting to the changing landscape of community programming.

This past year was certainly marked by ongoing adjustments as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, yet we prevailed and experienced a number of successes that are highlighted in this annual report, including:

- Positive behavior changes among youth and adult participants as a result of participation in SNAP-Ed comprehensive nutrition education;
- Innovative cooking classes for teens through video-conferencing;
- Launch of new educational curricula, such as Summer Foods, Summer Moves, and resources, such as educational videos and the “What to do with....?” and the “Look and Cook” series;
- A statewide assessment of food security among individuals with low incomes to inform SNAP and SNAP-Ed activities;
- Distribution of vegetable seeds, basic container gardening supplies, and gardening and nutrition education for both youth and adults in SNAP-Ed eligible communities and partner sites;
- Use of quick response (QR) codes as a nutrition education outreach strategy at partner food pantries;
- Representation on the Governor’s Children’s Cabinet’s sub-committee on Nutrition and Food Security Issues; and
- Ongoing support, coaching, and training for employees.

We also completed a needs assessment on physical activity programs and initiatives and continued to monitor program and fiscal integrity and provide technical assistance to employees as needed.

We are proud of our accomplishments this past year, in spite of the many challenges we faced. We look forward to building upon these successes to reach more eligible individuals next year.

Thank you for your support.



Elena Serrano, PhD
FNP Director



Gina Kindred, EdD
Associate Director of
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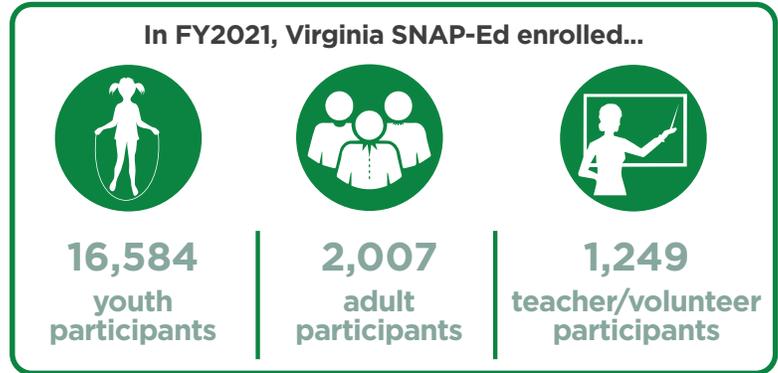


Sarah Misyak, PhD, MPH
Assistant Director;
Support Coordination,
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SNAP-ED PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This overview highlights key achievements from FY 2021. Virginia SNAP-Ed continued to promote healthy eating and physical activity with SNAP-Ed eligible youth, adults, and communities through a combination of peer- and volunteer-led nutrition education, social media and marketing, and policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) change initiatives. While FY 2020 was marked by rapid change and adaptation to conditions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, FY 2021 was characterized by a focus on program quality and supporting staff through adaptations, barriers, and opportunities arising from continued social distancing measures and restrictions on in-person programming in some locales.



ADAPTATIONS IN PROGRAMMING

In FY 2020, Virginia SNAP-Ed transitioned all in-person programming to remote-only programs in March of 2020. Additionally, employees moved to tele-work status, through which they were required to submit weekly tele-work logs and participate in bi-weekly video or phone meetings to check-in on programming status. Many employees began to transition back to a standard, in-person work status with the tele-work option ending in September of 2020 for all employees (except those with an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) five day/week tele-work exemption). At that time, in-person programming resumed in addition to remote programming. (See glossary of terms.)

Glossary of Terms

In-Person Programming:

Programming held face-to-face with participants prior to implementation of social distancing measures. Paper evaluation forms were used.

Remote Programming:

Live (synchronous) programming held either via videoconferencing or over the phone with participants. At least two adults were required to be present in a Zoom room for youth programming in line with Virginia Tech and Virginia Cooperative Extension guidelines.

Virtual Programming:

Self-guided (asynchronous) online programming in the form of videos or online modules that participants could complete at a time and pace convenient to them.

A self-guided, virtual (asynchronous) nutrition education opportunity from North Carolina State University (NCSU) EFNEP had been implemented as an opportunity to reach clients who did not have the capacity or preference to engage in live (synchronous) remote programming. The NCSU program was phased out as an option in the Summer of 2021. Virginia SNAP-Ed is exploring additional options for asynchronous programming that participants can complete at a time and pace convenient to them and that is user friendly, covers the basics of nutrition education, and has English and Spanish materials.

Virginia SNAP-Ed administration continuously developed and updated education and reporting guidelines for programming, as opportunities to resume in-person programming grew throughout the state. These education and reporting guidelines documents included information on the type of

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education available per age group, the length of lessons, evaluation and reporting guidelines, and additional considerations (such as logistics for food experiences).

In summer of 2021, food experiences were resumed based on guidance from Virginia Cooperative Extension food safety specialists. A training on conducting safe food experiences was held for all staff. Food experiences remained optional (not mandatory, as they were prior to COVID-19). Peer Educators and SNAP-Ed Agents could offer food experiences if all food safety guidelines and precautions could be followed (e.g. individual dispensing of food) and they had endorsement from their partner site.

**Number of
Virginia SNAP-Ed
Peer Educators**
*As of September 3, 2021

Youth
15.5 FTEs

Adult
18

Youth/Adult
2

Sample Education and Reporting Guidelines for SNAP-Ed Peer Educators working with youth

INITIATIVES PEER-LED NUTRITION EDUCATION (LEARN, LIVE, PLAY)

NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR SNAP-ELIGIBLE YOUTH

Comprehensive Programs

Due to continued restrictions with youth programming due to COVID-19 and staffing shortages, the number of graduates from youth programs declined by 66.7% from FY 2020, when the majority of youth participated in Virginia SNAP-Ed programming in October 2019 through February of 2020, prior to the implementation of social distancing measures to halt the spread of COVID-19. Despite these challenges, Virginia SNAP-Ed still graduated 12,125 youth from comprehensive programming (six lessons or more). Youth in grades 3-5 significantly increased fruit and vegetable (MT1) and milk consumption, decreased sugar-sweetened beverage (SSB) consumption, and increased their frequency of participation in physical activity (MT3) from pre to post-participation in Virginia SNAP-Ed. Additionally, youth in grades 6-12 also significantly increased their fruit and vegetable (MT1), healthy snack, breakfast and low-fat or nonfat dairy consumption. They also reported drinking fewer SSBs following participation in Virginia SNAP-Ed programming, increased physical activity frequency (MT3), and improved hand washing before eating or preparing food (MT4).



SNAP-Ed Youth Education and Reporting Guidelines (August 16, 2021 – September 31, 2022)			
All programs must follow FNP and VCE guidelines for in-person and remote programming and food experiences. Only in-person and remote education are permitted. Food experiences (hands-on food preparation, smart sampling, and food demonstrations) are optional and subject to change.			
Target Audience: SNAP-Eligible Youth			
Type of Education	Participants	Curricula & Approaches	Evaluation & Reporting
Short-Term Education (< 20 minutes)	K - 12 In-person	Short-term education is recommended to maintain teaching contacts and for marketing and recruiting for comprehensive education to include community public health events. Ex: Mini-Lessons in-person (only), Garden to Go mini-grants	Report reach in Indirect Activities module of PEARS No duplicated contacts allowed toward short-term contacts Short-term contacts forms are required *Electronic and written publications and marketing and recruitment brochures cannot be counted as short-term contacts.
PSE Supports	Eligible students in schools or afterschool programs (in-person)	Physical Activity Challenge Nutrition Challenge Custody of care must be assumed by a group leader	Report in Indirect Activities module of PEARS Report in PSE module of PEARS
Evaluation Methods			
Comprehensive Education* 6+ Lessons, 6 Sessions (max 2 lessons/week)	K - 12	All curricula and delivery methods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group Attendance Form 4-H FNP Youth Enrollment Form K-12 Lesson Log In addition to the following -
	K - 2	Pick a Better Snack - In-Person (min of 60 minutes: 45 minutes instruction + 15 minutes food experience or email distribution of handouts to students)	Teacher observation form in paper-copy or fillable pdf via email
	K - 2	Pick a Better Snack - Remote** (min of 30 minutes)	Post-only teacher observation form via email via PEARS or fillable PDF
	3 - 5	Choose Health - In-Person (min of 60 minutes: 45 minutes instruction + 15 minutes food experience, distribution of Choose Health worksheets, or email distribution of newsletters to students)	Grades 3 - 5 matched SNAP-Ed pre- and post paper copy
		Choose Health - Remote** (min of 30 minutes)	Grades 3 - 5 matched SNAP-Ed pre- and post paper copy OR emailed survey (PEARS)

Summer Food, Summer Moves

The USDA Summer Food Summer Moves program was launched in summer 2021. It is designed for summer feeding sites. The curriculum was delivered in-person in a variety of settings. The program focuses on using music, games, art, and movement to encourage more fruits and vegetables, choosing water as the beverage of choice, moving, and limiting screen time.



Moving More during Summer Food, Summer Moves Training (red pepper, green pepper similar to red light, green light)

NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR SNAP-ELIGIBLE ADULTS

In FY 2021, similar declines were seen for adult programming as for youth programming. A total of 2,007 adults graduated from a comprehensive series (six lessons or more) delivered by Peer Educators. This was a 43.6% decrease from FY 2020. While there were fewer overall participants, behavior change improved significantly. Based on a sample of 523 caregiver of young children who complete a pre-post evaluation, there were statistically significant improvements in food resource management behaviors, such as shopping with a grocery list and planning shopping to avoid food waste (MT2). There were also significant improvements in consumption of fruit and vegetables (MT1); whole grain, dairy and lean protein consumption; and decreases in SSB consumption. There were also statistically significant improvements in frequency of physical activity and increased limiting of sedentary behaviors (MT3). Perceptions of the accessibility and affordability of foods and places to be physically active also increased following the lessons. One participant explained how they made healthier decisions following participation in Virginia SNAP-Ed programming, though decisions still were shaped by their financial situation:

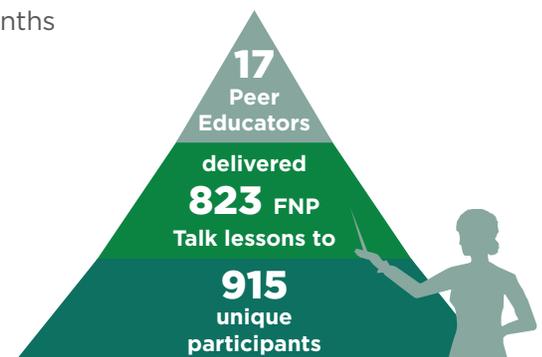
“This Eat Smart-Being Active program is a blessing. Thank you for showing me how to help my family be more healthier. We are moving more every day to improve our activity and are eating more fruits and vegetables. On occasions we have whole grains and lean protein when finances allow.”

FNP Talks

Virginia SNAP-Ed developed FNP Talks for FY 2020 as a method to check-in with participants and deliver education in short lessons by phone or Zoom. Each Talk also contained information on nutrition assistance programs and emergency food systems. Topics included:

- Older Adults – Staying Safe and Connected during the Winter Months
- Cooking and Physical Activity Activities for When Kids at Home
- Shopping with Limited Options and Using Shelf-Stable Foods
- What You Need to Know about Online Shopping
- How to Start a Container Garden at Home
- Food Storage and Safely Freezing Foods

Peer Educators continued to offer FNP Talks in FY 2021, with several new topics developed.



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Additionally, Virginia SNAP-Ed drafted four core FNP Talks lessons for a comprehensive FNP Talks curriculum. The core topics include nutrition, food resource management, food safety, and physical activity. A trial of the core curriculum and testing FNP Talks as a comprehensive series will be completed in FY 2022.

In the Kitchen

In FY 2020, Virginia SNAP-Ed experienced success with Teen Cuisine @ Home, the cooking-skills based program for adolescents that was adapted for remote delivery, through which youth participants were provided cooking and recipe kits through funding provided by the National 4-H Council from the Walmart Foundation to Virginia 4-H. That curriculum as adapted to focus on parents and their children for the new, cooking skills-based curriculum, *In the Kitchen*. *In the Kitchen* was delivered remotely by Peer Educator partners with one Peer Educator working with adults and one working with youth. SNAP-eligible family units were recruited and the curriculum was piloted between April and June of 2021. Using non-SNAP-Ed funds, participating families were provided with cooking and recipe kits. Kits included basic cooking utensils and supplies as well as food for recipes included in this interactive and hands-on curriculum. Peer Educator partners delivered a minimum of eight, one-hour sessions of remote *In the Kitchen* via Zoom video-conferencing that included cooking instruction, food safety, food resource management, and nutrition information.

In the Kitchen provided an experience for parents and their children that the whole family could enjoy and look forward to. Youth and parents learned cooking skills while preparing and eating meals together.

The collage features three main posters from the Virginia Cooperative Extension Family Nutrition Program:

- Older Adults: Staying Safe and Connected During Winter Months - Quick Tips**: Includes sections for "Lower Your Risk" (wear a mask, social distance), "Follow MyPlate" (healthy eating is part of a strong immune system), and "Staying Connected" (reach out to friends, video chat).
- Slow Cooker and One Pot Meals - Quick Tips**: Provides "Slow Cooker Meal Ideas" such as Stuffed Apples & Sweet Potatoes, Navy Bean Soup, Lentil Soup, Vegetarian Steak, Baked Beans, Italian Bean Soup, and Shepherd's Pie. It also includes "Pro Tips" and "Oven recipe to slow cooker conversion?".
- Screen Time (computer, tv, smart video games) can lead to:** Lists symptoms like Depression, Anxiety, and Lack of physical activity, and suggests to "Monitor Screen Time" by taking breaks to go outside, cook, or get active.



Figure 1. *In the Kitchen* Participants

VOLUNTEER-LED NUTRITION EDUCATION

The Volunteer-Led Nutrition Education initiative is coordinated by SNAP-Ed Agents. In FY 2021, Virginia SNAP-Ed saw a decrease in the number of SNAP-Ed Agents down to 10 from a high of 16. Despite this decline in SNAP-Ed Agents, the number of trained volunteers increased to 1,249 and the number of volunteer hours increased to 5,633, a 71.8% and 73.6% increase from FY 2020 respectively (see Table below). The number of youth served by SNAP-Ed trained volunteers in FY 2021 decreased by 63.1% from 14,215 in FY 2020 (mostly from prior to March 2020) to 5,244 in FY 2021. The number of volunteers also increased from FY 2019 in which the number was 682, though the number of volunteer hours has not increased back to the 6,299 in FY 2019. The number of youth served by SNAP-Ed trained volunteers has also not reached the FY 2019 level of over 50,000 youth.



SNAP-Eligible Audiences Reached by SNAP-Ed Trained Volunteers					
	Volunteers	Volunteer Hours	Youth Served By SNAP-Ed Trained Volunteers	Indirect Contacts	Indirect Media Contacts
Program Totals	1,249	5,633	5,244 enrolled 3,164 graduated	31,970	105,212

In FY 2022, Virginia SNAP-Ed Agents plan to increase the number of partnerships with early care and education facilities to reach pre-K populations through volunteer-led nutrition education.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR VIRGINIA SNAP-ED AGENTS TO INCORPORATE A RACIAL EQUITY LENS WITHIN THEIR PROGRAMMING

With the goal of incorporating a racial equity lens into Virginia SNAP-Ed operations and programming, Virginia SNAP-Ed formed a monthly journal club for SNAP-Ed Agents who facilitate PSE initiatives within their communities and also offer volunteer-led nutrition education to create a space where racial equity and its implications for SNAP-Ed programming could be discussed regularly. The creation of the monthly discussions was prompted by SNAP-Ed Agent feedback requesting open discussions about the 2020 racial justice protests and observed systemic racism. A journal club provided a structured opportunity for monthly conversations on topics including reviewing the APHA series on race and public health, providing constructive recommendations for modifying the Dietary Guidelines for Americans to be more inclusive and culturally relevant, and Trauma Informed Nutrition Information. The journal club also included a training on holding difficult conversations with opportunities for SNAP-Ed Agents to practice having difficult conversations around race and other diversity, equity and inclusion topics. SNAP-Ed Agents were asked six months after the start of the conversations to provide feedback on the conversation series and suggested changes. SNAP-Ed Agents were overwhelmingly positive about the series, the benefits of having a regular conversation on this topic for them as they work with partners, and the desire to continue the conversation. Virginia SNAP-Ed is currently considering how to apply this approach for use by other employees.

POLICY, SYSTEMS, AND ENVIRONMENTAL (PSE) CHANGE INITIATIVES (LEARN, SHOP, LIVE, AND PLAY)

The PSE change initiative focus remained on schools with a free and reduced lunch rate of 50% or higher, SNAP-authorized stores and farmers markets.

Policy, Systems, and Environmental Changes by Setting Type				
Setting	Changes			Potential Reach (n)
	Policy	Systems	Environmental	
Before and after-school programs	8	7	9	92
Community and recreation centers	3	12	9	156
Community organizations	4	9	7	58
Early care and education facilities	9	17	9	905
Farmers markets	2	14	10	61,835
Food assistance sites, food banks, and food pantries	3	11	14	2,110
Gardens	0	2	3	5,641
Health care clinics and hospitals	0	10	13	27,516
Large food stores and retailers (4+ registers)	0	4	6	46,549
Schools (K-12, elementary, middle, and high)	27	101	66	42,683
Small food stores (<= 3 registers)	0	10	13	54,190
Youth Organizations (e.g. Boys or Girls Clubs, YMCA)	0	4	6	57
Total	56	201	165	241,792

Potential reach was determined using zip code tabulation data (farmers markets, health care clinics and hospitals, large food stores, and small food stores), Virginia Department of Education statistics (schools), and site estimates of individuals served (food assistance sites). Direct tabulation of participants was used in other settings. Promotion refers to posting posters and flyers.

Farmers Markets

A total of five dietetic students were hired and trained to support a variety of Virginia SNAP-Ed activities for summer 2021. This year's focus is:

- Supporting online outreach marketing for SNAP-authorized farmers markets
- Creating blog content for social media use
- Tabling of communities at farmers markets, libraries, and other locations with high proportions of SNAP participants without sampling/nutrition education to encourage SNAP shoppers to go to farmers markets
- Adapting current recipes to be more visually appealing (Look and Cook)
- Assisting with ground-truthing of farmers market and food access mapping



Virginia SNAP-Ed also completed its fifth year of the Farmers Market Manager Certification Program, which continued with adjustments made in FY 2020 to accommodate social distancing requirements. This program continues to be instrumental in providing Virginia farmers market managers with the skills necessary to attract and serve SNAP shoppers and is key to Virginia SNAP-Ed's strong partnership with the Virginia Farmers Market Association. The Virginia Farmers Market Association received a grant for implementation in FY 2022 with funds to cover the cost of a Farmers Markets Market Manager Certification Program 2.0, which will cover additional topics relevant to farmers market managers.

Food Banks and Food Pantries

Virginia SNAP-Ed partnered with the Food Bank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore during the past quarter to pilot the use of quick response (QR) codes as a client outreach strategy. Three food pantry sites and two food hubs were selected for the pilot program. Each site received 100 specially designed magnets to distribute to their clients as well as A-Frame boards that also displayed the QR code information for clients. The QR code directed clients to a specially designed website, Nourish, that housed nutrition education, physical activity resources, and community specific information. During the 3-month pilot period, the Nourish website received 251 overall visits with 150 of those visits being from unique users. Of the unique views, 35% were from the QR code. Virginia SNAP-Ed is actively collecting feedback from clients on acceptability of the website content and from site staff/volunteers on initiative implementation. From the initial findings, this method of outreach could be a great resource for connecting our target population to educational content and community aid moving forward.

Gardens to Go

In FY 2021, Virginia SNAP-Ed continued its Gardens-to-Go initiative. The goal of this program was to offer barrier-free and contactless access to fresh vegetables and increase accessibility to SNAP-Ed programming to meet local needs, especially for eligible participants who could not access online SNAP-Ed educational resources. The Gardens to Go PSE program involved purchasing and distributing vegetable seeds, basic container gardening supplies, and gardening and nutrition education for both youth and adults in SNAP-Ed eligible communities and partner sites. Virginia SNAP-Ed implemented these efforts through a \$250 mini-grant program in which Peer Educators who typically offered direct education could apply. A total of 33 grants were implemented in FY 2021. Overall, Gardens-to-Go was well-received and easily implemented. Additionally, many Peer Educators reported that Gardens-to-Go served as a recruitment tool for other SNAP-Ed programs, with many recipients enrolling in direct education. It also increased visibility of Virginia SNAP-Ed as a resource within the community/setting. Due to the strong positive response from partners and participants, Virginia SNAP-Ed will continue to offer the Gardens-to-Go program in the future. In FY 2022, mini-grant recipients will be encouraged to layer Garden to Go programs with comprehensive, SNAP-Ed direct education opportunities.



Nutrition and physical activity challenges were offered for the second year to schools, early care and education facilities, before and after school programs and community recreation centers to encourage healthy eating and physical activity for 4 weeks among youth. A total of 63 challenges were delivered in FY 2021 reaching 2,673 youth.

Physical Activity PSEs

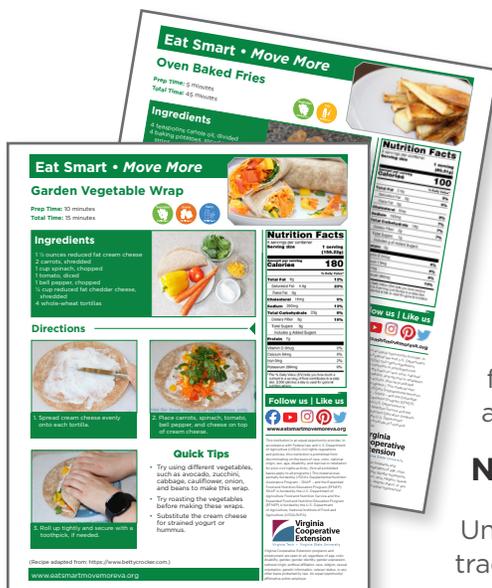
A needs assessment was conducted in FY2021 to inform physical activity programs and initiatives. Surveys and focus group discussions with SNAP-Ed Agents identified preferences for the following physical activity PSEs:

- School-based and integrated direct education and PSE interventions for youth
- Built environment improvements to improve access to walking and biking infrastructure
- Signage and prompts for physical activity
- Parks Rx and worksite wellness programs with community partners
- Social marketing to promote physical activity and support physical activity interventions in local communities

NEW RESOURCES

How to Cook....

One of the biggest partners for Virginia SNAP-Ed during COVID has been food pantries. A common request from food pantries to Virginia SNAP-Ed was education to encourage the consumption of unfamiliar produce that food pantries had in excess. As a result, Virginia SNAP-Ed developed a series of “What to do with...” handouts for venison, butternut squash, spaghetti squash, and sweet potatoes. The handouts included information on processing, nutrition information, and simple nutritious recipes.



Look and Cook Recipe Series

In FY 2021, Virginia SNAP-Ed launched a Look and Cook recipe series designed to increase competencies to prepare low-cost, healthy recipes, for non-cooks and individuals with low food literacy. This series of recipes was designed for use with food pantry partners but is in the process of being expanded for use by FNP participants at all settings. Visuals are provided of each step of the recipes. Visuals of the finished dishes are intentionally designed to be realistic and attainable for individuals with limited cooking skills and experience. To date, 25 look and cook recipes have been completed.

Navigating the Holidays with COVID

Understanding that with COVID restrictions limiting traditional holiday traditions and gatherings, Virginia SNAP-Ed expanded its FNP Talks, which are short, casual conversations, about 5-20 minutes in length written in a script format, to include holiday themes (including the following):

- COVID Thanksgiving: Celebrating Safely During the Pandemic
- Saving Money and Eating Healthfully Thanksgiving 2020
- Celebrating Winter Holidays Safely During the Pandemic
- Eating Smart and Moving More During the Winter Holidays

These topics addressed how to prepare turkey safely, turkey alternatives, Thanksgiving recipe ideas, CDC recommendations for hosting and attending gatherings, holiday recipes on a budget, simple ways to stay active, healthy meal hacks, ways to stay safe and low risk activities, and virtual holiday ideas.

Recipe handouts were also developed. These featured healthy, low-cost recipes using shelf stable foods that could be received at food pantries. Some of the featured recipes included glazed carrots, crustless pumpkin pie, winter greens salad, and fresh cranberry sauce. All materials were available in English and Spanish.

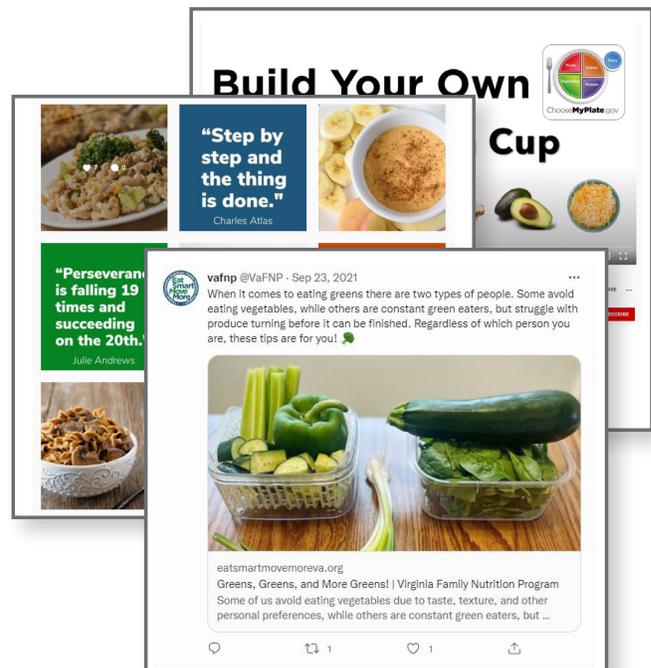
Social media supports for the holidays included blogs on our eatsmartmovemoreva.org website, holiday inspired recipes, walkable holiday light tours as a fun, outdoor activity, staying healthy and happy during the holiday season, a 20-minute Thanksgiving workout, and healthy ingredient swaps.



SOCIAL MEDIA AND MARKETING (LIVE AND SHOP)

In FY 2021, Virginia SNAP-Ed shifted its online presence from FY 2020 to support programming and on-going behavior change for participants with educational content in online platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, the eatsmartmovemoreva.org website, and electronic newsletters for potential and past participants. While reach from Facebook and impressions from Twitter decreased from FY 2020, Pinterest impressions and page views from the website increased.

	4,037 followers	68,480 reach	4.7% engagement rate
	580 followers	29,737 impressions	0.5% engagement rate
	910 followers	15,878 reach	5.7% engagement rate
	110 followers	116,761 impressions	0.98% engagement rate
	127,801 unique page views	4,587 referrals	1,837 social referrals
	6327 subscribers	9.4% average open rate	0.7% average click rate
	3,672 views	149 hours watch time	16 new subscribers
			39,479 impressions
			2.1% clickthrough rate



PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHT: GOVERNOR'S CHILDREN'S CABINET

Virginia SNAP-Ed (Meredith Ledlie-Johnson) was honored to be an active participant in the Children's Cabinet's subcommittee on Nutrition and Food Security Issues from FY 2020 to FY 2021. Chaired by Virginia's First Lady, the Cabinet's members included the Secretaries of Agriculture and Forestry, Education, Health and Human Services, Public Safety, and the Lieutenant Governor. The goal of the Children's Cabinet regarding nutrition and food security was to ensure that Virginia's children have consistent, reliable access to healthy foods. To achieve this, three main objectives were: expanding access to nutrition food and decreasing food insecurity in children, expanding access to nutritious food and decreasing food insecurity in pregnant women, and promoting community-based food systems to increase access to healthy, local foods. Specific ways that Virginia SNAP-Ed contributed included providing statewide data on which farmers markets accept EBT for the FeedVA website and mapping project as well as creating strong partnerships with Virginia Fresh Match and the new Virginia Food Access Incentive Fund grantees to provide technical assistance with outreach to the SNAP population.



STATEWIDE FOOD SECURITY ASSESSMENT

In partnership with the Virginia Department of Social Services, two separate statewide surveys were conducted in Virginia to assess food security status of individuals/households with lower income. The findings highlighted that self-reported food insecurity drastically increased as a result of COVID-19 with higher rates among households with children and high levels of very low food security (characterized by skipping meals and experiencing hunger). SNAP did not protect against food insecurity.

Food Security Status of Households with Children

Food Security Status of Households with Children in VA March, April 2020 (n=617)	
Food Security Status	n (%*)
Very Low	275 (44.6%)
Low	145 (23.5%)
Marginal	76 (12.3%)
High	121 (19.6%)

Food Security Status of Households with Children in VA Nov., Dec. 2020 (n=514)	
Food Security Status	n (%*)
Very Low	239 (53.1%)
Low	96 (21.3%)
Marginal	54 (12.0%)
High	61 (13.6%)

The results confirm that families with children should continue to be the focus of nutrition education in Virginia. They also highlight the importance of reinforcing food resource management within programs and referrals to emergency food systems, as needed.

VIRGINIA SNAP-ED EVALUATION REPORTS COMPLETED FOR THIS REPORTING YEAR

SNAP-Ed Evaluation Report Completed for this Reporting Year							
Delivery Mode	Settings	Key Project Objective(s)	Target Audience	Check all Evaluation Types for Which Reports Are Included			
				FE	PE	OE	IE
Peer-Led Nutrition Education	Learn	Nutrition and Health	SNAP-Eligible Adult	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peer-Led Nutrition Education	Live	Nutrition and Health	SNAP-Eligible Youth	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Volunteer-Led Nutrition Education	Learn		SNAP-Eligible Virginians	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Media and Marketing	Shop, Live	PSE, Social Marketing	SNAP-Eligible Virginians	X	X	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change Initiatives	Shop, Learn	PSE		<input type="checkbox"/>	X	X	<input type="checkbox"/>

VIRGINIA SNAP-ED PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS

Virginia SNAP-Ed planned improvements for FY 2022 by setting include:

Learn and Live:

Virginia SNAP-Ed will shift its language to be consistent with a health-focused instead of a weight-focused paradigm. A philosophy and language guide is being developed to be used as part of employee trainings and social media and marketing.

Shop:

Shop Smart, Eat Smart will be expanded to include more food retail and pantry partners.

Play:

Virginia SNAP-Ed will adopt the *Be Physically Active Everyday (BEPA) 2.0* curriculum from Oregon State SNAP-Ed. This research tested curriculum provides physical activity breaks for youth in grades K-5 aligned with national health and physical education standards. *BEPA 2.0* will replace the current PSE change offering helping teachers off physical activity breaks in classrooms and be offered in conjunction with nutrition and physical activity challenges.

Movement clubs were piloted in the Fall of 2021 to increase opportunities for youth to be physically active. Movement clubs with equipment kits will be an option for SNAP-Ed Agents to help partners implement.

Social Media and Marketing:

Virginia SNAP-Ed is in the process of refilling the Social Media and Marketing Coordinator position. Future goals for digital imagery will be on expanding the representation of individuals featured in social media and print materials and increasing brand awareness of the Virginia Family Nutrition Program (SNAP-Ed and EFNEP).

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A physical activity social marketing initiative will also be developed in FY 2022.

Assessment and Evaluation:

In FY 2020, two rounds of a food security survey were administered in Virginia, one in April/May and one in November/December. Another round of the survey will be conducted in the second quarter of FY 2022 for Virginia SNAP-Ed to develop a strategy for reaching the populations most vulnerable for food insecurity.

Racial equity and accessibility audits were conducted on the Virginia Family Nutrition Program online and print materials and programming to identify opportunities to be more inclusive. The results will be included in the SNAP-Ed needs assessment in FY 2022.

Quality Assurance:

An intense professional development training and support plan will continue into FY 2022. A Senior Peer-Educator tips and hacks professional development series is being implemented in FY 2022 to help Peer Educators use best practices for partner and participant recruitment, teaching and program delivery, and paperwork management. Additionally, a strategy for remote record reviews by supervisors is being developed.

Partnerships:

Community garden and food bank and pantry partnerships will continue to be a focus for FY 2022, particularly for comprehensive, multi-level initiatives in the Play and Shop settings.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:

Virginia SNAP-Ed has launched a multi-pronged diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiative. The foci of this initiative will be: ensuring accessibility to all programs and services; compliance with civil rights requirements; supporting managers on DEI-topics; recruiting employees that represent a range of demographic diversity; and increasing employee inclusivity practices.

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