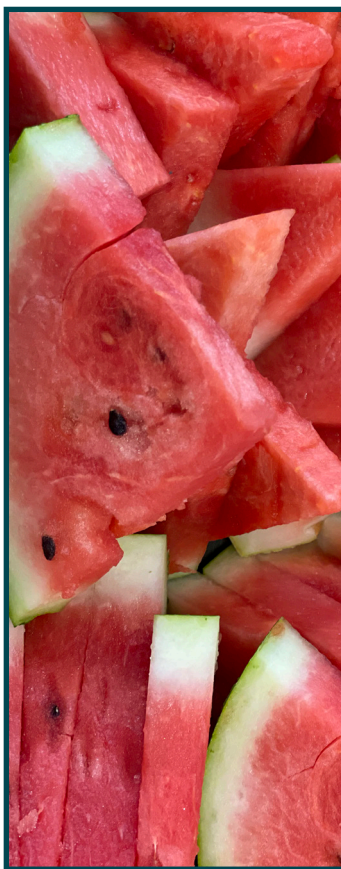


# 2022 VIRGINIA SNAP-ED ANNUAL REPORT



## SNAP-ED PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

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## A LETTER FROM VIRGINIA SNAP-ED LEADERSHIP

Dear Stakeholders,

Moving out of the third year of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have shown that we have adapted and even grown, identifying creative ways to support education and encourage policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) changes to reach health goals in Virginia. We continue to see positive behavior changes from comprehensive nutrition education for adults and youth, with adult nutrition education now being offered in-person, by phone, or by video-conference (Zoom), depending on participants' preferences. Gardens-to-go, which include basic container gardening supplies, vegetable seeds, and gardening and nutrition education, as well as community gardens continue to thrive across the Commonwealth. Several new farmers market initiatives have also sprouted. As always, we continue to monitor program and data quality.

This next year we plan to cultivate these successes to reach more eligible individuals and to make an even larger impact with our communities and support our community partners through our PSE work.

None of our past and future successes would be possible without our employees, volunteers, and you. Thank you for your support of Virginia SNAP-Ed.



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# SNAP-ED PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This overview highlights key achievements from FY 2022. Virginia SNAP-Ed continues to promote nutrition security and physical activity with SNAP-Ed eligible youth, adults, and communities through a combination of peer- and volunteer-led education, policy, systems and environmental (PSE) change initiatives, and social marketing. The focus in FY 2021 was on ensuring program quality and supporting staff through unanticipated barriers that arose during the COVID-19 pandemic, including social distancing

measures that limited in-person programming in some locales through the previous fiscal year and changing preferences of eligible program participants. Our focus in FY 2022 continued to be on supporting our staff as social distancing requirements were eased in most location throughout the state, resulting in increased programming. We also focused on new ways to meet participants where they are at, with increased preference for new formats and shorter durations of in-person educational opportunities.

## In FY 2022, Virginia SNAP-Ed enrolled...



**18,216**  
youth  
participants



**1,433**  
adult  
participants



**149**  
teacher/volunteer  
participants

## INITIATIVES

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

Number of  
Virginia SNAP-Ed  
Peer Educators

\*As of September 30, 2022

Youth  
**14.5** FTEs

Adult  
**18** FTEs

## NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR SNAP-ELIGIBLE YOUTH

### Comprehensive Programs

FY 2022 saw a dramatic return to in-person programs for Virginia SNAP-Ed youth programming from previous years that were impacted by COVID-19 restrictions. The number of enrolled and graduated youth increased to 18,216 and 13,526 respectively. That is an 11.6% increase in program graduates from the previous fiscal year. Additionally, youth in grades 3-5 reported higher frequency of hours spent in physical activity





## 2022 Virginia SNAP-Ed Annual Report

following participation in classes. Youth in grades 6-12 reported increases in vegetable, healthy snack, breakfast, and milk consumption. They also reported higher frequency of hours spent in physical activity and decreased consumption of sugar-sweetened and caffeinated beverages following participation in comprehensive classes.

### Pick a Better Snack™

*Pick a Better Snack™*, developed by Iowa Department of Public Health, is a nutrition education program aimed to encourage children in kindergarten through grade 2 to eat more fruits and vegetables as snacks. Peer Educators and trained volunteers can choose from eight different fruit and vegetables to teach a comprehensive program series of six fun and interactive lessons for each grade.

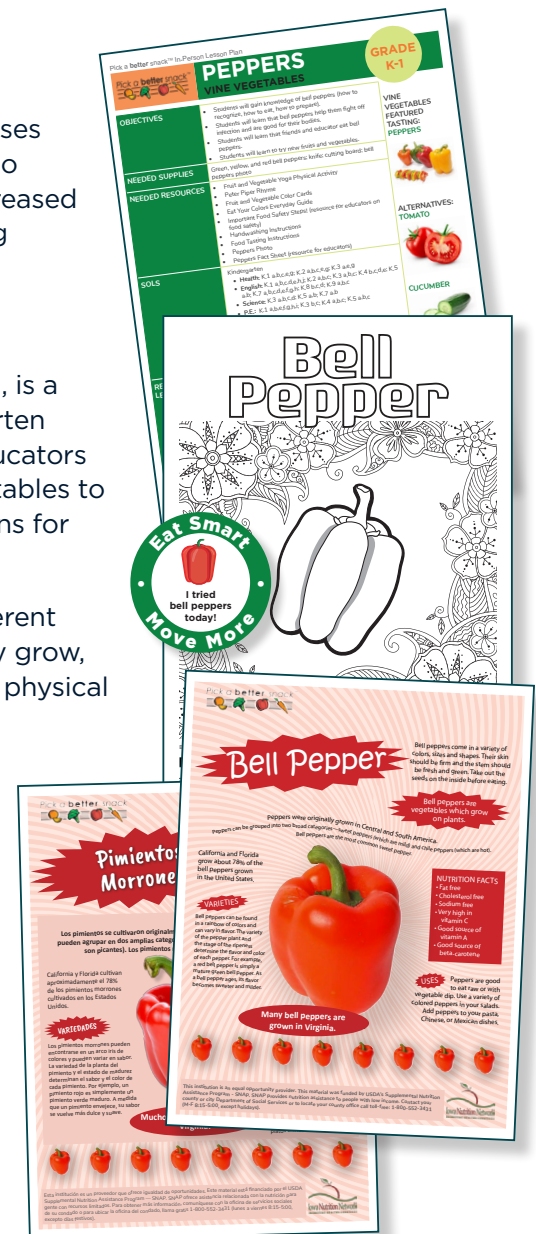
As part of the lessons, students get to see, touch, smell and taste different fruits and vegetables. They hear what makes them healthy, where they grow, and tasty ways to eat them. Each lesson includes a food tasting and a physical activity demonstration.

*Pick a Better Snack™* was originally launched in Virginia SNAP-Ed in FY 2021. In FY 2022, a new series of lessons were created for 1st grade since the same lessons were used in the first year for both kindergarten and 1st grade.

Virginia SNAP-Ed resources include:

- a teacher's guide with lesson plans for each grade and fruit and vegetable
- parent e-newsletters
- coloring pages for children
- and stickers to encourage trying each fruit and vegetable

All materials are available in both English and Spanish.



## NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR SNAP-ELIGIBLE ADULTS

In FY 2022, the focus of adult programming was to regain, refresh, and re-establish partnerships for the delivery of in-person programs. Ongoing district and state-level trainings and coaching were held with staff to brainstorm strategies, including “hacks” and reminders to efficiently manage programs.

Similar to youth programs, FY 2022 saw an increase in the number of in-person programs for adults resulting in a total of 141 in-person comprehensive programs. A total of 1,152 adults graduated from comprehensive programs, consisting of six lessons or more, delivered by Peer Educators. This was a 42.6% decrease from FY 2021. Despite this decrease in reach for comprehensive programs, program graduates reported significant increases in fruit, vegetable, whole grain, dairy and lean protein consumption. There were also significant improvements in physical activity levels, avoidance of food waste, and decreases in sugar-sweetened beverage consumption. The impact of these programs on participants is clear.

*“This has been a blessing. I really enjoyed the tips on safe food preparation and storage. Also, I learned a lot about reading labels and understanding healthy portions. I will use the things I have learned in my daily life and definitely spread the word.” – Participant*

## VOLUNTEER-LED NUTRITION EDUCATION (LEARN, PLAY)

The Volunteer-Led Nutrition Education Initiative is coordinated by SNAP-Ed Agents. In FY 2022, Virginia SNAP-Ed experienced a decrease in the number of SNAP-Ed Agents with only eight SNAP-Ed Agents remaining. Despite this decline in the number of SNAP-Ed Agents, the remaining Agents recruited and trained 362 volunteers for a total of 3,406 volunteer hours. The number of youth enrolled in the program through trained volunteers increased 15.5% from 5,244 in FY 2021 to 6,057 enrolled youth in FY 2022. The number of youth reached through indirect contacts also increased by 99.9% from 31,970 in FY 2021 to 63,989 in FY 2022.

SNAP-Eligible Audiences Reached by SNAP-Ed Trained Volunteers					
	Volunteers	Volunteer Hours	Youth Served By SNAP-Ed Trained Volunteers	Indirect Contacts	Indirect Media Contacts
<b>Program Totals</b>	362	3,406	6,057 enrolled 3,681 graduated	63,989	55,077

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

Although the number of SNAP-Ed Agents declined, the number of individuals reached increased from FY 2021 (241,792), demonstrating an upward trajectory of PSEs over time. Farmers markets, SNAP-eligible stores, and health care clinics and hospitals represent the settings with the highest reach. Eligible schools have the most PSE changes altogether.

Policy, Systems, and Environmental Changes by Setting Type				
Setting	Changes			Potential Reach (n)
	Policy	Systems	Environmental	
Community and recreation centers	0	7	6	77
Early care and education facilities	0	1	0	14
Farmers markets	1	11	5	53,179
Nutrition assistance sites, food banks, and food pantries	1	9	5	50,569
Gardens	0	1	0	500
Health care clinics and hospitals	0	12	10	<b>40,643</b>
Individual homes or public housing sites	0	4	2	146
Large food stores and retailers (4+ registers)	1	6	8	<b>97,133</b>
Libraries	0	2	1	888
Schools (K-12, elementary, middle, and high)	2	48	53	2,263
Small food stores (<= 3 registers)	0	4	6	<b>57,636</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>303,048</b>

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.

## • SHOP •

### Shop Smart, Eat Smart

*Shop Smart, Eat Smart* continues to be a Virginia SNAP-Ed signature program with all SNAP-Ed Agents expected to facilitate PSE changes and comprehensive programming, including direct education, at SNAP-eligible stores in their communities. SNAP-Ed Agents work closely with stores to mutually determine which strategies to implement based on the menu shown here. The most popular PSEs include posting shelf-talkers that are attached to the edge of a shelf, to promote low-cost, nutrition items and displaying posters to promote healthy foods. Others include creating a “healthy food section” in the store.

#### Menu of Strategies for Retailers

##### Store Name:

##### In-Store Marketing

- ☐ Incorporate posters and/or shelf-talkers to promote and highlight healthy food and beverages
- ☐ Attach Family Nutrition Program recipes to healthy foods and beverages
- ☐ Use cues (sign or floor arrows) to guide consumers to healthy foods and beverages
- ☐ Utilize giveaways as prizes for customers who make healthy purchases and complete the Customer Intercept Survey

##### Technical Assistance

- ☐ Develop appealing displays to highlight healthy foods and beverages (Healthy Food Section)
- ☐ Arrange healthy food and beverages at eye level in high consumer traffic areas such as the front of the store or at the check-out lanes/areas
- ☐ Use store aisle endcaps to display healthy foods and beverages
- ☐ Package recipe ingredients as a Meal Bundle

##### Direct Education & Customer Engagement

- ☐ Nutrition education for staff
- ☐ Food demonstrations with nutrition education
- ☐ Adult Grocery Store Tours or Youth Scavenger Hunts
- ☐ Acknowledge consumer requests (“Voice Your Choice”)
- ☐ MyPlate shopping list



Virginia SNAP-Ed Agent and Peer Educator



Example of a shelf talker sign



## Summer Internship at Farmers Markets



*A summer intern at the West End Farmers Market*



*Two summer interns at the Blacksburg Farmers Market*

Five Virginia Tech dietetic students from the Department of Human Nutrition, Foods, and Exercise were hired and trained to support SNAP outreach at farmers markets for summer 2022. They provided short-term nutrition education and food demonstrations at farmers markets.

## Farmers Market Certification Program

The Virginia Farmers Market Certification Program was offered again this past year with 20 market managers completing the certification program in coordination with several partners, including the Virginia Farmers Market Association. The certification program includes 12 modules taught over 13 weeks by a number of different presenters representing different farmers markets, as well as experts in different topics. Topics included:

- Market rules and policies
- How to recruit and retain vendors
- SNAP and marketing accounting
- Special event planning
- Social media and marketing
- Online ordering
- Ensuring equity and access to farmers markets
- Collecting and analyzing market data
- Food safety
- Grant writing

More than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of participants who completed the course evaluation indicated that they were “extremely satisfied” with the certification program.

*“I found great ideas to add to my program this season and things that I would need to look out for.”*

*“Thank you so much for allowing me to be a part of this class.”*

– Participants

## • HOME •

### Gardens-to-Go

Virginia SNAP-Ed continued to promote Gardens-to-Go, which was initially developed to offer barrier-free and contactless access to fresh vegetables through Virginia SNAP-Ed distribution of vegetable seeds and basic container gardening supplies at youth and adult sites. It has expanded to serve as a recruitment tool for gardening and nutrition education.

33

33 garden-to-go mini-grants were awarded in spring 2022 to help support container gardens across the Commonwealth. This thank you card was sent to Virginia SNAP-Ed.

thank YOU for your help with the Garden to Go Program. Without you I would have known fun. I am very happy to do this most of all, am happy that I can grow and eat my own Project. I thank you for your help God Blesses you

### Life Cycle of a Plant

Stages	Date	Observations
Seed		
Sprout		
Seedling		

### The Virginia Family Nutrition Program

#### Make Your 'Garden to Go'!

**Materials:** Seeds, soil, container, saucer, watering can, and trowel

##### Step 1: Find a space where making messes is ok!

- Either set up outside or on some newspaper

##### Step 2: Fill your container with soil

- Empty the soil in the large baggie into the container

##### Step 3: Cover your seed with soil

- Bury your seed under soil. Follow the seed pack instructions to know how deep

##### Step 4: Water the seed

- Lightly drizzle about 1 cup of water onto the soil

##### Step 5: Put it in a sunny spot

- Find a place on your porch or yard with at least 6 hours of sunlight

##### Step 6: Watch it grow!

- Check on your plant every day

#### Care and Keeping of Your Container Garden

- Your plant will grow with these four things: soil, sunlight, air, water. (and loving care is important, too!)
- Water your plant every day. If it rains you can skip a day. On sunny days over 80 degrees you can water twice, once in the morning and once in the evening.
- If you or someone you know has a garden you can transfer your young plant into the earth! This will require parent approval and guidance.
- Your plant will grow to produce food within three months. You can eat it fresh from the plant or try one of the recipes in your kit.

#### Join Us!

For more information contact:

Follow Us | Like Us

[www.eat-smart-move-more.org](https://www.eat-smart-move-more.org)

**Eat Smart • Move More**  
Virginia Cooperative Extension • Family Nutrition Program

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## NEW RESOURCES

### Farmers Market Education for Youth – *Just Say Yes!*

In response to requests from Virginia SNAP-Ed field staff for a youth-focused farmers market curriculum, Virginia SNAP-Ed conducted a process evaluation of a newly-developed youth version of the evidence-based *Just Say Yes! to Fruits and Vegetables* curriculum. The youth version, available in English and Spanish, has six lessons covering topics including the benefits of fruits and vegetables and smart snacks using food sold at farmers' market. These lessons also have messages for caregivers and include activities such as a scavenger hunt at the market. The process evaluation will capture the field educators' perceptions on whether the curriculum aligns with the Virginia SNAP-Ed learning objectives and will be completed in FY 2023.

### Movement Clubs

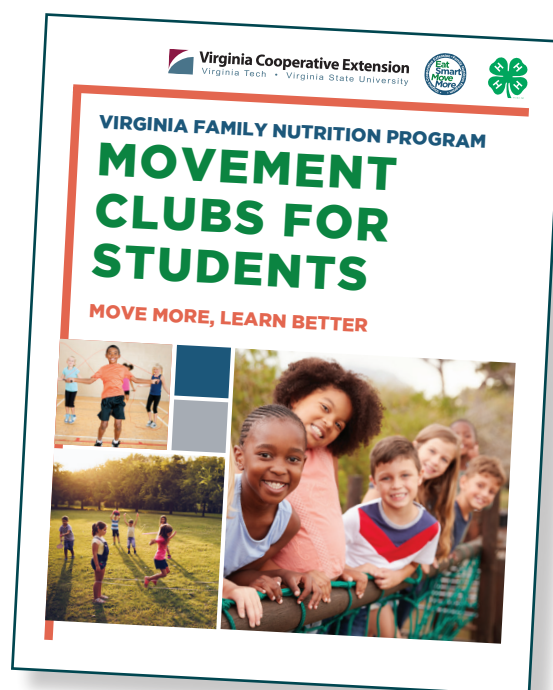
In order to encourage movement and physical activity within schools, a handbook/guide was developed for SNAP-Ed Agents to help train and facilitate school staff and volunteers on creating and/or adapting movement clubs for youth. The *Movement Club* handbook is a comprehensive tool for planning, implementing, and evaluating *Movement Clubs* and covers volunteer recruitment, session planning, risk management, parent engagement, and community outreach. It was pilot-tested in fall 2022 in Page county. Feedback from the pilot-test will help further refine the handbook in order to scale up to reach more SNAP-Ed eligible schools.

### Be Physically Active Everyday

Virginia SNAP-Ed trained SNAP-Ed Agents on 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 replaced the current PSE change offering helping teachers offer physical activity breaks in classrooms and be offered in conjunction with nutrition and physical activity challenges.

### Food and Recipe Photography

Ongoing efforts are taking place to offer timely and relevant recipes and corresponding photography for use in social media and for recipe sheets, including the Look and Cook series. This photo shows some of our Virginia SNAP-Ed team members working on food photography.



Food and recipe photography



### SOCIAL MEDIA AND MARKETING (LIVE AND SHOP)

In FY 2022, Virginia SNAP-Ed maintained and improved social media and marketing initiatives to support in-person programs and offer educational resources across digital platforms to encourage participants to improve health behaviors. Overall, FY 2022 was highly successful in terms of digital content delivery and an increase in online resources in response to continued challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Facebook, Instagram, monthly e-newsletters, and the [eatsmartmovemore.org](https://eatsmartmovemore.org) website/blog were the dominant platforms for Virginia SNAP-Ed social media marketing and engagement. The number of followers increased over 17% from 910 to 965 from FY 2021 to FY 2022. Facebook, as the top performing social media platform, was where the majority of our participants went for updated information about Virginia SNAP-Ed programming and digital resources. The best example of this was SNAP-Ed's top performing post: a graphic promoting the Prince George's County Farmer's Market, where EBT/P-EBT tokens are accepted with 39,799 impressions and 10,843 reached.

### PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

#### Community Garden Network

In order to provide support to community gardens, Virginia SNAP-Ed initiated the creation of a network of community garden representatives. The network provides a clearinghouse of information to community gardens, webinars, and opportunities for networking and technical assistance.



*A popular post featured using SNAP/EBT at the Prince George Farmers Market.*

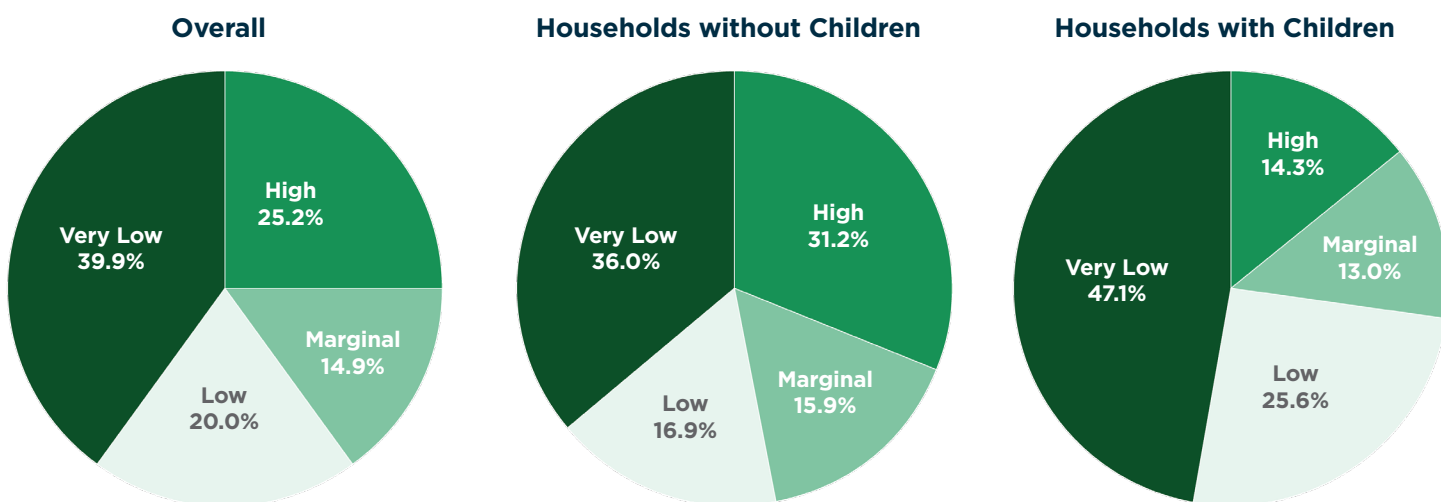


*Another popular post from this last year featured a food experience as part of the Petersburg Healthy Options Partnership.*



## CONTINUING STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT OF FOOD SECURITY

In FY 2022, in partnership with the Virginia Department of Social Services, a follow-up third statewide survey was conducted to assess food security status among adults living in Virginia. The results found that of the 2,018 responses, 20.0% were considered low food secure and 39.9% very low food secure. Food insecurity was also found to be highest among households with children (73.0%). Almost one-half (49.7%) of respondents reported “never” or “sometimes” planning meals before shopping and over one-third (37.1%) “never” or only “sometimes” shopping with a list, highlighting opportunities for Virginia SNAP-Ed nutrition education. The full reports can be found at: <https://eatsmartmovemoreva.org/fnp-reports/>



## VIRGINIA SNAP-ED PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS

Virginia SNAP-Ed planned improvements for FY 2023 by setting include:

### Employees:

The major focus of this next year is to increase the number of Peer Educators and SNAP-Ed Agents in order to increase the reach of SNAP-Ed programming.

### Shop:

Supporting comprehensive, multi-level initiatives consisting of PSEs and direct education at food banks and food pantries, in partnership with the Federation of Virginia Food Banks, will be the focus for FY 2023.

### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:

Virginia SNAP-Ed continues to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion within its organization and with all programs, including: ensuring accessibility to all programs and services; compliance with civil rights requirements; supporting managers on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion-topics; recruiting employees that represent a range of demographic diversity; and increasing employee inclusivity practices. Virginia SNAP-Ed is also developing a Language of Health Guide to promote inclusivity across all programs and communications.



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