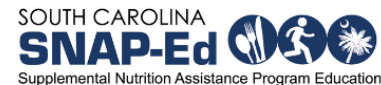


Expand Community Voice South Carolina Profile

SOUTHEAST REGION FFY2023 PROJECT

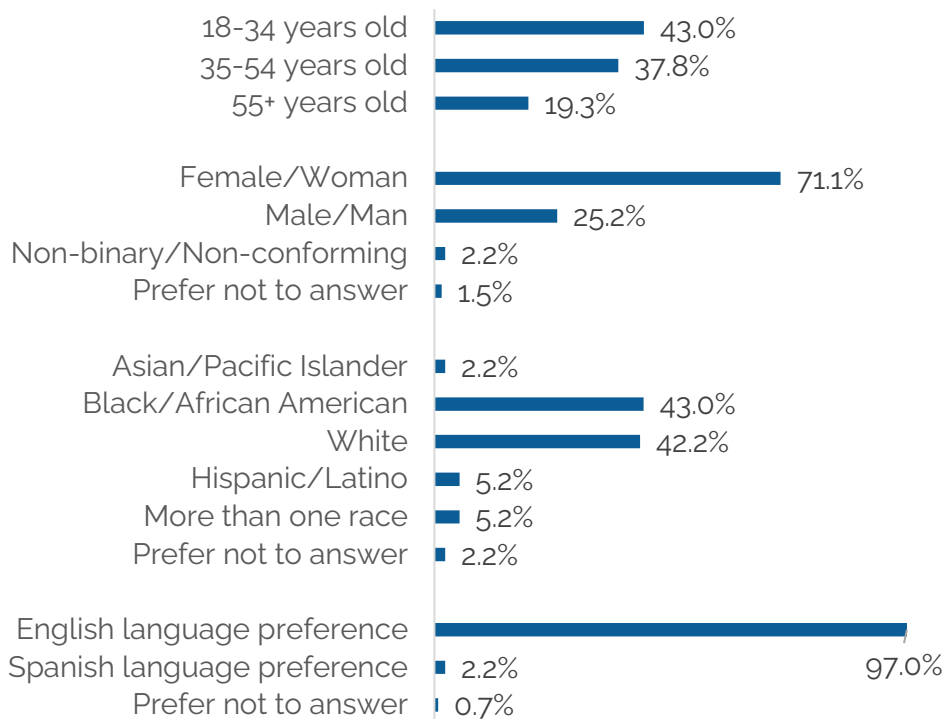


Project Overview

The Public Health Institute Center for Wellness and Nutrition (PHI CWN) in coordination with Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina undertook the **FFY2023 Expand Community Voice project** in the Southeast Region to capture the lived experiences of the SNAP-Ed eligible community. An online survey and feedback groups were conducted to assess equitable practices in SNAP and SNAP-Ed and provide recommendations for SNAP-Ed programming to increase food and nutrition security for all populations.

There were 425 SNAP-Ed-eligible respondents for the online survey, with 135 (31.8%) respondents from South Carolina. Eight community residents participated in feedback groups. Online survey respondent demographics are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Description of the South Carolina Online Survey Respondents (n=135)



Access to SNAP and SNAP-Ed

Access to SNAP and SNAP-Ed means everyone has an equal opportunity to fully participate in programs and services. While the majority of South Carolina respondents reported using SNAP benefits (67.4%), a third of respondents (33.3%) reported ever participating in SNAP-Ed programming. The analysis did not find any significant differences in SNAP or SNAP-Ed participation by race or ethnicity. Reasons for not participating in SNAP included "do not think I qualify" (n = 22) and "too difficult to apply" (n = 7). Reasons for not participating in SNAP-Ed included "do not know about SNAP-Ed" (n = 50), "unsure" (n = 24), and "do not want to attend SNAP-Ed classes" (n = 11).

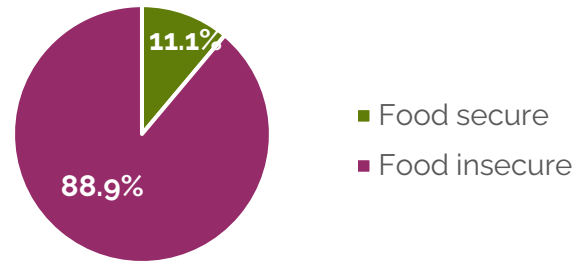
67.4%
Ever used SNAP

33.3%
Ever participated in SNAP-Ed

Food and nutrition security

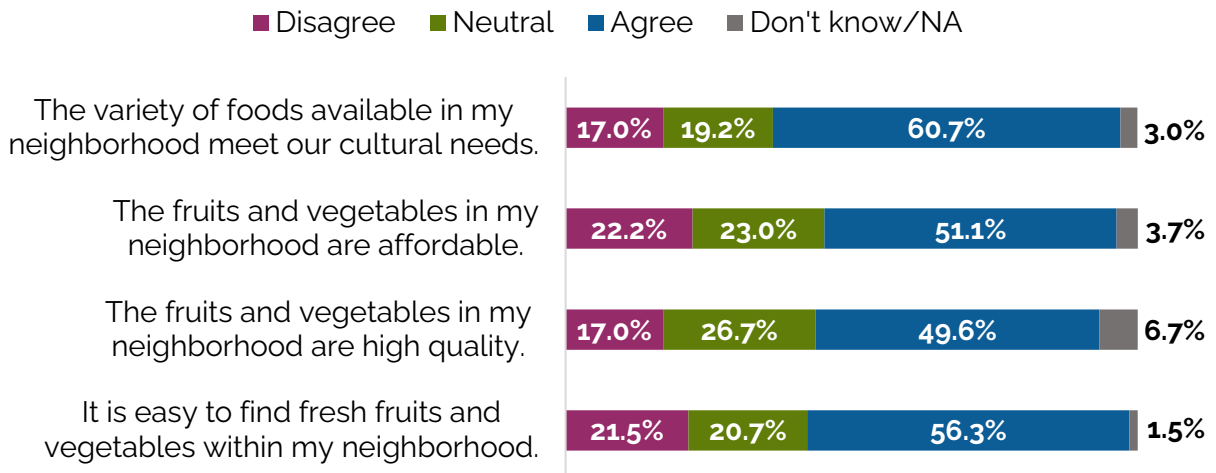
Food and nutrition security are rooted in access, availability and affordability of nutritious food. Food insecurity is defined as “*consistent lack of access to enough food to lead a healthy and active life.*” In South Carolina, about 10% of the population are considered food insecure (Feeding America, 2023), but among those surveyed, almost 90% reported experiencing food insecurity (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Food Security Among Online Survey Respondents (n=135)



Nutrition security is defined as “*having consistent access, availability, and affordability of foods and beverages that promote well-being and prevent (and if needed, treat) disease*” (USDA NIFA). About half respondents reported they had access to fresh, high quality, affordable culturally specific produce (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Food Access Among Online Survey Respondents (n=135)



Respondents in South Carolina primarily shop at supermarkets like Kroger, Publix, Aldi, Food Lion or Piggly Wiggly, and superstores, like Walmart or Target. Household or community gardens, health food stores and food pantries or food banks were the most underused places that respondents reported accessing food.



Community Recommendations to Improve SNAP and SNAP-Ed Equity

To improve community access to healthy food, survey respondents recommended more farmers' markets or farm stands (48.5%, n = 65), higher quality of produce (47.8%, n = 64) and better variety of produce at local stores (41.0%, n = 55). To improve access to SNAP-Ed, recommendations included more information about SNAP-Ed (42.9%, n = 57), classes offered at convenient times (31.6%, n = 42), and classes closer to home (30.8%, n = 41). Other recommendations from community members included marketing SNAP-Ed classes to reach a broader audience, hiring SNAP-Ed instructors with similar race/ethnicity as participants, and cooking culturally relevant meals during classes.

Recommendations to Improve Equity in SNAP and SNAP-Ed

In order to continue to provide equitable practices within SNAP and SNAP-Ed, several key recommendations are proposed:


- **Embed Feedback Systems into SNAP-Ed Nutrition:** Integrate feedback systems into program activities and PSE changes encouraging participants to share suggestions for improvement as well as areas of strength.
- **Market SNAP-Ed Classes Through Multiple Strategies:** Diversify marketing strategies to reach a wider and more diverse audience for SNAP-Ed programming, such as radio broadcasts, listservs, and in-person outreach at schools and clinics.
- **Further Explore Equity Among Hispanic/Latino Populations:** More work needs to be done to address the needs of Hispanic/Latino populations, such as state-level needs assessments or listening sessions.
- **Design Programs for Low-Literacy:** Use accessible materials, alternative communication channels, and varied educational strategies to address the needs of individuals.
- **Assess the Equity of SNAP-Ed and SNAP through Multiple Dimensions of Access:** Consider the acceptability, affordability, availability, accessibility, accommodation and awareness of programs and services.
- **Meet People Where They Are:** Offer times convenient for participants, hold classes in places where many people already gather and use low-impact, data-collection methods.

“[SNAP-Ed classes] were very convenient...It was in our community, and it was at a central location within my area of the town. So it worked for most people in this area.”

-South Carolina community resident

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SOUTH CAROLINA
SNAP-Ed 
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