



# 2012 - 2013 GEORGIA SNAP-ED REPORT

## Empowering Healthy Choices in Schools, Homes & Communities in Georgia

HealthMPowers works with multiple stakeholders to promote nutrition education and physical activity through SNAP-Ed funding. Education, accompanied by environmental supports, is provided to schools to facilitate the adoption of healthy eating and physical activity behaviors by students, staff and families. Training, resources and information are provided and reinforced to sustain positive change.



## What is SNAP-Ed?

SNAP-Ed is the nutritional education component of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Through evidence-based, collaborative approaches, SNAP-Ed programs improve the likelihood that low-income families and youth will make healthy food choices and choose active lifestyles consistent with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans and MyPlate.gov.

### HEALTHMPOWERS

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### FOOD INSECURITY

- The USDA defines food insecurity as the lack of access to adequate food resulting from the lack of money and other resources.
- Over the past three years, the number of Georgia households receiving food stamps has increased by 62%.<sup>1</sup>
- Nearly one in five children in America lives in households that struggle to put food on the table.<sup>2</sup>

### FAST FACTS- NUTRITION PROBLEMS THAT IMPACT GEORGIA'S CHILDREN:

- More than one in every four Georgia children (28.8%) live in food insecure households. That's over 700,000 children under the age of 18.<sup>3</sup>
- 19.2% of Georgians are living in poverty, an increase of almost 1 million Georgians over the past 12 years.<sup>4</sup>
- As of 2013, Georgia remains one of only 4 states with minimum wage rates under the federal rate with Georgia's wage at \$5.15/hr.<sup>5</sup>
- 62% of America's teachers regularly see kids who come to school hungry because they aren't getting enough to eat at home.<sup>6</sup>
- Missing breakfast has been shown to impact a student's intellectual performance, attendance and classroom behavior.
- Three out of four teachers (77%) say addressing childhood hunger must be a national priority.<sup>7</sup>

*Think that obesity and food insecurity don't go together? Think again!*

#### **Q: How do obesity and food insecurity relate to each other?**

A: Food insecurity and poverty often coexist. This relationship may be affected by factors such as persistent poverty, lack of access to healthy foods, tendency to binge when food is available, and lack of quality mental health services and health promotion programs.

#### **Q: How can programs address both of these issues?**

A: Food insecurity impairs healthy child development and increases risk of obesity later in life, so it is important for programming to reach low-income children. The food students eat in schools—whether provided by schools or obtained from other sources—represents a substantial portion of the calories they consume, providing opportunities to influence their consumption patterns.



Of the Georgia students enrolled in SNAP-Ed programming in 2013, 79% depended on Free and Reduced Lunch.

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*With schools serving more than 95% of US children ages 5-17, school-based nutrition and physical activity interventions can successfully impact these health behaviors.*

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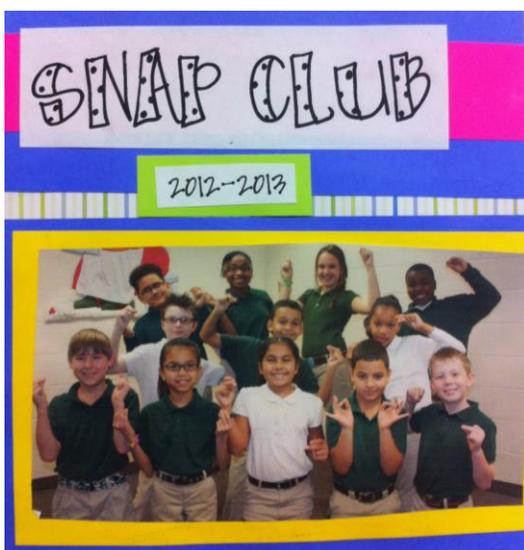
### A RECENT SUCCESS

Students from Southwest Elementary School learned to use communication, data collection and project planning skills to promote physical and healthy eating to their peers.

To increase physical activity, they created a booklet with ideas for being active entitled, “*Ridiculously RAD Recess.*” Students presented the book to teachers and taught students a few of the sample activities.

These leaders also worked with the cafeteria staff to promote breakfast and provide taste-testings that resulted in new, healthy selections for the school lunch menu.

HealthMPowers recognizes that students **can and should be** part of the solution.



### WHY IS SNAP-ED IMPORTANT?

Throughout the United States, SNAP-Ed meets people where they live, work and play. Working through a host of targeted community venues, interventions are tailored to a spectrum of audiences to deliver critical and practical nutrition information that makes a real difference in the lives of low-income Americans.

**IN GEORGIA,** HealthMPowers’ comprehensive SNAP-Ed intervention program has achieved significant, measureable success in improving student nutrition and physical activity behaviors, programs and environments. Most importantly, by offering services as an integrated school-wide educational process, HealthMPowers has successfully improved students’ fruit and vegetable consumption, physical activity and fitness levels without taking away from valuable class time.

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*“I have seen first-hand, the powerful impact of the information, resources and skills that HealthMPowers provides to help improve the eating habits and physical activity practice of students, staff and families.”*  
**Principal, Nesbit Elementary**

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### PROGRAM REACH

- 61 Georgia Schools
- On-site services reaching 39,272 students and their families
- Training and resources provided for 2,604 classroom teachers, special areas teachers, nutrition managers, counselors and administrators

### PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- 100% of students in participating schools have increased opportunities for nutrition education and physical activity
- 83% of students improved at least one nutrition or physical activity behavior
- 97% of school teams completed a needs assessment and 91% completed an action plan
- All fourth and fifth grade students demonstrated statistically significant increases in number of PACER laps completed at post-test.

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## FINANCIAL IMPACT

*Fighting malnutrition and increasing physical activity in young children should be a top priority investment for policymakers.*

*Every \$1 invested in nutrition generates as much as \$138 in better health and increased productivity.<sup>7</sup>*

*One physically active child saves \$2,741 in health care costs each year.<sup>8</sup>*

## SUPPORT SNAP-ED FUNDING

HealthMPowers needs your support to continue this important work with children and families. Investments in our children's physical future today will result in lower healthcare costs and greater security for the state's fiscal future. Find out more about HealthMPowers at [www.healthmpowers.org](http://www.healthmpowers.org), and learn about SNAP-Ed's efforts in other states at [snap.nal.usda.gov/](http://snap.nal.usda.gov/).

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*"HealthMPowers is in the business of changing lives. As the statistics show, all advances in medicine in the past several decades will be undone by the unhealthy behaviors of our youth. It is our responsibility to improve the quality of those individual's lives or the future by taking action today."*

***HealthMPowers Board Member***

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### References:

<sup>1</sup>GA DHR 2012

<sup>2</sup>[www.nokidhungry.org/sites/default/files/2011-childhood-hunger-facts.pdf](http://www.nokidhungry.org/sites/default/files/2011-childhood-hunger-facts.pdf)

<sup>3</sup>Feeding America, 2013 Map the Meal Gap Study

<sup>4</sup>U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Profile. Data released Sept. 2013

<sup>5</sup>U.S. Dept. of Labor, Employment Standards Admin. 2013

<sup>6</sup><http://www.nokidhungry.org/additions/educators>

<sup>7</sup>[https://secure.nokidhungry.org/site/SPageNavigator/SHARE/SHARE\\_Teachers\\_Report\\_2012.html;jsessionid=7917713FE435F70CC5093477D52E71EF.app252b7www.nokidhungry.org/ShareOurStrengths.2012-teacher-report-final.pdf](https://secure.nokidhungry.org/site/SPageNavigator/SHARE/SHARE_Teachers_Report_2012.html;jsessionid=7917713FE435F70CC5093477D52E71EF.app252b7www.nokidhungry.org/ShareOurStrengths.2012-teacher-report-final.pdf)

<sup>8</sup>Hoddinott, Rosegrant and Torero, Copenhagen Consensus Challenge Paper, Copenhagen Consensus 2012.

<sup>9</sup>Cawley, J. and Meyerhoefer, C. (2012). The medical care cost of obesity: An instrumental variables approach. *Journal of Health Economics*, Vol. 31 Iss. 1, January 2012, pp.219-230.

*This material was funded by USDA's SNAP and other HealthMPowers Partners. SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help individuals buy nutritious foods for a healthy diet. For more information go to [www.compass.ga.gov](http://www.compass.ga.gov), or call 1.800.georgia. In the Atlanta area, call 678.georgia. This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. "In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. To file a report of discrimination, contact USDA Director, Office of Civil Rights, 400 Independence Avenue, Washington D.C. 20250-9410."*