



# Vermont SNAP-Ed Evaluation Summary FY 2020

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Photo by Vermont Foodbank

# Introduction and Program Overview

# FOOD INSECURITY, INEQUITIES, AND HEALTH

## *Food insecurity and inequities put the health of Vermonters at risk*

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines food security as “access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life.”<sup>1</sup> Nearly 10% of Vermonters experienced food insecurity from 2016 to 2018,<sup>2</sup> with rates tripling in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>3</sup> Research conducted by the University of Vermont (UVM) found that half of all households experiencing food insecurity reported eating fewer fruits and vegetables since the start of the pandemic.<sup>4</sup> Food insecurity is highest among people of color, those with high school education or lower, and those experiencing job loss or unemployment,<sup>5</sup> with inequities being amplified during COVID-19.

Limited access to food and opportunities for physical activity is associated with increased risk of chronic conditions and greater health care spending. The Vermont Department of Health (VDH) conceptualizes this link through the 3-4-50 campaign.<sup>6</sup> Chronic diseases also affect the state’s economy, with costs reaching \$2.29 billion in 2017.<sup>7</sup> Chronic diseases do not impact all communities in the same way. Vermonters disproportionately affected include those with low incomes, individuals with disabilities, and older adults.<sup>8</sup>



Graphic from *Vermont Department of Health*

<sup>1</sup> USDA Economic Research Service (2020). *Food Security in the U.S.*

<sup>2</sup> USDA Economic Research Service (2020). *Food Security in the United States: How do States Compare?*

<sup>3</sup> Niles, M.T., et al. (2020). *Food Access and Security During Coronavirus: A Vermont Study.*

<sup>4</sup> Niles, M.T., et al. (2020). *COVID-19 Impacts on Food Security and Systems: A Third Survey of Vermonters.*

<sup>5</sup> Niles, M.T., et al. (2020). *Food and Job Insecurity in Vermont During COVID-19 Infographic.*

<sup>6,7</sup> VT Dept. of Health (VDH, 2019). *3-4-50 Statewide Data Brief.*

<sup>8</sup> VDH (2018).. *3-4-50 Special Population Data*

# OVERVIEW OF SNAP-ED

*Evidence-based strategies to improve opportunities for health of people experiencing food insecurity*

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, or 3SquaresVT in Vermont) provides eligible households with monthly vouchers to purchase food at participating retailers. SNAP is funded by the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service and is administered in Vermont by the Department for Children and Families. Coordinated statewide efforts to promote nutrition education and policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) changes to increase healthy eating and physical activity are essential to health promotion and chronic disease prevention. Vermont's SNAP-Ed Program, overseen by the Vermont Department of Health (VDH), collaborates with four community-based organizations to implement three categories of evidence-based strategies focused on healthy eating and physical activity:



Direct  
education



Policy, systems,  
environmental  
(PSE) change



Social  
marketing

By implementing these evidence-based strategies, SNAP-Ed partners help to increase the likelihood that people eligible for SNAP have the knowledge and opportunities they need to meet national dietary and physical activity guidelines. SNAP-Ed's evaluation seeks to understand the short- and long-term impacts of these strategies on fruit and vegetable consumption, physical activity, and food insecurity among priority populations within the program's target regions throughout the state.

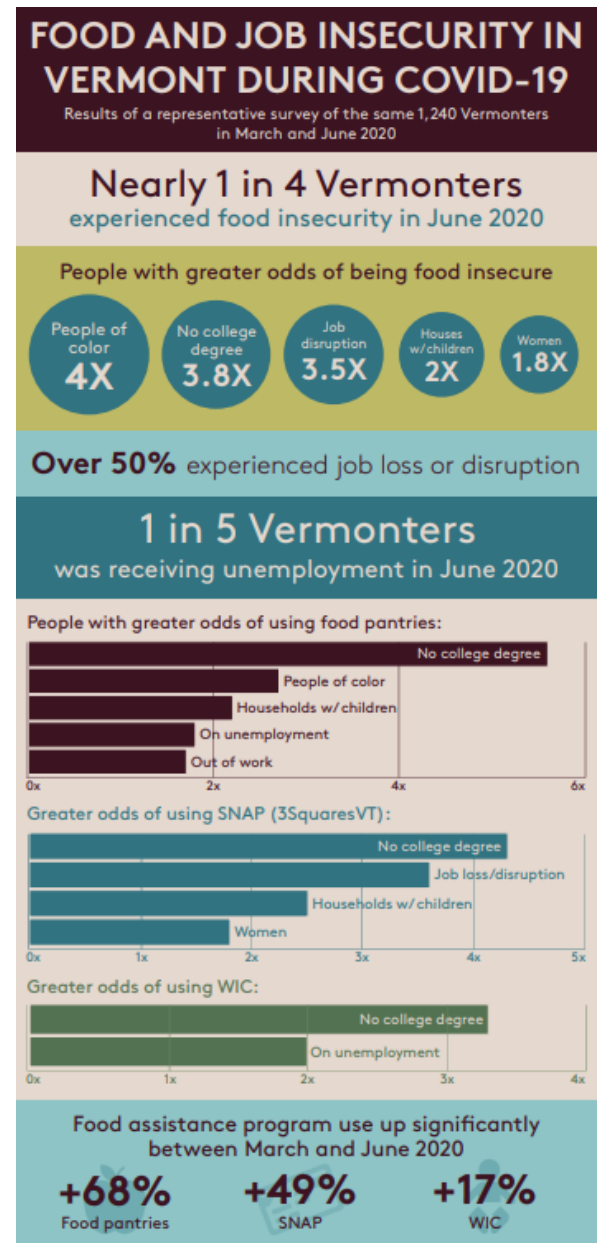
# SNAP-ED AND COVID-19

*COVID-19 has deepened inequities and increased the need for programs like SNAP-Ed*

With more Vermonters experiencing food insecurity this year due to COVID-19, there is a greater need to increase healthy food access for individuals and families. Opportunities for physical activity have also been compromised this year as a result of COVID-related gym and recreation center closures. Now, more than ever, programs like SNAP-Ed are essential to the health and well-being of Vermonters in need and will continue to play an important role in chronic disease prevention during and after the pandemic.

This annual report provides a summary of SNAP-Ed strategies, reach, and outcomes accomplished in fiscal year 2020 (FY20, October 2019 – September 2020). Acknowledging the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on Vermonters and statewide programs, this report also highlights the ways in which partners have adapted to challenges presented this year.

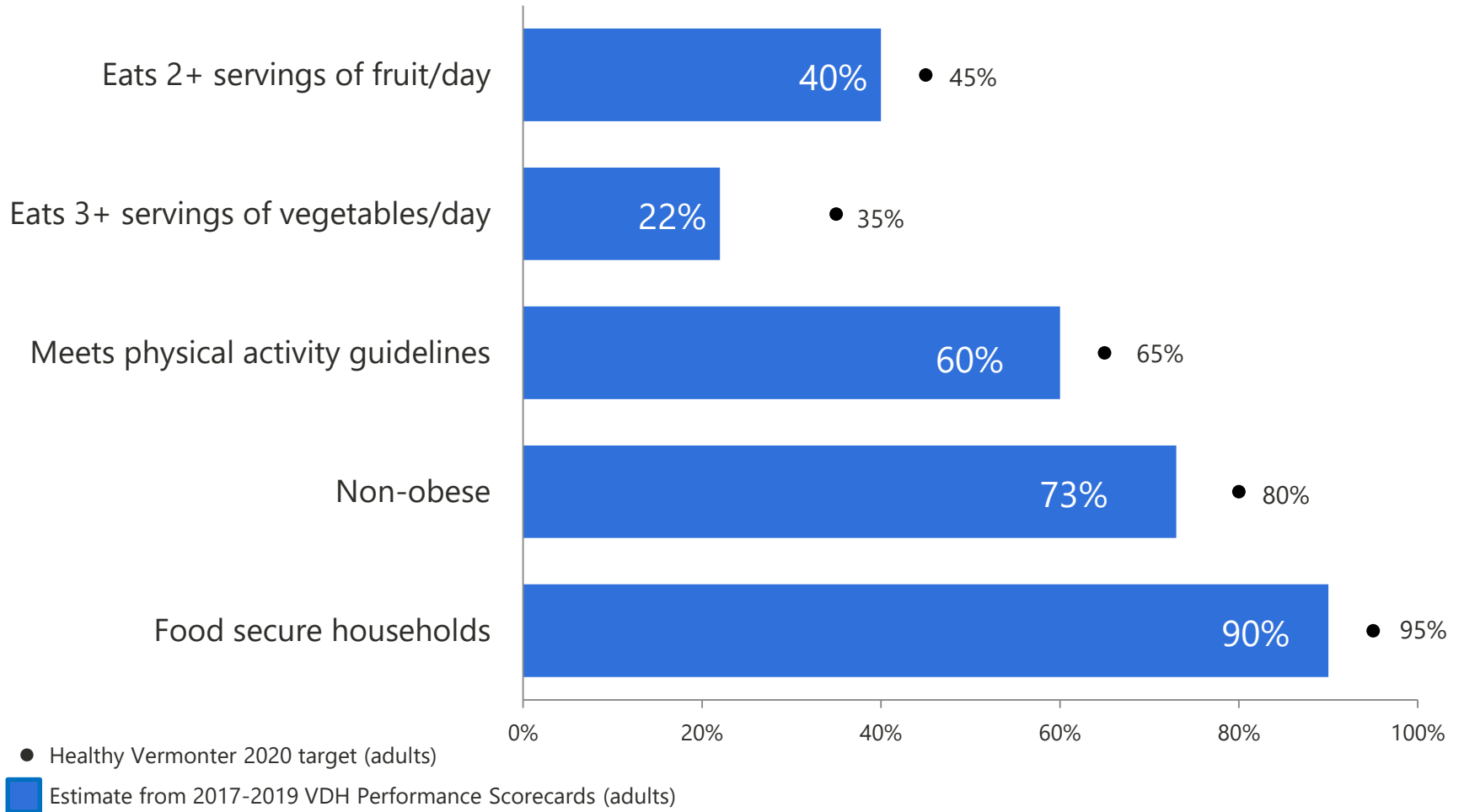
Infographic at right by the *National Food Access & COVID-19 Research Team (NFACT)*



# HEALTHY VERMONT 2020 TARGETS

*SNAP-Ed is one of many state programs that contributes to the objectives below.*

*Data from 2017-2019 show that the state is making progress, but more work remains.*



# SNAP-ED PARTNERS & STRATEGIES

*Partners that implement direct education strategies only*



THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT  
**EXTENSION**



*Physical activity promotion resource for youth*



Winter Passport



Summer Passport



Implementation Toolkit



Choose Health: Fun, Food, and Fitness (CHFFF)



Eat Smart, Move More (ESMM)

*In-depth curricula with 6+ lessons*



Direct education

*Direct education strategies vary based on frequency, duration, and intensity, with the goal of impacting individual behaviors associated with healthy eating and physical activity. Higher intensity activities may reach fewer individuals, but greater impacts on behavior are expected. This icon is used throughout this report to indicate data from direct education strategies.*



# SNAP-ED PARTNERS & STRATEGIES

Partners that implement PSE strategies



VT Fresh: Community food shelves



Smarter Lunchrooms



Veggie Van Go mobile food shelves



NAP SACC (Early Care and Education)



Newsletter and social marketing



Direct education



PSE change



Social marketing

*Direct education strategies vary based on frequency, duration, and intensity, with the goal of impacting individual behaviors associated with healthy eating and physical activity. PSE changes are designed to make healthy eating and physical activity easier for individuals and families. Higher intensity educational activities may reach fewer individuals but are expected to yield greater impacts on behavior compared to PSE activities and social marketing, which are lower intensity but have higher anticipated reach. These icons are used throughout this report to indicate data from each type of strategy.*



Photo by Vermont Foodbank

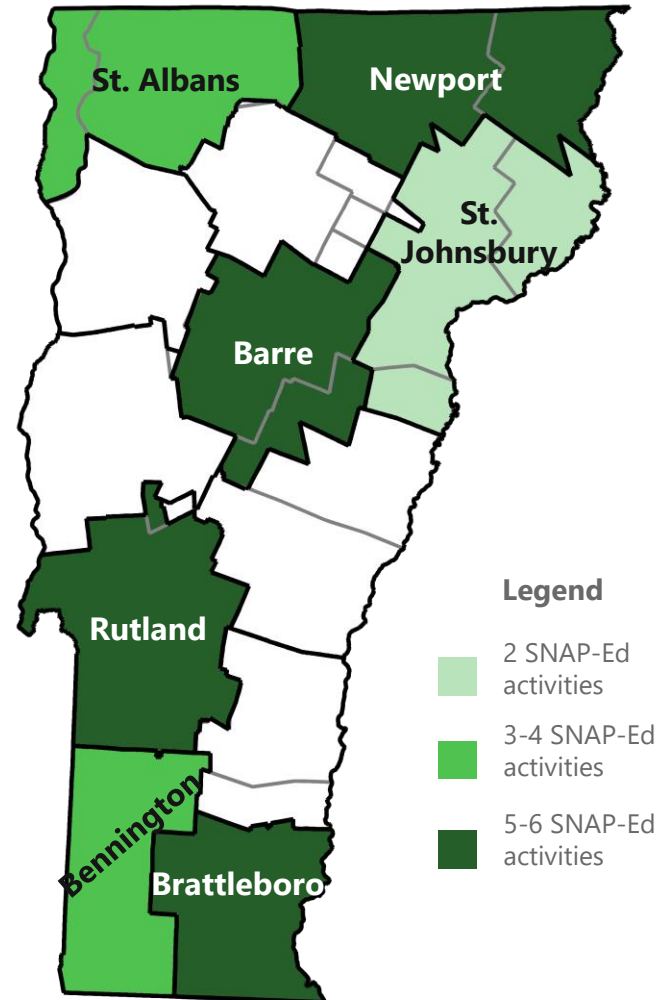
# Statewide Activities and Reach

# WHERE SNAP-ED WORKS

*SNAP-Ed strategies were implemented in seven regions*

SNAP-Ed strategies were implemented in FY20 in the regions shown on the map to the right. Seven out of 12 regions received at least two SNAP-Ed activities in the past year. Four regions, Barre, Brattleboro, Newport and Rutland, received five or more.

SNAP-Ed implementing partners have expanded their geographic reach in the past year, while continuing to tailor programming to community needs. SNAP-Ed partners tapped into local networks and established new connections in SNAP-Ed regions. Some of these networks include local Hunger Councils (not pictured), which are present in each of the seven SNAP-Ed regions.



# STATEWIDE REACH BY REGION

*SNAP-Ed activities vary by region, with some layering to amplify program effects*



Region	Passport Programs	CHFFF	ESMM	VT Fresh	Veggie Van Go	SL	NAP SACC	Hunger Councils
Barre								
Bennington								
Brattleboro								
Newport								
Rutland								
St. Albans								
St. Johnsbury								*

Darker shading indicates areas where all activities by a particular partner are being implemented.

\* St. Johnsbury shares a Hunger Council with Newport

Activity acronyms:

CHFFF: Choose Health: Food, Fun, & Fitness

ESMM: Eat Smart, Move More,

SL: Smarter Lunchrooms

NAP SACC: Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care

# STATEWIDE REACH

*SNAP-Ed strategies reached over 64,000 Vermonters in FY20*



Direct  
education

**6,805**

Goal: 5,470

Direct education included both nutrition and physical activity education, with tailored programs for youth and adults. These educational events were implemented by Come Alive Outside, the University of Vermont Extension, and Vermont Foodbank.



Policy, systems,  
environmental (PSE)  
change

**46,285**

Goal: 71,544

PSE strategies included improving access to and appeal of fresh produce at community food shelves, early care and education settings, and school lunchrooms. These activities were implemented by Hunger Free Vermont and Vermont Foodbank.



Social  
marketing

**11,273**

Vermont Foodbank used social marketing to promote healthy eating and active living. Content was delivered across 3 platforms and included 30 activities. Reach was calculated using the total number of views and engagements, including likes, replies, and shares.

# STATEWIDE INITIATIVES AND COORDINATION

*VDH supports cross-cutting efforts by SNAP-Ed implementing partners and external organizations*

SNAP-Ed is just one of many statewide programs working to improve the health of Vermonters by increasing access to healthy foods. The image to the right shows the many components of Vermont's food system. The Vermont Nutrition Education Committee (VNEC) and the Vermont Farm to Plate Initiative are two statewide initiatives that complement SNAP-Ed's work by addressing additional components of Vermont's food system in alignment with SNAP-Ed goals (see pages 14-15 for more details). VDH actively participates in and supports the work of these cross-cutting efforts to minimize duplication and amplify impact.



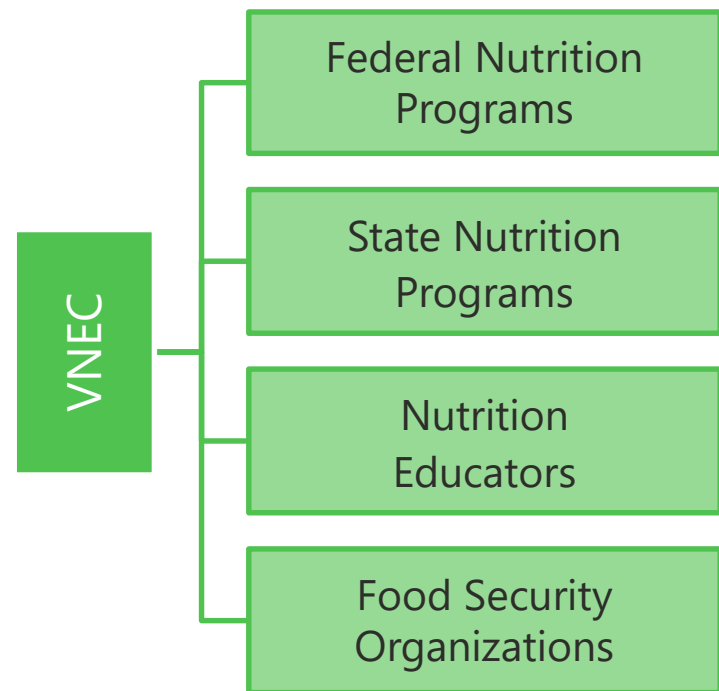
Figure at right by *Vermont Farm to Plate*

# VERMONT NUTRITION EDUCATION COMMITTEE (VNEC)

*VNEC brings together organizations working to improve the health & wellbeing of all Vermonters*

According to VDH, VNEC was “created to better align the goals and activities of Vermont agencies working on federal food assistance and physical activity programs.”<sup>1</sup> The Committee’s goals are to:

- “Improve coordination, partnerships and communication among federal, state and private nutrition education provider agencies and federal nutrition programs.”
- “Conduct statewide, cross-program nutrition education planning that promotes shared goals and integrated approaches that connect efforts and resources.”
- “Promote VNEC as a model for aligning programs, activities and initiatives around nutrition education and obesity prevention efforts.”<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1,2</sup> VT Dept. of Health (VDH, n.d.) *Vermont Nutrition Education Committee (VNEC)*. Retrieved from: <https://www.healthvermont.gov/wellness/physical-activity-nutrition/snap-ed>

# VERMONT FARM TO PLATE INITIATIVE

*The Farm to Plate Initiative works to strengthen all components of Vermont's food system*

Farm to Plate is Vermont's food system plan to increase economic development and jobs in the farm and food sector and to improve access to healthy local food for all Vermonters. The Farm to Plate Strategic Plan is comprised of 25 goals aimed at strengthening all components of Vermont's food system. Goals include decreasing food-related health problems, improving food literacy, and increasing access to and consumption of Vermont-produced healthy foods. These goals are being addressed by the collective work taking place with the Farm to Plate Network and by individual businesses, organizations, agencies, and institutions.

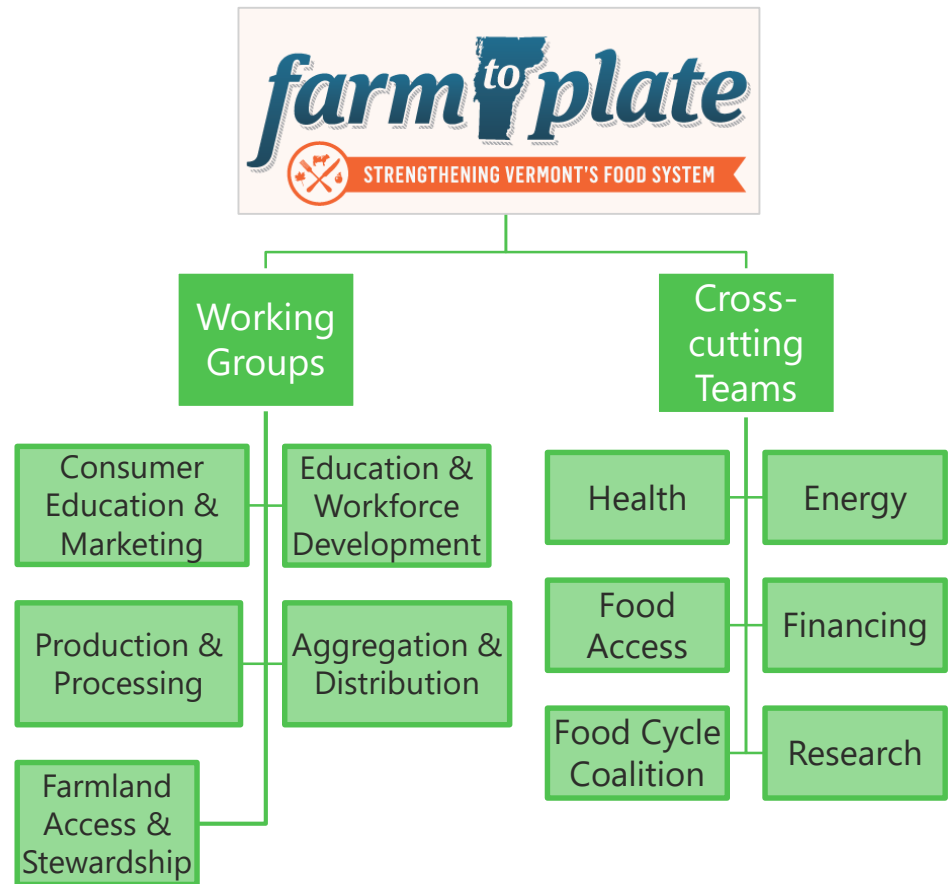


Figure. Organizational structure of *Farm to Plate Initiative*  
Logo by *Farm to Plate Initiative*

Source: <https://www.vtfarmtoplate.com/getting-to-2020>





Photo by Vermont Foodbank

# Partner Highlights

# COME ALIVE OUTSIDE

*Engaging kids in physical activity year around*



**Direct  
education**

**2,524  
youth  
reached**

**11  
partner  
schools**

**15  
community  
events**

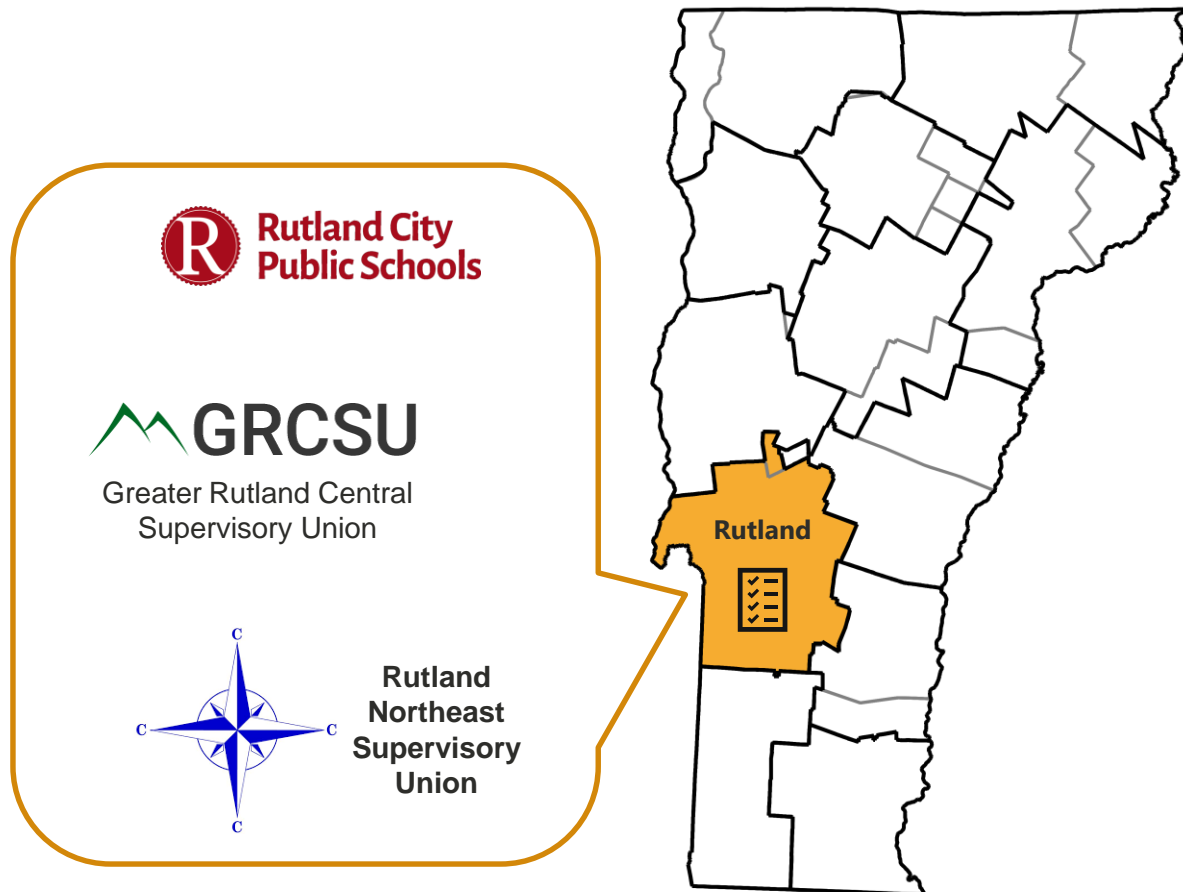
Through its Summer and Winter Wellness Passport Program, Come Alive Outside (CAO) works to keep youth and families active all year long. Participants can earn points for each activity completed and enter to win prizes at the end of each season. CAO partners with local school districts to distribute passports and survey students and parents about passport use and impacts; passports may also be requested directly from the CAO website, or downloaded for digital use. Additionally, CAO partnered with the Vermont Foodbank, another SNAP-Ed implementing partner, this year to distribute passports in Windham County. CAO also partners with parks and recreation boards, local businesses, health centers, and other local nonprofit organizations and government agencies.



Photo by Annie Spratt on *Unsplash*

# WHERE COME ALIVE OUTSIDE WORKS

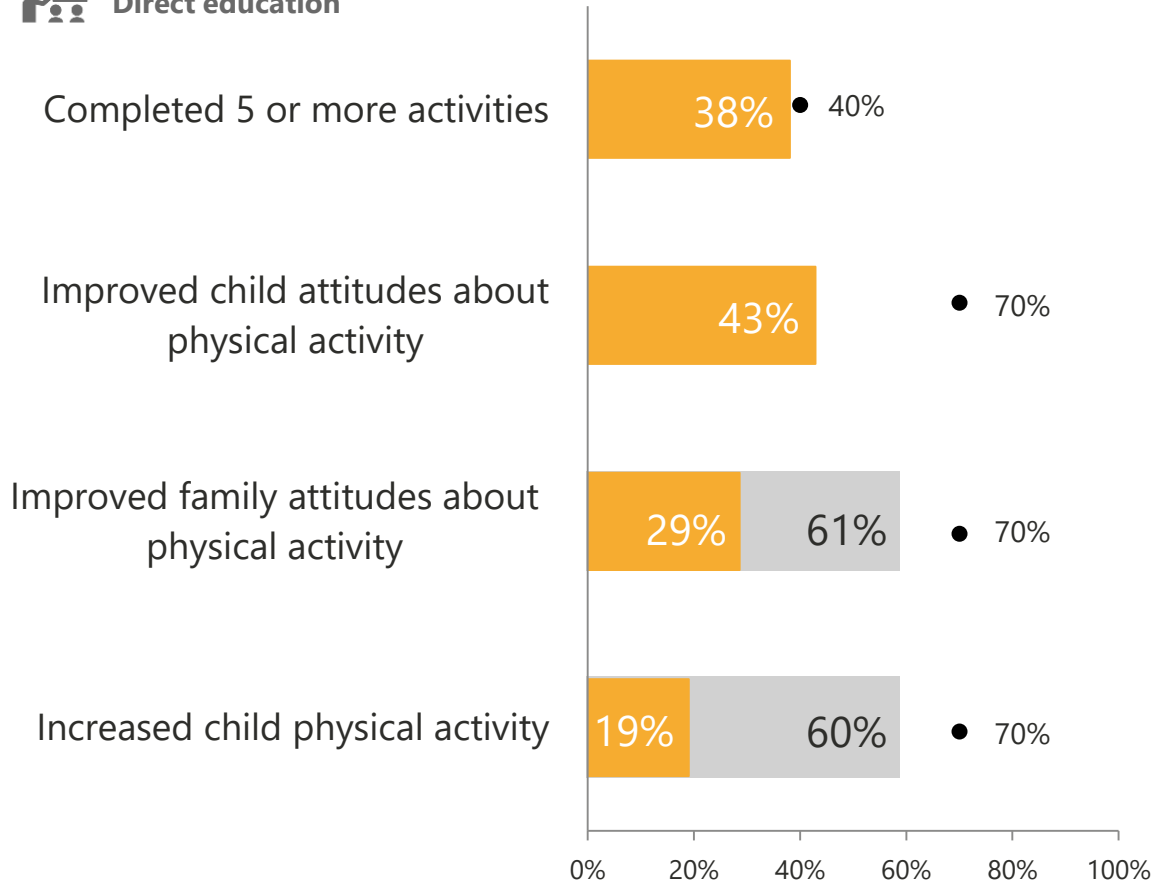
*CAO worked with 11 schools across three school districts in one SNAP-Ed region to engage youth in physical activity.*



# COME ALIVE OUTSIDE PARENT SURVEY FINDINGS

COVID-19 had a major impact on program activities and data collection in 2020

## Direct education



● FY20 Measures of Success (targets)

■ Actual values, 2020 ■ Actual values, 2019 (data not available for all indicators)

Results from Summer Wellness Passport Parent Survey, 2020 (n = 23)

## Key Takeaways

- There was no data collection for the Winter Passport because of COVID-19.
- Very few (n=23) parents responded to the Summer Passport survey.
- Results fell far below targets for attitudes and physical activity measures.
- There was a large differences in findings between 2019 and 2020, likely a result of COVID-19 impacts on family activities and a non-representative sample completing surveys.

# COME ALIVE OUTSIDE COVID-19 ADAPTATION

*CAO added new activities to its passports to create COVID-safe options*

All the activities included in the 2020 Summer Passport were “Make Your Own Adventure” activities. These included activities in the following categories:



**Get active  
outside**



**Learn with  
your hands**



**Play  
unplugged**



**Grow something  
you can eat**



**Connect  
with nature**

These kinds of activities will be included in the Winter Passport for 2020-2021, along with tips to help youth continue to stay safe and healthy during the pandemic.



Photos by *Come Alive Outside*

# UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT EXTENSION

Helping Vermonters of all ages reach their health and wellness goals



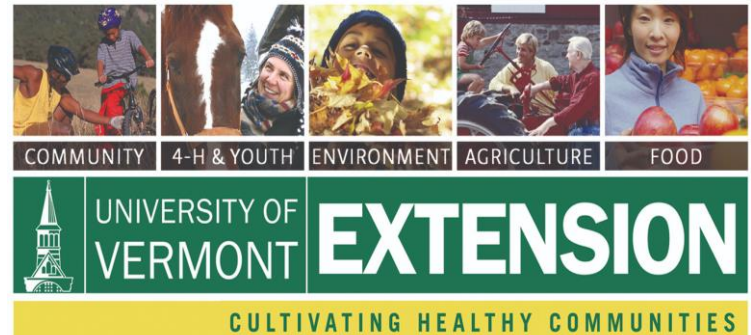
**Direct  
education**

**126  
enrolled**

**39  
local  
partners**

**168  
education  
sessions**

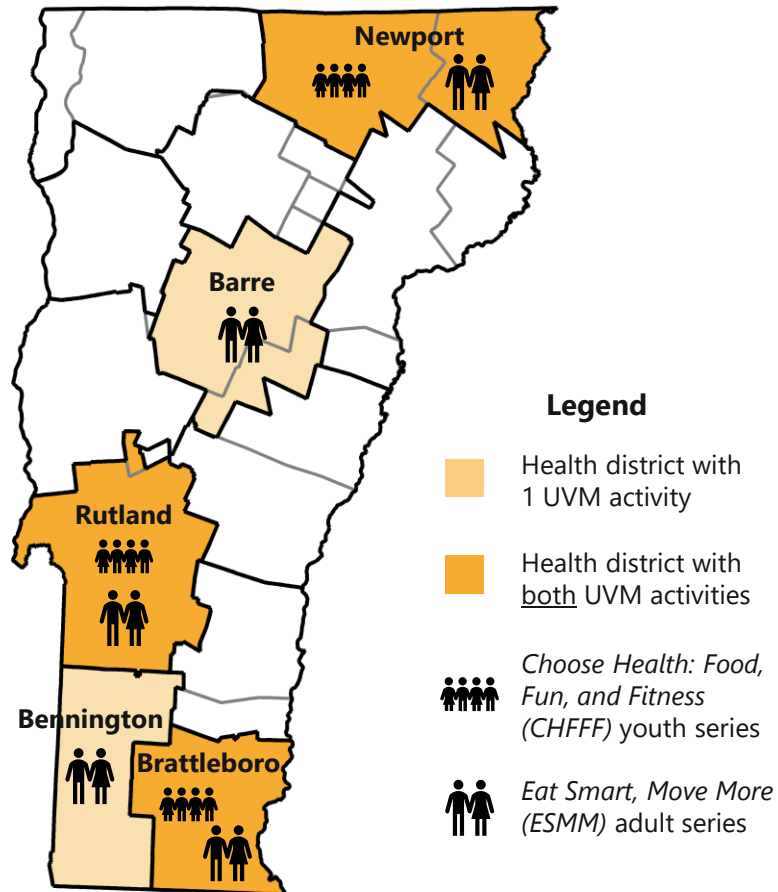
New to the Vermont SNAP-Ed program this year, University of Vermont (UVM) Extension conducts in-depth direct nutrition education in order to promote healthy eating among youth, adults. UVM partners with local school districts to implement the *Choose Health: Food, Fun, and Fitness (CHFFF)* curriculum in schools. UVM also offers *Eat Smart, Move More (ESMM)* courses for adults through partnerships with community organizations. These programs directly reached 126 participants who attended a series of educational courses and indirectly reached an equal number of their household members. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, UVM created a new virtual ESMM course with six self-paced video lessons and live phone/web support by UVM Extension staff to help participants meet their individual learning goals. CHFFF courses were also conducted virtually, with UVM Extension staff coaching teachers through implementation.



Photos by UVM Extension

# WHERE UVM EXTENSION WORKS

*UVM brought direct nutrition education to adults and youth in five SNAP-Ed regions across the state.*

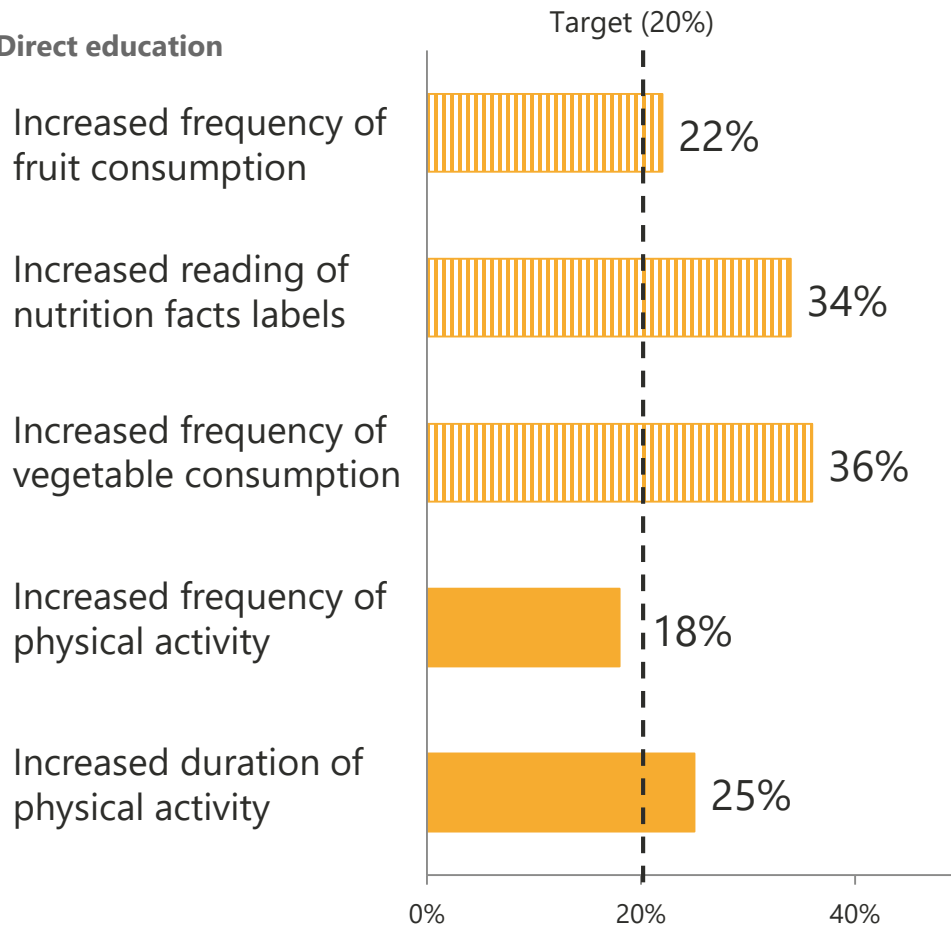


# UVM EXTENSION YOUTH SURVEY FINDINGS

*CHFFF series exceeded targets for increasing fruit and vegetable consumption, food resource management, and physical activity duration among youth*



## Direct education



--- FY20 Measures of Success (targets)    ▨ Actual nutrition values    ■ Actual physical activity values

Results from CHFFF youth surveys, 2020 (n = 77)

## Methods Considerations

- Youth surveys were collected prior to and during COVID-related school closures. Youth were able to improve healthy behaviors during the pandemic with the help of remote nutrition education delivery.
- The small number of completed adult surveys (n=13) makes it difficult to draw conclusions from the results. Therefore, only the youth results are presented in the chart



# UVM EXTENSION COVID-19 ADAPTATION

## *Eat Smart, Move More goes virtual*

Because of COVID-19, Eat Smart, Move More (ESMM) was converted to a distance learning series for SNAP eligible adults across the state. The new self-led online series is comprised of six 30-minute online video lessons that equip participants with knowledge and skills to improve their nutrition and physical activity. These include tips on meal planning and budgeting, recipe tutorials, and even workout videos. Participants are also able to connect with a UVM Nutrition Educator via phone or video chat to answer any questions and help participants meet their healthy eating and fitness goals. Those who complete the course receive a certificate of graduation, a nutrition reference book, and a strength training band to further encourage program graduates to continue to utilize the skills developed during the course.

Reading labels more closely, budgeting, finding ways to make health meal plans.

More aware of portion control, which was difficult even before the pandemic.

ESMM participant responses to the survey question *"What changes have you made?"*

I am aiming to make half of my plate fruits and veggies for both my son and I!

I am walking and playing with the kids more.

# VERMONT FOODBANK

*Increasing healthy food access for all Vermonters*



**Direct  
education**



**PSE  
change**

The Vermont Foodbank (VFB) provides direct service nutrition education and implements PSE strategies through their VT Fresh and Veggie Van Go (VVG) programs. Direct education includes cooking demonstrations and taste tests, which take place at local food shelves. Food shelves also implement PSE strategies to promote fruit and vegetable consumption, including using signage and attractive displays, improving systems to procure more healthy foods, and reducing or eliminating limits on the amount of fresh produce visitors can access. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, cooking demonstrations and taste tests were suspended. In response, VFB developed cooking videos and increased virtual engagement with SNAP eligible individuals and families. VVG events were also modified so that participants could continue to access much needed food in a safe and comfortable way.

Over  
**54,000**  
reached

**48**  
sites  
served

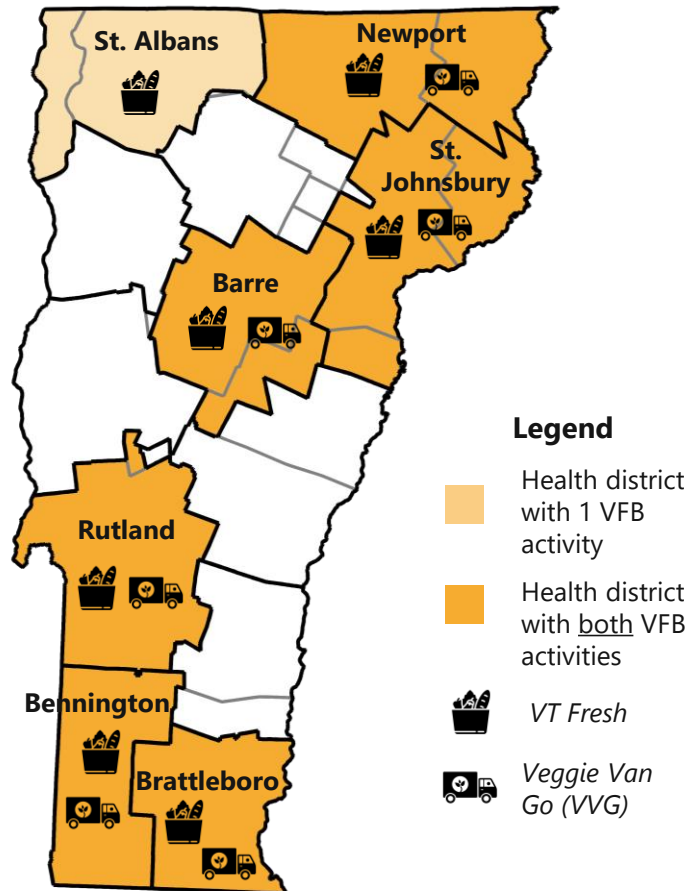
**79**  
local  
events



Photos by Vermont Foodbank

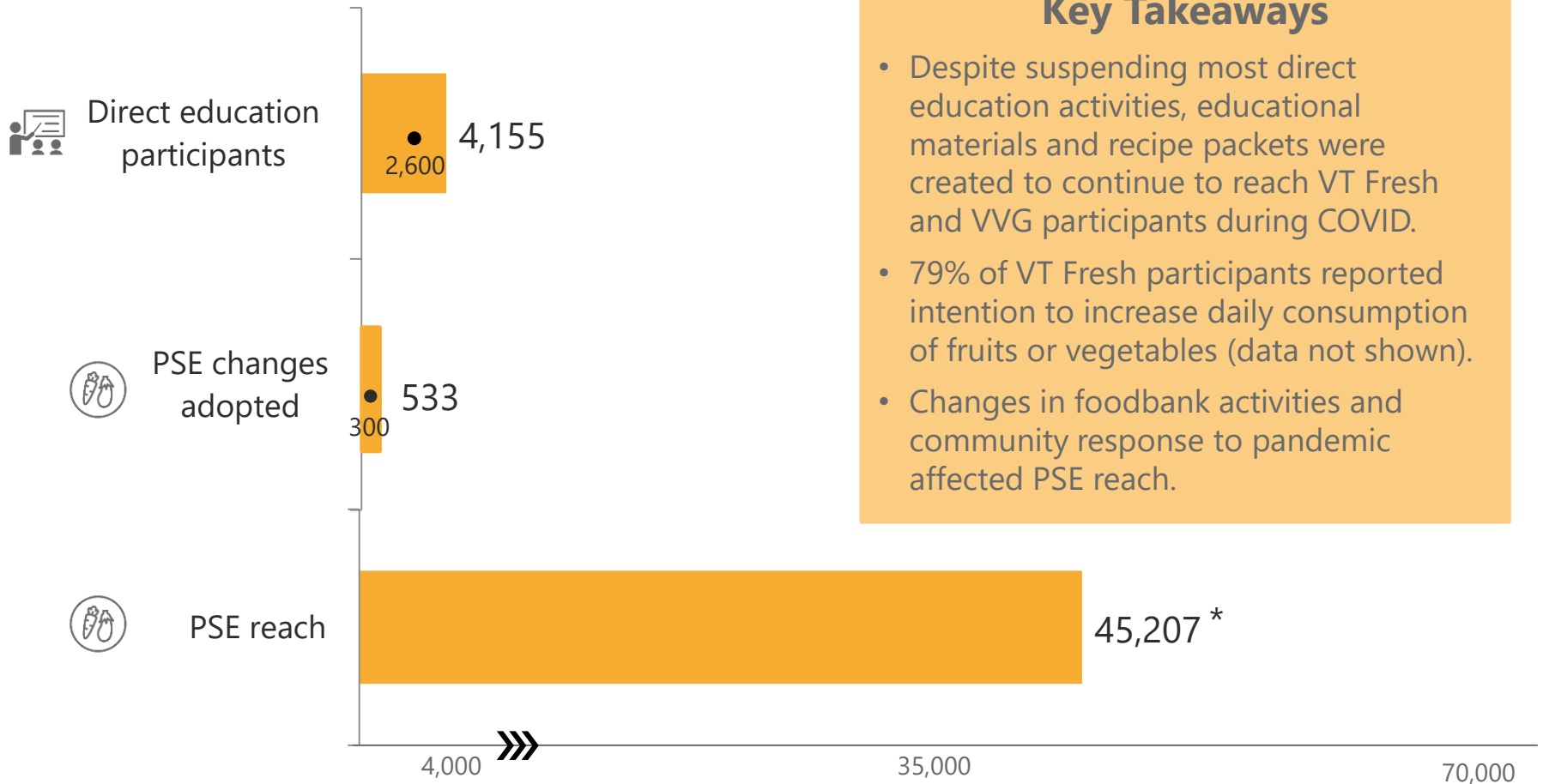
# WHERE VERMONT FOODBANK WORKS

*VFB worked in seven SNAP-Ed regions to improve community access to fresh produce and nutrition education to encourage healthy eating.*



# VERMONT FOODBANK REACH AND PSE FINDINGS

Programs exceeded targets for number of direct education participants and PSE changes adopted, which reached over 45,000 people



### Key Takeaways

- Despite suspending most direct education activities, educational materials and recipe packets were created to continue to reach VT Fresh and VVG participants during COVID.
- 79% of VT Fresh participants reported intention to increase daily consumption of fruits or vegetables (data not shown).
- Changes in foodbank activities and community response to pandemic affected PSE reach.

● FY 20 Measures of Success (targets)    ■ Actual values

\*No target for PSE reach was set this year due to changes in methodology to eliminate duplicates.

Results from Vermont Foodbank annual report to VDH

# VERMONT FOODBANK COVID-19 ADAPTATION

*New precautions and new responses to a changing food landscape*

## *Activities before COVID*

64 educational events  
1,404 participants reached  
543 PSE activities

## *Activities during COVID*

15 educational events  
2,751 participants reached  
311 PSE activities

October  
2019

March  
2020

September  
2020

Cooking demos  
&  
taste tests  
**suspended**

## *New activities during COVID*

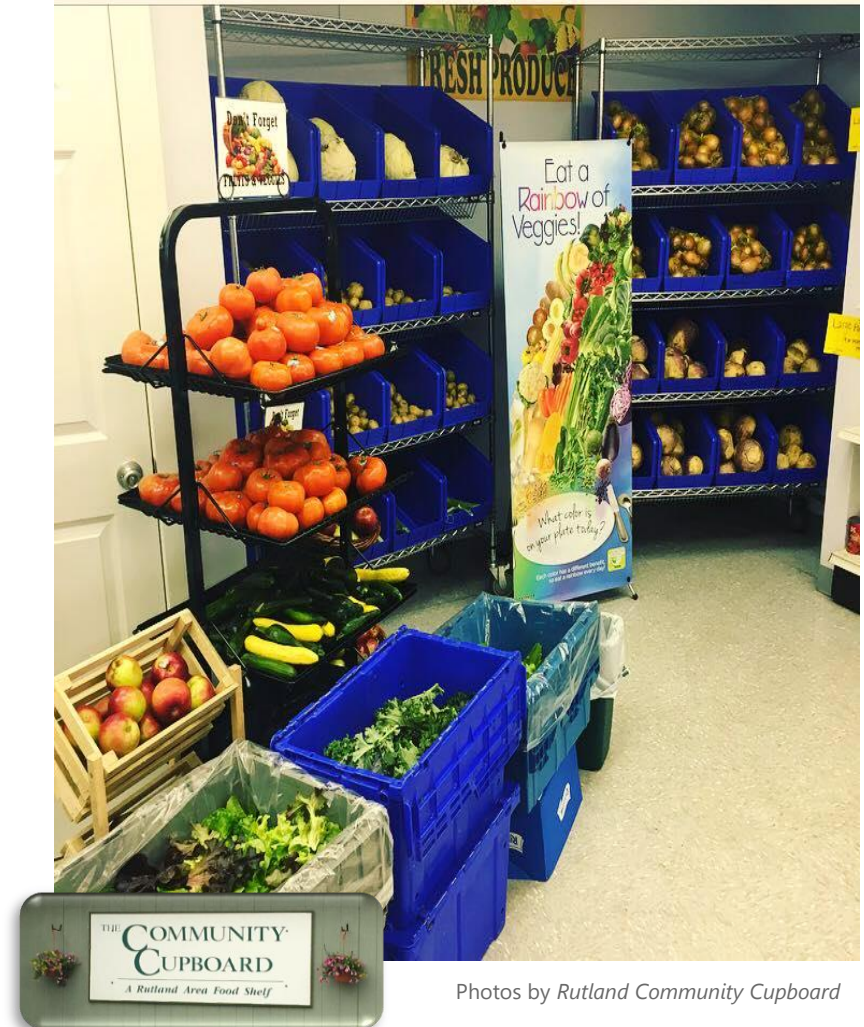
- Modified food distribution protocols
- Created 'snack packs' for easy grab-n-go
- Developed cooking videos
- Distributed recipe packets
- Increased virtual presence and engagement

# VERMONT FOODBANK IN ACTION

## *Rutland Community Cupboard keeps families fed*

As the second largest food shelf in Rutland County, Rutland Community Cupboard implemented PSE changes to respond to increased demand for food during the COVID-19 pandemic. Before, visitors were only been able to access the Cupboard six times per year. Now, the Cupboard allows for weekly visits to provide for Rutland residents in need. VFB has helped to improve produce handling and distribution, which has increased visitor access to produce. Additionally, all guests are now able to take an unlimited amount of produce.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Cupboard has also established protocols to help keep visitors, staff, and volunteers safe and healthy. These include reducing hours to minimize contact, limiting the number of visitors inside the food shelf at one time, and distributing pre-packaged food boxes to visitors. Next year, the Cupboard will continue to do all it can to keep families fed during the pandemic and beyond.



Photos by Rutland Community Cupboard

# HUNGER FREE VERMONT

*Changing the environment to improve child nutrition*



**PSE change**

**1,078**  
youth  
reached

**22**  
local  
partners

**77**  
council  
meetings

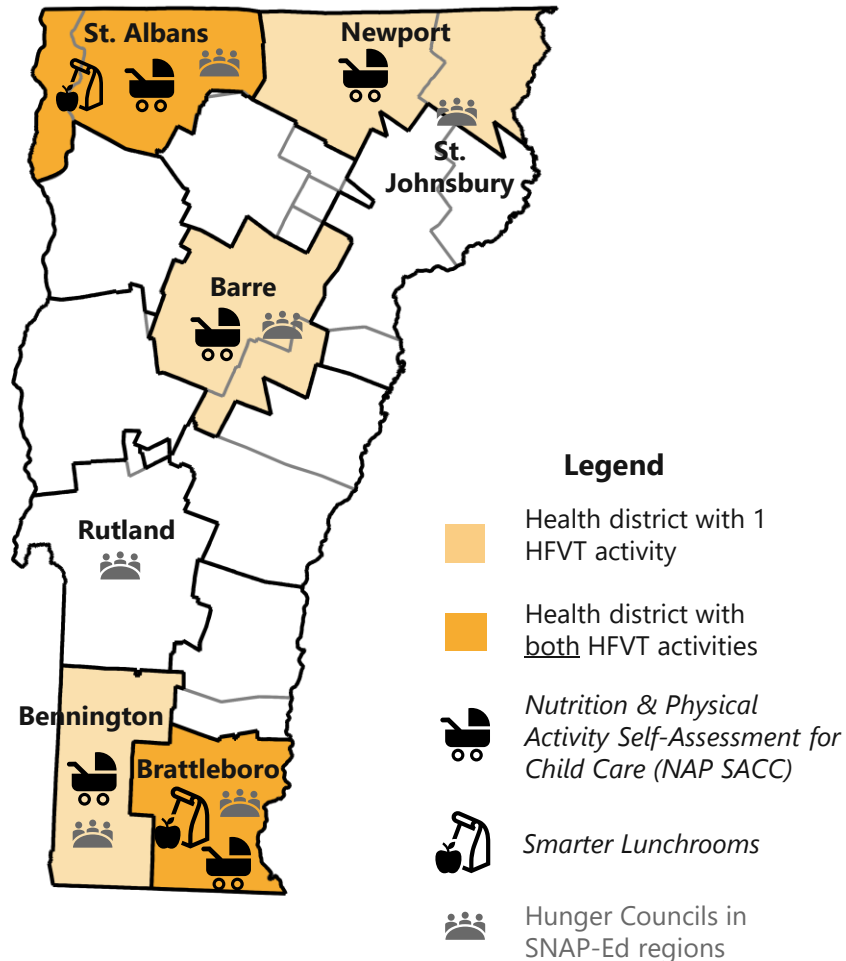
Hunger Free Vermont (HFVT) implements PSE strategies to promote physical activity and healthy eating among youth across the state. These include the *Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC)* and *Smarter Lunchrooms (SL)*. Both strategies faced challenges due to COVID-19 but were able to adapt to the needs of partner organizations. NAP SACC training was conducted virtually, with 11 new providers being onboarded. Due to COVID-related school closures, many SL activities were put on hold, but HFVT staff continued to provide resources and assistance to schools planning for the '20-'21 school year. HFVT also convenes local Hunger Councils, which are multi-sector collaboratives seeking to address food insecurity in their communities. The frequency of Hunger Council meetings increased dramatically during COVID-19 as councils worked to respond to community food needs.



Photos by Hunger Free Vermont

# WHERE HUNGER FREE VERMONT WORKS

*HFVT worked in seven schools and 15 child care programs in five SNAP-Ed regions across the state to improve nutrition and physical activity among children and infants. HFVT also convened Hunger Councils that serve all seven SNAP-Ed regions.*



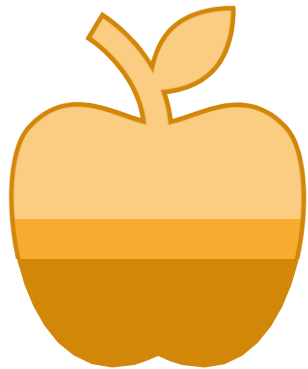


# HUNGER FREE VERMONT PSE FINDINGS

40 PSE changes were completed across all sites in FY20, with 19 more in progress



## Smarter Lunchrooms



**19** Pending  
**4** In Progress  
**13** Completed

Goal: 30 completed

*Examples of PSE changes:*

- Provided school staff and families information about the benefits of school meals annually
- Facilitated fruit or vegetable taste tests at least once per academic year
- Engaged students in the development of materials to promote school meals

## NAP SACC



**15** In Progress  
**27** Completed

Goal: 18 completed

*Examples of PSE changes:*

- Established, reviewed, updated, and shared a written nutrition policy with staff and families
- Expanded nutrition and cooking curriculum in classrooms
- Increased active play time and opportunities for physical activity

# HUNGER FREE VERMONT IN ACTION: SMARTER LUNCHROOMS

## *Smarter Lunchrooms at Alburgh Community Education Center*

In Fall 2019, the Alburgh Community Education Center was recruited by Hunger Free Vermont to implement and evaluate *Smarter Lunchrooms (SL)* activities. Through action planning alongside HFVT staff, Alburgh administrators identified five PSE changes to implement during the '19-'20 school year. Successful changes included the promotion of fruits through attractive displays, a new MyPlate poster, and flyers distributed to school staff and families. Other action items have been postponed as a result of school closure due to COVID-19.

Alburgh worked to ensure that students would continue to receive meal service during the pandemic by delivering meals on bus routes throughout the community. Staff also distributed flyers to families with information about the school meal program and associated benefits to students. Once it is safe to return to school, Alburgh hopes to renew its commitment to improving student nutrition by conducting fruit and vegetable taste tests, tending to the school garden, and increasing student involvement in SL activities.



Photos by Hunger Free Vermont  
Logo by Alburgh Community Education Center

# HUNGER FREE VERMONT IN ACTION: NAP SACC

## *Implementing NAP SACC at the Family Center of Washington County*

In May 2020, the Family Center of Washington County was recruited by HFVT to participate in training for the *Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC)*. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all meetings and training sessions were conducted virtually. With the help of HFVT staff, the Center identified three nutrition goals and created an action plan to improve the health and well-being of the children they serve. One of the Center's first goals was to update its nutrition policy with relevant NAP SACC best practices, which was completed in June. Staff also worked to expand nutrition and cooking curriculum in the classroom and is now using the Learning about Nutrition through Activities (LANA) curriculum included in the SNAP-Ed Strategies & Interventions Toolkit.

Next year, the Center will begin implementing the Tiny Tastes curriculum, a series of evidence-based taste test modules that helps child care providers introduce new flavors and healthy foods to young children.



Photo by Jacob Lund on *The Noun Project*  
Logo by the *Family Center of Washington County*

# HUNGER FREE VERMONT COVID-19 ADAPTATION

## *Mobilizing Hunger Councils for COVID-19 Response*

Hunger Free Vermont convened 77 Hunger Council meetings this year, most of which were related to COVID-19 response. Comprised of members representing various sectors within each SNAP-Ed community, Hunger Councils met frequently either virtually or in-person to share information and respond to food access concerns. The focus of each Hunger Council has been different in order to meet their region's unique needs. Almost all Hunger Councils have continued to meet regularly to address immediate needs, and some have begun to start planning for more resilient food systems. Hunger Councils have also heard from and advised state and federal officials, sharing grassroots perspectives to increase awareness and understanding of local needs and to further inform improvements to the statewide crisis response. As Vermont works to recover from the health and economic impacts associated with COVID-19, Hunger Councils will continue to play an integral role in securing food for Vermonters in need.



Photo by Hunger Free Vermont

### Top Sectors Represented in Hunger Councils



State/local  
Government



Agriculture &  
Emergency Food  
Services



Non-profit  
Organizations



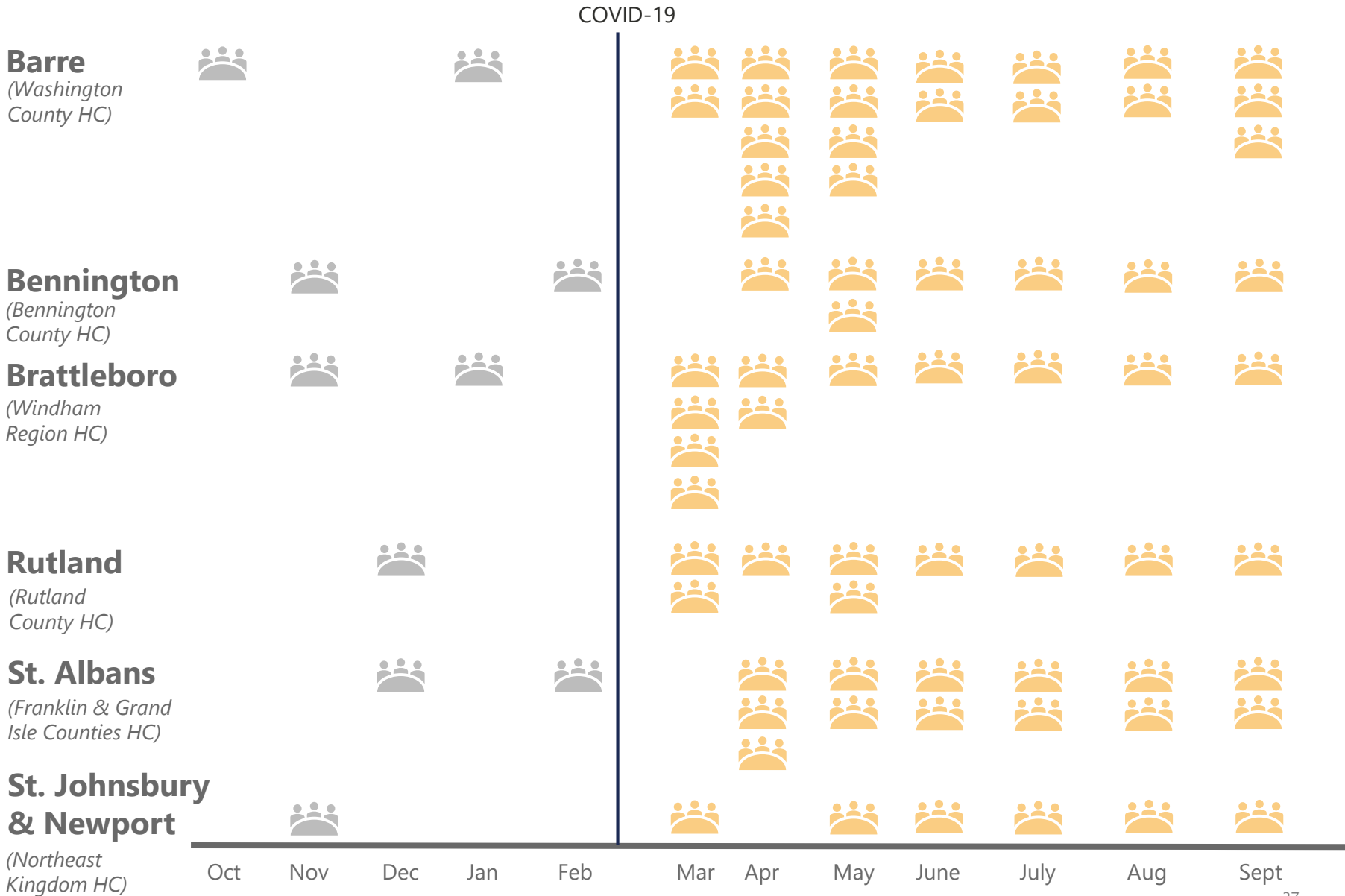
Child & Family  
Services



Education

# HUNGER FREE VERMONT COVID-19 ADAPTATION

Frequency of Hunger Council (HC) meetings increased when COVID-19 pandemic began





# Conclusions and Recommendations

# APPROACH TO DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions and recommendations in this section were informed by PDA's evaluation approach, which includes:

- An emphasis on **use** and **practical value** of evaluation findings.
- The use of **mixed methods**, including quantitative and qualitative data, to enrich evaluation findings.

Based on reports and other documentation from SNAP-Ed implementing partners and a review of how SNAP-Ed is evaluated in other states, this section summarizes key takeaways from the FY20 evaluation and identifies one COVID-19 adaptation, one success, and one opportunity for each partner's evaluation.

PDA looks forward to discussing these conclusions and recommendations with VDH and the implementing partners.



Photo by Paul Magdas on *Unsplash*

# KEY TAKEAWAYS



The SNAP-Ed program had a broad reach through direct education and PSE change strategies across its five priority regions and beyond.



Formal partnerships with other organizations in the state are used to align the goals and activities of Vermont agencies working on federal food assistance and physical activity programs.



The four implementing partners continue to work toward established targets; some goals have been attained this year, but work remains in other areas.



The COVID-19 pandemic impacted many planned activities, but implementing partners continued to practice flexibility and devised new activities to make progress towards their goals



# COME ALIVE OUTSIDE



## **Adaptation:**

Added new activities to its activity passports to create COVID-safe options and continue to promote healthy activities for youth.



## **Success:**

Established a partnership with Vermont Foodbank to deliver passports through the Veggie Van Go program.



## **Opportunity:**

Review the way that data is collected and used to ensure that it is accurately capturing program effects.

# UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT EXTENSION



## **Adaptation:**

Added new distance learning options to continue providing direct education programs.



## **Success:**

Surpassed goals for increased fruit and vegetable consumption, food resource management, and physical activity duration.



## **Opportunity:**

Consider adding new data collection mechanisms to assess whether behavioral changes are sustained by participants over time.

# VERMONT FOODBANK



## **Adaptation:**

Added cooking videos, modified food distribution protocols, and increased their virtual presence.



## **Success:**

Exceeded goals for direct nutrition education and PSE strategies implemented.



## **Opportunity:**

Consider leveraging qualitative data collection to further explore the implementation and impact of PSE activities.

# HUNGER FREE VERMONT



## **Adaptation:**

Increased the frequency of Hunger Council meetings after the pandemic to respond to greater food insecurity.



## **Success:**

Completed 40 PSE changes through the Smarter Lunchroom and NAP-SACC programs, with 19 more in progress.



## **Opportunity:**

Leverage qualitative data collection opportunities to understand the experience of individuals participating in these programs.

# RECOMMENDATIONS



Strategically use qualitative data collection to enrich findings.

While it is helpful to use quantitative data to display findings and trends, some intentional qualitative data collection could enrich quantitative findings. Qualitative data collection methods might include focus groups or key informant interviews and could also be used to bring in additional voices of program participants.



Leverage evaluation as partners continue adapting to COVID-19.

The pandemic has presented unique challenges for each partner. It is likely that many of the adjustments they have made in their activities will be necessary for some time. Evaluation can be used to help partners develop data-informed plans to adapt their programming and help them see lessons that have emerged during a time of adaptation and change.



Review and revisit current PSE strategies being implemented.

Evaluation and data can help partners better understand how PSE strategies are being implemented at program sites and explore the influence of site-specific context in implementation and effectiveness of PSE strategies. Furthermore, evaluation planning and data can be used to help select future PSE strategies.