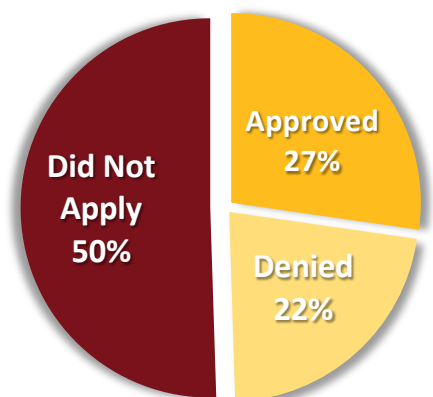


Introduction

Led by Boynton Health, the UMN-TC campus has implemented a SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) Screening and Referral Program to connect students to food benefits via: a brief a condensed SNAP screening survey shared with all campus food pantry participants, as well as referral emails sent to students identified by financial aid data. Students identified as likely eligible for SNAP via the program screening were referred to a partner organization for support in applying for SNAP.

This program is a low-cost way to help students meet their food needs in a dignified, respectful manner. To evaluate the program, Boynton Health administered a brief online satisfaction survey to students who had sought SNAP screening via the SNAP Screening and Referral Program during the 2020-2021 school year. In collaboration with the UMN School of Public Health, the purpose of the evaluation was to improve the program for future students.

Did students apply for SNAP after they were referred through the program? If so, were they approved for benefits?



Among those who DID apply for benefits:

64% were referred via direct email from the university financial aid office

26% were referred after screening via the UMN-TC Nutritious U Food Pantry

Among students who applied and were approved, most received benefits within 2-3 weeks. However, for some it took as long as 10-11 weeks.

Reasons students didn't apply to SNAP after being referred:

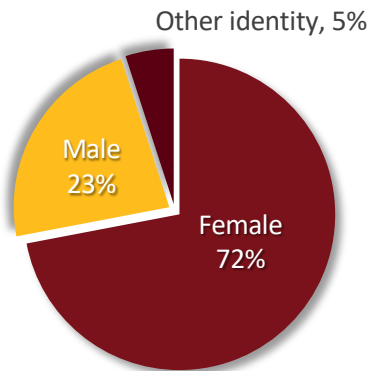
- Many reported feeling intimidated, overwhelmed, or confused by the application process.
- Some were unsure how to get the documents they needed to apply.
- Others reported no one followed-up with them after they were referred.
- Some didn't want to take benefits from others who need it more.
 - *This is a common misconception! In fact, SNAP is an entitlement program, meaning anyone who qualifies can receive benefits. Receiving benefits does not take benefits away from anyone else.*

Some difficulties students had while applying for SNAP included:

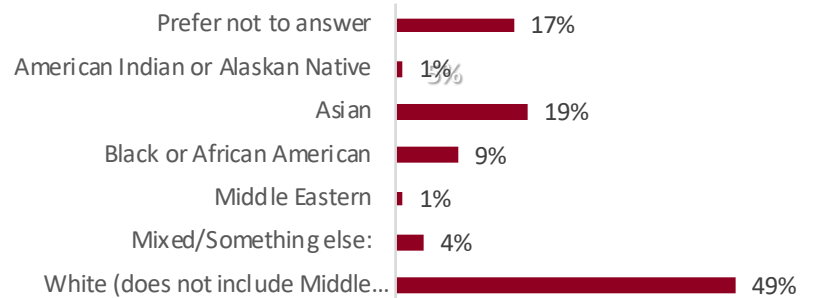
- It took a long time to apply.
- They didn't hear back after applying.
- They didn't know where to retrieve documentation they needed.
- It took a long time to receive benefit.

Who participated in this evaluation?

By gender:



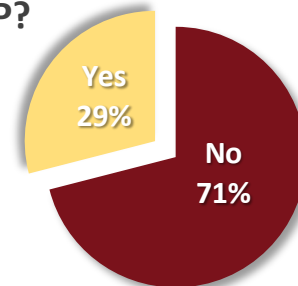
By race:



Racial identity % based on those who responded to the question (n=149).
Gender identity based on 89% (n=133) who responded to this question.

How many participants had previously been on SNAP?

23% had received SNAP as a child
4% had received SNAP as an adult



Based on 92% (n=137) of participants who responded to this question.

What's next?

Institutions of higher education can help students by providing them with details about the SNAP application process and easy access to required documents, as well as training key staff on SNAP eligibility.

Collaboration across colleges can also foster shared learning and improved processes. For example, The SNAP for Students Statewide Coalition, led by the University of Minnesota Twin Cities, facilitated a 7-week structured discussion series providing technical assistance to over 30 schools to promote SNAP benefits to more students. Continued support and collaboration across schools is necessary to improve outcomes and reach the most students possible.

On-going communication between key groups, like colleges, state agencies, county workers, and third party SNAP outreach specialists, can also reduce confusion and ensure eligible students receive benefits. Exploring reasons that likely eligible students were denied benefits and continuing training with county workers will ensure future applicants are not wrongfully denied.

SNAP is the largest federal nutrition assistance program fighting hunger in America. Institutions of higher education can help students learn about SNAP eligibility and how to apply. Ensuring eligible students receive benefits helps make ends meet, so students can focus on academics rather than worrying where their next meal will come from.