

Evaluation of *The Action Pack* Media Campaign



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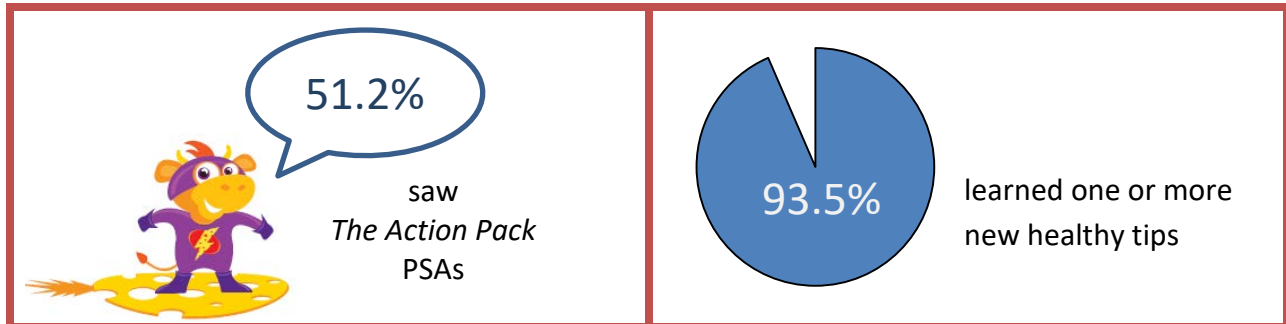
Executive Summary



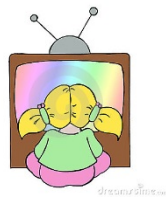
The Action Pack media campaign consists of multimedia public service announcements (PSAs) to help low-income families improve their eating and physical activity behaviors.

Evaluation	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	OUTSTANDING
<input type="checkbox"/>	Excellent
<input type="checkbox"/>	Very Good
<input type="checkbox"/>	Average
<input type="checkbox"/>	Below Average

Evaluation of the media campaign validated the effectiveness of *The Action Pack* PSAs in reaching low-income families.



38.0%
saw PSAs on buses



33.5%
saw PSAs on television



11.7%
saw PSAs on the Internet

Introduction

The Action Pack project

The Action Pack project involved the development of characters, logos, recipe cards, promotional items, a website and a media campaign, designed to promote nutrition messages to families with young children. The project was developed in 2012 by the Connecticut Department of Public Health (CT DPH) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education (SNAP-Ed) as an effort to support and enhance nutrition education messages when targeting low-income families for nutrition education. This project utilizes the Core Nutrition Messages developed by the United States Department of Agriculture – Food and Nutrition Services, to complement the key recommendations of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*¹. The message concepts (e.g., role modeling, eating together as a family, cooking with preschool-aged children, and letting kids serve themselves at meals) help families take incremental steps toward adopting the recommended eating patterns. *The Action Pack* project uses these core messages as part of nutrition education efforts with the goal of helping target audiences improve the eating and physical activity behaviors of their families.

The Action Pack media campaign

As part of *The Action Pack* project, *The Action Pack* media campaign is comprised of multimedia public service announcements (PSAs), developed in video, audio and print formats. The two video PSAs are named *Play Hard* and *Reach*.² The two audio PSAs are named *Best Recipe* and *Try Try Try*. The five print PSAs (Appendices A and B) are designed for the exterior and interior of mass transit buses, but can also be used for billboards, magazines, posters, stickers or other print media. All PSAs are available in both English and Spanish, and are intended to raise public awareness on the importance of fruit and vegetable consumption, choosing low-fat dairy products, and being physically active every day. The PSAs have been conveyed through multiple delivery platforms, including television, radio, mass transit signage, and the Internet since 2012, primarily targeting low-income families in the Hartford, New Haven, Waterbury, and Bridgeport areas.

The Action Pack media campaign of 2019

The CT DPH SNAP-Ed program conducted another round of *The Action Pack* media campaign from June to August 2019, targeting areas in Hartford, New Haven, Waterbury and Bridgeport. The primary target audience was low-income parents (18 years or older) with young children; the secondary target audience was preschoolers 2-5 years of age from low-income families. With a budget of \$90,000, SNAP-Ed contracted Connecticut Public Television (CPTV) to deliver *The Action Pack* PSAs through 30-second television spots, and their placement on mass transit buses. CPTV also worked with Makiaris Media to

¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. (2015). *2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. 8th Edition. Retrieved from <http://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/>.

² Connecticut Department of Public Health. (2019). *The Action Pack*. Retrieved from <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Health-Education-Management--Surveillance/Nutrition/SNAP-Ed-Program>.

execute the logistics of mounting PSAs on buses, airing them on television, and displaying digital video PSAs that were accessible on the Internet through various websites. Table 1 shows the breakdown of the PSA delivery platforms used for *The Action Pack* media campaign, along with the location, time period and cost. The cost for each delivery platform varied and was dependent on the number of spots per week for television PSAs (or the number of PSAs placed on buses), and the number of weeks PSAs were aired or displayed. Television PSAs accounted for 41.6% of the total budget, bus PSAs accounted for 39.6%, Internet PSAs was 3.3%, and the remaining 15.5% was for administrative fee and production/installation cost.

Table 1. *The Action Pack* media campaign of 2019: delivery platform, location, time period, and cost.

PSA delivery platform	Location/Designated Market Area	Time period	Cost
Connecticut Public Television	Hartford and New Haven	June – September	\$15,895
Altice Cable (Networks included BET, E!, GSN, MTV, NICK, OWN, Disney XD, TOON, TLC, GALA, and Fox Deportes)	Bridgeport	July – September	\$6,500
Comcast (Networks included TOON, NICK, TLC, MTV, FRFM, FOOD, HALL, and VH1)	Hartford, New Haven and Waterbury	June – September	\$11,766
Univision & Unimas Spanish TV	Hartford and New Haven	June – August	\$3,300
Digital Video Spanish (Internet)	Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven and Waterbury	June – September	\$3,000
CT transit buses (Exterior/Interior)	Bridgeport	June – August	\$10,890
CT transit buses (Exterior)	Hartford	June – August	\$9,225
CT transit buses (Exterior)	New Haven	June – August	\$6,750
CT transit buses (Exterior/Interior)	Waterbury	June – August	\$8,790

Giving the significant financial resources committed to conducting *The Action Pack* media campaign, we were interested in evaluating its effectiveness in reaching our target audiences. In the past, we were only able to obtain vendors' commercial market data that estimated impressions and the reach of the PSAs. For *The Action Pack* media campaign of 2019, we wanted to design our own evaluation to study how effective the campaign was in reaching our target audiences. Specifically, our research questions were: (1) What percentage of the target audience saw the PSAs? and (2) among those who did, did they pay attention to the PSAs or learn a new healthy tip from them?

Evaluation Methods

With limited financial and personnel resources and time constraints for evaluation, we elected to concentrate the study only in the Hartford area. The study design was to survey 250 adults through a convenience sampling across at least five locations in and around Hartford. We preselected 10 potential sites so as to have some flexibility in the event we were unable to obtain permission from business establishments to conduct interviews on their property. The potential sites were selected based on the

maximum likelihood of encountering our target audience, close proximity to a bus stop, and having a diverse geographic coverage of the Hartford area. Three interviewers were trained to conduct the surveys, all bilingual in English and Spanish. One of the interviewers was also assigned as the coordinator; her responsibility included staff scheduling, securing site permissions, and being present at all survey sites to coordinate field activities.

The survey was conducted over five days between July 23, 2019 and August 28, 2019. A total of 255 surveys (200 in English and 55 in Spanish) were administered by randomly selecting adults at the six locations in the Hartford area. The survey (Appendix C) consisted of 12 questions, seven of which were related to *The Action Pack* mass transit PSAs (displayed on buses in Hartford) and the campaign's television and Internet PSAs. Several of the campaign questions were asked only if the response to a previous question was "yes". The remaining questions collected demographic information (age, zip code, ethnicity and race); the person's gender was noted by the interviewers, and one question asked if there were any children under the age of six living in the participant's home.

Participants were instructed to look at pictures of *The Action Pack* mass transit PSAs as the interviewers flipped through them, and then asked if they had ever seen them on a bus, or in ads with the same characters on television or the Internet. If the answer was "yes" to having "ever seen" them on a bus or on television, they were asked if they had seen them during the previous three months (i.e., had "currently seen" the ad). The Internet ads were shown only in the three months prior to the survey, so it was not necessary to ask this additional question. If the participants had ever seen any of the ads, they were asked if they read/listened to them (i.e., paid attention to the ads). If the participants had read or listened to any of the ads, it was then asked if they had learned one or more healthy tips from them. The collected data were entered into an Excel database and analyzed using SAS® 9.4 software. The study and survey instruments were approved by the CT DPH Human Investigation Committee prior to carrying out the interviews.

Results

Of the 255 adults surveyed, 62.3% were female (Table 2). Nearly half (49.2%) of the participants were 50 years old or older and 58.6% were Hispanic. Most (84.7%) lived in Hartford and about 30% had at least one child in the home who was less than six years of age. More than one-quarter (26.3%) of the participants were surveyed at the Department of Social Services in Windsor/North End of Hartford, followed by two outdoor locations (20.4%), plus the Community Health Services (20.0%), the Hartford Public Library (17.7%), and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) office located at the Hispanic Health Council on Main Street in Hartford (15.7%).

Table 2. Characteristics of survey participants (N=255).

Characteristics	No.	%
Gender		
Male	96	37.7
Female	159	62.3
Age		
<30 years old	43	17.2
30–39 years old	50	20.0
40–49 years old	34	13.6
50+ years old	123	49.2
Race/Ethnicity		
Non-Hispanic White	17	6.8
Non-Hispanic Black	74	29.5
Hispanic	147	58.6
Non-Hispanic Other	13	5.2
City of residence		
Hartford	216	84.7
Other Connecticut city	23	9.0
Unknown/out of state	16	6.3
Has children < 6 years old living in home		
Yes	74	29.1
No	180	70.9
Survey location		
Community Health Services, Hartford	51	20.0
Department of Social Services, Windsor Office	67	26.3
Outdoors: Barnard Park, Hartford	36	14.1
Outdoors: Park/Washington Street, Hartford	16	6.3
Public Library, Hartford	45	17.7
WIC office, Hispanic Health Council, Hartford	40	15.7

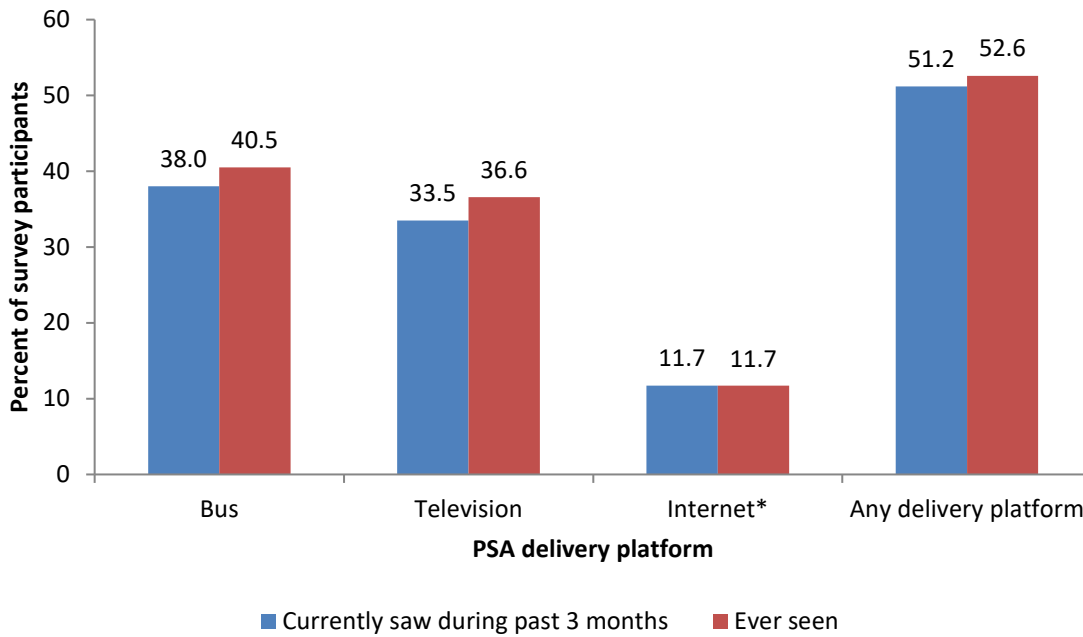
Table 3 shows that over half (51.2%) of survey participants had seen at least one of *The Action Pack* PSAs in the previous 3 months. Three out of five (59.3%) male participants had seen at least one PSA from any of the delivery platforms, compared to less than half (46.4%) of the female participants. Among those thirty years old or older, three out of five (59.4%) had seen at least one PSA, compared to 28.6% among those under thirty years of age. Three out of five (59.4%) non-Hispanic Black participants had seen at least one PSA, compared to about half (49.0%) among Hispanic participants. Seven out of ten (70.2%) participants surveyed at the Community Health Services clinic had seen at least one PSA, but only three out of ten (28.2%) participants surveyed at the WIC Office at the Hispanic Health Council had seen any of the PSAs. The results also show that 38.0% of participants had seen the bus PSAs, 33.5% had seen the television PSAs, and 11.7% had seen the Internet PSAs over the previous 3 months.

Table 3. Percentage of participants who saw *The Action Pack* media campaign during the previous 3 months.

	During the previous 3 months saw PSA on the...			
	Bus (%)	Television (%)	Internet (%)	Any delivery platform (%)
Overall	38.0	33.5	11.7	51.2
Gender				
Male	46.7	31.1	12.6	59.3
Female	32.7	34.9	11.1	46.4
Age				
<30 years old	14.6	18.6	4.9	28.6
30–39 years old	43.5	27.7	17.4	56.3
40–49 years old	46.9	37.9	21.2	60.6
50+ years old	43.2	41.5	9.8	56.9
Race/Ethnicity				
Non-Hispanic Black	45.7	44.1	16.9	59.4
Hispanic	35.7	30.0	9.8	49.0
Non-Hispanic White/Multiracial/Other	31.0	30.0	10.0	44.8
City of residence				
Hartford	40.0	34.8	11.0	52.2
Outside Hartford/Unknown	27.0	26.3	15.4	46.0
Has children < 6 years old living in home				
Yes	35.7	36.6	13.0	48.0
No	38.6	31.8	11.2	52.4
Survey location				
Community Health Services, Hartford	57.5	49.0	10.2	70.2
Department of Social Services, Windsor	29.2	32.3	14.9	42.2
Outdoor locations (2), Hartford	45.8	39.1	18.0	62.0
Public Library, Hartford	38.6	23.3	7.0	52.3
WIC office, Hispanic Health Council	18.4	20.5	5.1	28.2

As previously mentioned, CT DPH had conducted *The Action Pack* media campaign prior to 2019. Figure 1 shows that 52.6% of participants had “ever seen” at least one of *The Action Pack* PSAs. Overall, 40.5% of participants reported having ever seen the bus PSAs, 36.6% said they had ever seen PSAs on television, and 11.7% had ever seen the PSAs on the Internet. Because *The Action Pack* Media Campaign was shown on the Internet for the first time in 2019, the result for the percentage ever seen through this medium was the same for those who had seen it in the “past 3 months”.

Figure 1. Percentage of participants who have ever seen *The Action Pack* media campaign or currently saw during the past 3 months by PSA delivery platform.



**The Action Pack* media campaign was shown on the Internet for the first time in 2019; thus, “currently saw” and “ever seen” on the Internet have the same results.

Figure 2 shows that among participants who had seen one of *The Action Pack* PSAs in the previous three months, 45.6% had seen it on one delivery platform (i.e., on a bus, television or the Internet); 40.8% had seen a PSA on two different delivery platforms; and 13.6% had seen the PSAs on all three delivery platforms. Among participants who had read or listened to any of *The Action Pack* PSAs, the majority (93.5%) indicated that they learned one or more new healthy tips (Table 4).

Figure 2. Among participants who saw *The Action Pack* media campaign during the previous 3 months, the percentage who saw them on one, two or all three PSA delivery platforms.

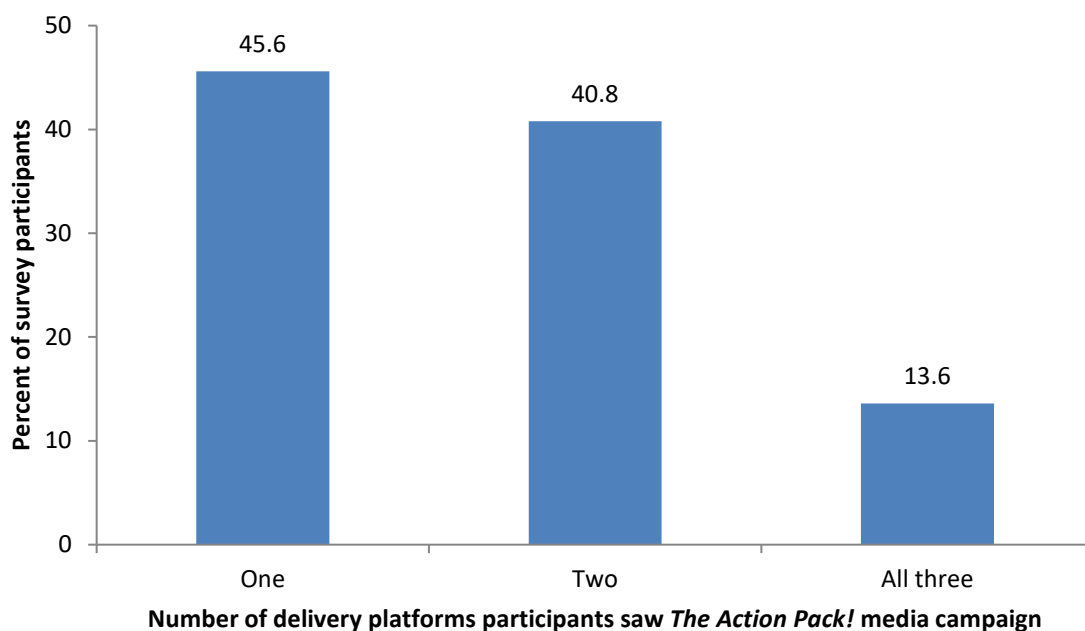


Table 4. Among participants who had read or listened to any of *The Action Pack* public service announcements, percentage who learned one or more new healthy tips.

	Total No.	No.	%
Overall	108	101	93.5
Gender			
Male	46	43	93.5
Female	62	58	93.6
Age			
<50 years old	48	43	89.6
50+ years old	60	58	96.7
Race/Ethnicity			
Non-Hispanic Black	35	33	94.3
Hispanic	62	58	93.6

Discussion

The results showed that about half of the survey participants had seen at least one of the PSAs from *The Action Pack* media campaign during the summer of 2019. One of the limitations of this study was that the findings were specific only to the Hartford area, due to limited resources and time constraints, and thus, results cannot be generalized to other areas in New Haven, Waterbury and Bridgeport, where the PSAs were also run. Additionally, the number of bus PSAs and the frequency of television PSAs aired in

the Hartford area were different than in the other cities, which further suggests that results from Hartford could be different from those in New Haven, Waterbury and Bridgeport.

Another limitation of the study was that survey participants were not randomly selected. Specific interview sites were chosen to achieve the maximum likelihood of encountering the targeted low-income audience, for their close proximity to a bus stop, and for attaining a diverse geographic coverage of the Hartford area. Therefore, the potential pool of participants was limited to those who happened to be at the interview sites at the time the interviews were conducted. Too, in order to match our interviewers' work schedule, surveys were conducted only on weekdays, between 9am and 2pm. Such a schedule could potentially bias our sample selection by underrepresenting people who work during the day. Furthermore, recruitment of survey participants was self-directed by the interviewers. Interviewers with different levels of comfort regarding which participant to recruit could introduce additional sample selection bias.

The Action Pack media campaign occurred from June to August 2019, while the evaluation survey was conducted from the end of July to the end of August. Survey participants recruited in late July would have had less opportunity to be exposed to the media campaign as compared to those recruited in late August, and thus would have resulted in a lower percentage of people seeing the PSAs. For example, the WIC office at the Hispanic Health Council was the first site selected in late July and had the lowest percentage of participants who saw *The Action Pack* media campaign during the previous 3 months, so the timing of the survey could also have influenced the results. However, surveys at outdoor locations were conducted only two days after surveying the WIC office, and participants surveyed there had more than double the percentage reached compared to those surveyed at the WIC office. The outdoor locations were at a bus stop with participants having a higher likelihood of seeing the PSAs on buses, so proximity to buses or circumstances leading to different degrees of exposure to the PSAs may have a greater influence on the results. The survey did not collect information on the circumstances affecting exposure (i.e., frequency of participants seeing a bus, watching television or use of the Internet); therefore, it was not possible to decipher those potential influences.

The results showed about two-fifths of survey participants saw the PSAs on buses, one-third saw them on television, and one-ninth saw them on the Internet. But such results should be interpreted with caution because the budget allocated for bus, television and Internet displays varied. Money spent on delivering PSAs through buses and television were fairly similar, but both were significantly higher than that spent on the Internet. A lower budget for the Internet could have resulted in a lower exposure to PSAs. Also, we did not solicit the services of the more popular websites (e.g., YouTube, Google) or social networking sites (e.g., Facebook) for the media campaign; doing so would have increased the cost, but also potentially increased the percentage reached through the Internet.

Another limitation of the study was the lack of equipment to play television or Internet PSAs in the field during the interviews. The inability to allow survey participants to view the actual videos could have led to a lower or less reliable recall of a participant's having seen them. Finally, a large majority of those who had read or listened to any of the PSAs indicated they had learned one or more new healthy tips. We could not independently verify participants' responses if they indicated having seen the PSAs, nor

could we verify if in fact they did learn a new healthy tip. Despite these limitations, the findings offered some insight into the reach and effectiveness of *The Action Pack* media campaign.

Conclusion

The CT DPH SNAP-Ed program has consistently used *The Action Pack* media campaign as part of its nutrition education efforts to help low-income families improve their eating and physical activity behaviors. The evaluation of the media campaign allowed SNAP-Ed to validate the effectiveness of PSAs in reaching low-income families. The evaluation showed over half (51.2%) of survey participants had seen at least one of *The Action Pack* PSAs, and the vast majority (93.5%) indicated that they had learned one or more new healthy tips. The findings were specific to the Hartford area; future evaluation efforts should be expanded to other cities in order to gauge the campaign's effectiveness on a statewide level.

The evaluation findings also showed 38.0% of participants had seen the PSAs on buses, 33.5% had seen them on television, and 11.7% had seen them on the Internet. However, because each PSA delivery platform had a different budget and the Internet did not use the more popular websites or social networking sites, these results should be interpreted with caution. To better understand the cost effectiveness of media campaigns, future evaluation studies should examine the relationship between cost and the percentage of participants reached for each PSA delivery platform. *The Action Pack* media campaign of 2019 was successful in reaching the target audiences; future media campaigns should include an evaluation component in order to continuously measure their effectiveness in raising public awareness on important health topics.

Appendix A: Exterior Bus Public Service Announcements


Tail – behind the bus



Queen – on the right side of the bus



Appendix B: Interior Bus Public Service Announcements




Cooking with your kids. The best recipe of all.

*Make healthy meals and memories together.
It's a lesson they'll use for life.*

The Action Pack Take Action! Eat Healthy! Eat fruits, veggies and low-fat dairy!

For more healthy tips go to: www.ct.gov/dph/actionpack



This initiative is an equal opportunity provider and employer. This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a healthier diet. To find out more, contact 1-800-858-8446.



Serve new foods with a **BIG** helping of patience.

*Offer fruits, veggies and low-fat dairy many times.
Give them a taste at first and be patient.*

The Action Pack Take Action! Eat Healthy! Eat fruits, veggies and low-fat dairy!

For more healthy tips go to: www.ct.gov/dph/actionpack



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Take Action! Eat healthy! your kids learn from watching you.

*Eat fruits, veggies and low-fat dairy
and your kids will too.*

The Action Pack Take Action! Eat Healthy! Eat fruits, veggies and low-fat dairy!

For more healthy tips go to: www.ct.gov/dph/actionpack



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Appendix C: Survey Instrument

Hi, my name is _____ from the Department of Public Health, and we are conducting a short survey to see if you have seen some of our nutrition ads. Would you mind helping us by answering some questions? It will only take about 2 minutes.

1. Do you have any children living with you who are under the age of 6?

- Yes
- No
 - Refused
 - No answer
- Dropped out

2. What is your zip code, please? _____

- Don't know/Not sure
 - Refused
 - No answer
- Dropped out

Please look at these ads... //Flip through The Action Pack ads//

3. Have you ever seen any of them on a bus?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/Not sure
- Do not ride or see buses
 - No answer
- Dropped out

If yes, did you see them during the past 3 months?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/Not sure
 - No answer
- Dropped out

4. Have you ever seen ads on TV with these characters?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/Not sure
- Do not watch TV
 - No answer
- Dropped out

If yes, did you see them during the past 3 months?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/Not sure
 - No answer
- Dropped out

5. Have you ever seen ads on the Internet with these characters?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/Not sure
- Do not use Internet
 - No answer
- Dropped out

//If the person does not answer "Yes" to at least one of questions 3, 4 or 5, skip to Question 8//

6. Did you read or listen to any of the ads?

- Yes
 - No
 - Don't know/Not sure
 - No answer
 - Dropped out
- } **skip to Question 8**

7. Did you learn one or more new healthy tips from any of the ads you saw or heard?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/Not sure
 - No answer

Dropped out

8. Can you tell me your age? **//Continue reading all choices until respondent answered//**

Are you...

- Younger than 20

In your...

- 20s
- 30s
- 40s
- 50s or older

//Do Not Read//

- Refused
- No answer

Dropped out

9. Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

- Yes
- No
 - Refused
 - No answer

Check if response is based on staff's observation

Dropped out

10. What is your race? (You can choose one or more answers)

//Read All Choices//

- White
- Black or African American
- Asian
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- Other Race

Check if response is based on staff's observation

//Do Not Read//

- Refused
- No answer

Read: *"That's the end of the survey. Thank you for your help."*

//Do not ask//

Gender:

- Male
- Female

Date: _____
Location: _____
Staff Initials: _____