Using Human-Centered Design to Test and Implement Food Retail Interventions to Promote Healthy Food Choices Among Caregivers of Young Children

| Spring 2021 |

Authors
Claire Sadeghzadeh, Jared Bishop, Eduardo Hernandez, Tracy Dearth Wesley, Lindsay Guge Cozon, Liz Chen, Jill Panichelli, Megan Bradley, and Molly De Marco
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Project Overview

Cooking Matters, a part of Share Our Strength, works to strengthen state and local planning and delivery of stakeholder-informed, larger-scale interventions to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)-eligible recipients. Cooking Matters received funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and contracted with UNC’s Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention’s Food, Fitness, and Opportunity Research Collaborative (FFORC) to lead the development of interventions for SNAP-Ed to improve its impact and reach at the Sectors of Influence (SOI) level. SNAP-Ed programming at the SOI level involves partnering with a variety of stakeholders across sectors (e.g., Education, Food Industry) to collectively impact healthy eating and active living in low-income communities. As described in greater detail in the Introduction to the SOI-Evaluation Framework section of the SNAP-Ed Toolkit, “the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recognizes that all sectors of society—including individuals and families, educators and health professionals, communities, nonprofits, businesses, and policy makers—shape the context and characteristics of the environmental settings and jurisdictions where people eat, learn, live, play, shop, and work.” Cooking Matters and FFORC utilized IDEO.org’s approach to human-centered design (HCD) to develop this guide, which included three distinct phases: Inspiration, Ideation, and Implementation. The table below provides an overview of each phase’s key activities and their unique opportunities for SNAP-Ed:
Human-centered design presents an opportunity to develop interventions that center priority audiences’ needs and desires while engaging the wide range of stakeholders needed for implementation. Design thinking is a human-centered approach to problem solving. It is a methodology and a set of tools to generate user-centered solutions to technical and social programs.

The design challenge we were seeking to solve with this project was: How might we develop a robust SOI-level intervention for SNAP-eligible caregivers of young children (0 – 5 years old) that meets their needs and advances SNAP-Ed’s reach and impact?

(IDEO. [2015]. The Field Guide to Human-Centered Design [San Francisco]).
How To Use This Guide

“And the cool part is they [the food retailer] take the idea and they run with it in how it’s going to work for them. And it can be ideas beyond what we’ve ever thought to brainstorm in this group.”

– Food Retail Stakeholder

We are excited to share the ideas we have co-created with key stakeholders to improve outcomes for SNAP-eligible caregivers and children in food retail settings with you. We call these initial ideas intervention options as they are basic concepts that will need to be tested in real-world settings, modified and updated, and then combined to meet the needs of your specific SNAP-Ed eligible caregivers and children in your food retail environment. Think of these intervention options as bite-sized works in progress that have been developed with meaningful stakeholder input along the way.

Throughout the Inspiration and Ideation phases of this project, SNAP-eligible caregivers and food retail stakeholders emphasized the importance of tailoring and adapting healthy retail strategies to meet the unique needs of your community. Food retail environments are embedded in complex systems and include a wide range of stakeholders, values, and resources that produce facilitators and barriers to successful implementation. Human-centered design offers an opportunity to co-create healthy retail strategies that center SNAP-eligible recipients’ needs in these environments and attend to key system stakeholders’ ideas and concerns for implementation. As the quote above highlights, through collaboration and co-creation, you and your food retail partner may unlock new ideas and solutions relevant to operationalizing the healthy retail strategies included in this Guide.
As such, this Guide is designed to help SNAP-Ed Implementing Agencies who are curious about or have identified healthy retail strategies as an appropriate potential policy, systems, and environmental change approach in their states and communities after a needs assessment:

- Learn about the needs and desires of SNAP-eligible caregivers of young children (ages 0 to 5 years) identified through a series of listening and human-centered design (HCD) workshops with the priority audience.
- Identify and build partnerships with stakeholders needed to support implementation and testing.
- Identify the appropriate intervention option that is supported by your food retail partner’s values, resources, and capabilities.
- Test and refine the intervention option using HCD methods and mindsets for prototyping.
The figure below offers a visual flow for the steps this Guide will help you complete as you work your way through the content, templates, and decision points.
This Guide is not a step-by-step process for implementing a one-size fits all healthy retail strategy. It is a step-by-step process for how to adapt and refine a healthy retail strategy to your state or community using HCD methods. To implement successful interventions that cross several sectors, this process must include developing deep partnerships, reflecting on how each decision either centers or decenters the priority audience, and co-creating and testing new ideas or strategies with the stakeholders who are instrumental for implementation and sustainability. This process reflects the FY 2022 Guidance (page 19) that clarifies SNAP-Ed’s role in “creating sustainable, long-term PSE change” by “working closely with communities and partners to develop PSE changes that are useful and relevant to SNAP-Ed participants, and feasible for PSE activity partners to sustain.”

We hope this Guide provides you with new tools, methods, and mindsets for developing and testing emerging health promotion strategies with your partners, while centering those we intend to serve. The SNAP-eligible caregivers we spoke with could not be clearer about their excitement for these ideas as opportunities to support their families’ health and well-being and their frustration with the rate of change inherent in public health.

This Guide is meant to help you move to action and translate caregiver-generated ideas to vibrant, robust, sustainable strategies in your community. If you need help along the way, email us at designforsnaped@unc.edu. Good luck!
Step 1: Understand the needs and values of SNAP-eligible caregivers of young children

In this step, we share with you how and what we learned from SNAP-eligible caregivers of young children. These learnings can help you understand the needs, values, and priorities of this audience as they apply to the food retail setting. As we take you through our process, we also share some tips and lessons learned from our experience that could be used to inform future work you might do.

FFORC team members first engaged 14 SNAP-eligible caregivers of young children (0-5 years) across five states in a series of virtual design thinking workshops (see Figure 1). Initially, these workshops were to be held in person, but the COVID-19 pandemic caused us to amend our plans. To learn more about how we adapted our methods as well as lessons learned, best practices, and implications for research and practice, see Adapting Design Thinking Methods and Best Practices to a Virtual Environment: Lessons Learned and Future Considerations. We used a variety of HCD methods to engage SNAP-eligible caregivers in understanding pain points and opportunities for developing ideas that meet their needs and interests in the grocery retail/food industry sector.

In total, we hosted four weekly workshops with the caregivers. Each workshop built on the previous one and produced unique products to ultimately garner key insights into this priority audience and generate intervention options to co-create with stakeholders.
During session one, caregivers built out empathy maps. Empathy maps can help uncover motivations, challenges, and barriers experienced in a particular setting or experience. The empathy maps shown below captured caregivers’ thoughts, actions, and emotions within the grocery store setting. It’s important to note these empathy maps were developed during the COVID-19 pandemic (Summer 2020); therefore, many of the data points reflect concerns about health and safety and highlight modified practices and behaviors.
During the second session, we worked with SNAP-eligible caregivers to develop themes from the empathy maps and generate insight statements. Insight statements transform themes into core building blocks towards the original design challenge. We developed the first round of insight statements by synthesizing the themes across the groups to give caregivers a starting point during the next session. This allowed us to ease the cognitive burden on caregivers while still allowing them to develop the final product. We next spent some time refining the insight statements, allowing caregivers time to evaluate the insight statements created and make any edits or adjustment. The following are the final insight statements:

**Insight Statement 1**

“There is a lot to do and consider when I’m at the grocery store, like reading labels and checking my budget. It can be overwhelming and tiring at times, but I still really enjoy going because it gets me out of the house, helps me connect with my community, and teaches my kids about food and finances.”

**Insight Statement 2**

“I prepare for the grocery store before I leave the house so I can focus on the task at hand while I’m there. If I came across new information at the store, I would like it to be something I can quickly read or something I can take home to read later so that I can focus on shopping.”
During the last session, SNAP-eligible caregivers developed journey maps, which visualize a process from beginning to end. We asked them to share all the steps they complete before, during, and after a trip to the grocery store with an emphasis on steps they really enjoy (i.e., opportunities) and steps they really do not enjoy (i.e., pain points).
Each SNAP-eligible caregiver developed their own map and presented it to the group, and we synthesized their journeys to visualize a common journey through the grocery shopping experience. Combined with the insight statements and empathy maps, the journey maps allowed us to begin brainstorming what types of intervention options could be integrated into the journey that also aligned with the core values and needs that we identified in previous sessions.
Following the caregiver-only workshops, SNAP-eligible caregivers were then joined by stakeholders with expertise in the grocery retail setting and those with expertise in SNAP-Ed implementation. Key stakeholders were identified from a stakeholder map and prioritization matrix that assessed both the level of power and level of interest stakeholders have in this design project (see Appendix 2).
When selecting participants for the co-creation sessions, we worked to identify a diverse group of participants who share and understand the common goal of improving the well-being of communities and caregivers of young children. As each stakeholder has a unique view of the sector, we worked to include the broadest mix of stakeholders as appropriate. We were also mindful of power dynamics during this selection process to ensure SNAP-Ed eligible caregiver voices were still centered throughout.

Here are some tips and ideas for managing power dynamics that worked for us:

- Reflect on who has the ultimate say. It’s okay if not all decisions are collaborative but get clear about who is making the final decision and when decision making can be shared.
- Develop group norms that emphasize the importance of all voices. We used “No one knows everything, together we know a lot.”
- Make sure the facilitator is noticing how much space each person is taking up to invite others to share their thoughts.
- Use small group discussions and a variety of activities to accommodate different learning and engagement styles.
- Develop consensus style voting processes, like dot voting, to refine ideas and options.
- Limit the use of acronyms and jargon. Ask people to explain jargon or acronyms if they come up.
- Compensate stakeholders and people with lived experience at equal levels as experts.
A series of four co-creation sessions were held to work collectively toward developing an intervention Guide (see Figure 2). These co-creation sessions prioritized hands-on opportunities to build tangible products of what the intervention options may look like using a range of HCD methods. Prior to the first co-creation session, eight ideas, generated from the caregiver sessions, were circulated with stakeholders for feedback. Pre-session surveys with questions specific to each stakeholder type were used to collect feedback on these ideas (e.g., food retail stakeholders were asked about the practicality of the ideas based on their experience in the retail setting as well as their level of interest based on food retail goals). There was also open discussion during the first co-creation session around these ideas in terms of likes, dislikes, questions, or concerns. Following this discussion, stakeholders were asked to provide any additional ideas. All stakeholders then voted on their top two choices from the list, and the meal box idea received the most votes followed by the rewards program idea. Details on the HCD methods used in each of the four co-creation sessions can be found in Appendix 3.
Figure 2. Overview of Co-Creation Sessions

Co-Creation Session Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Output</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Session 1</td>
<td>Early December 2020</td>
<td>Initial draft of program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 2</td>
<td>Mid-December 2020</td>
<td>Refined program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 3</td>
<td>Mid-January 2021</td>
<td>Refined program and checklist for implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 4</td>
<td>Late January 2021</td>
<td>Remaining questions answered and key program details finalized</td>
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</tbody>
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Stakeholders included 3 caregivers, 3 representatives from SNAP-Ed, 3 representatives from the retail sector, 2 Cooking Matters team members, and 5 FFORC team members.
As you move into identifying a partner and testing out one or more of the intervention options we generated through this process, it may be helpful to reflect on the following questions to ensure our findings around SNAP-eligible caregivers’ needs and desires are transferable to the communities you serve:

- How do the insight statements and key findings connect with what I already know about the community we serve?
- What curiosities do I have about the values and needs of SNAP-eligible caregivers in my community? What does their journey through the grocery store experience look like? *Think transportation, frequency of shopping, cultural food preferences, online versus in-store shopping experience, etc.*
- How could I learn about these curiosities without adding participant burden (e.g., does this information exist somewhere else? Can I set-up a key informant interview with someone who works closely in this space?) What are human-centered design methods that I could use to build out deeper insights that are context-specific?
Step 2: Identify a potential retail partner

When looking to identify a potential retail partner, it will first be important to do some pre-work or to research the business prior to initiating discussions. This pre-work can help to identify any early roadblocks to success and ensure that initial criteria to identify the right retail partner is met. Much of this pre-work or research can be done by reviewing potential retail partner websites or searching for recent news articles. You also may need to send some emails to gather additional information. These initial emails could be to a community relations manager, regional or local manager, or potentially another community-based organization with an established relationship.

The type of information you may want to gather before initiating the conversation should include the food retailer’s:

- Stated values and mission, perhaps included in a Corporate Responsibility platform or highlighted through established community partnerships
- Existing prepared meal programs
- Health and wellness programs and/or staff capacity to support these including Registered Dietitians, Community Liaisons, and/or Wellness Program Managers
- Existing rewards programs
- Acceptance of SNAP/EBT and/or WIC
- Support of other community health and wellness initiatives or organizations (e.g., Cooking Matters at the Store tours, partnerships with food banks to reduce food waste)

Use the tool below to gauge the fit of the potential retail partner by responding to some key questions. The more the food retail partner is aligned with SNAP-Ed’s goals, focus, and guiding principles, the greater likelihood they will be a strong partner to test and implement strategies to make it easier for families to shop for and prepare healthy foods at home.
Checklist for Identifying the right retail partner

Instructions:
After researching the food retail partner online, complete this checklist to determine how closely they may align with the goals and values of SNAP-Ed and how supportive they may be of emerging healthy retail practices. Only one of the questions is required (indicated by a *), but retail partners that check more of the boxes below may be a better fit in terms of values, resources, and interests.

Some other questions that may help you learn more about a potential food retail partner’s values, needs, and priorities to consider are:

- What are the store’s priorities around community engagement and giving? Who are their existing community-based partners?
- Who are the customers they target? How does their marketing, website, etc. speak to them? What can you learn about what is important to them through these channels?
- If the food retailer doesn’t have a dietitian on staff (dietitians are generally hired at the corporate or regional-level, not the store-level), who would be the best person at the store or market-level (community relations partner, marketing manager) to initiate a conversation about a potential healthy retail strategy?
**Guiding Question**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guiding Question</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>(If exploring one site) Is this site a SNAP-Ed eligible food retailer?</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the retail partner have a health and wellness program? <em>If yes, spend some time to understand the components of the program. Do some components align with SNAP-Ed?</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the retail partner have a registered dietitian on staff and/or a dedicated individual leading health and wellbeing initiatives for the food retailer?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the retail partner already support other food security programs (e.g., partnerships with food banks or pantries)? <em>If yes, spend some time to understand if the partner has the capacity and interest in supporting additional programs and/or explore opportunities for potential collaboration among all partners.</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Do they accept Electric Benefit Transfer (EBT) online?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do they have a Corporate Responsibility platform? <em>Look for information that helps you learn about the business’s history, culture, and values.</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Does their mission statement support SNAP-Ed’s goal and guiding principles?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Yes:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total No:</td>
<td></td>
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*Required for SNAP-Ed. If you answered no to this question, this food retail location would not be an eligible SNAP-Ed partner as stated in the FY2022 SNAP-Ed Plan Guidance:*

- Food retail locations must accept WIC and SNAP benefits to qualify as a site for SNAP-Ed activities. Although many food retailers accept these benefits, States should only approve SNAP-Ed activities in locations which demonstrate significant patronage by low-income individuals and families. Stores located in census tracts where at least 50 percent of persons have gross incomes that are equal to or less than 185 percent of the poverty threshold may qualify as SNAP-Ed activity sites.

Name of Food Retail or Site Location: _______________________________________________________________
Step 3: Develop a plan to exchange information with your potential retail partner

Before meeting with the potential retail partner, it will be important for you to think through what you want to share with the retail partner and what you want to learn from them. In thinking through this information exchange, we encourage you to review the following brief: What’s in it for retailers? Establishing Partnerships with Food retailers to Conduct Healthy Food Choice Research. This brief shares insights from researchers working with various programs and projects, including SNAP-Ed, who have conducted healthy retail strategies for over five years with over 20 different corporate and family-owned food retailers.

The following tips pulled directly from the brief are most relevant to developing a meal box or rewards program intervention option:

● When you are having your initial meetings to build your partnership with a food retailer, you should be clear about what the food retailer can expect to gain as well as what you hope to gain. You should also address what each partner brings to the table. Be as flexible as you can be to the concerns and recommendations of the food retailer.

● When approaching a food retailer, remember that their decisions often are based on “the bottom line.” Emphasizing how your work could help food retailers improve their “bottom line” (i.e., sales and profit) is an absolute necessity and should be one of the first points of discussion. For example, you may want to talk about financial benefits to food retailers, such as how the promotion of fresh produce can increase sales.
Because many companies, particularly large national or regional food retailers, have Corporate Responsibility (CR) platforms or a marketing or public relations department, explaining that your work could contribute to the company’s CR platform and improve public perception of their business could be a convincing argument. Consumer trust and loyalty are important factors to a food retail. Highlight how these programs could increase consumer trust and loyalty.

Often, healthy retail strategies collect data to better understand or shape customers’ purchasing behavior. Food retailers are very interested in understanding why customers make certain purchasing decisions, which may require hiring market research firms. Your work could provide food retailers with this information at little cost, as an incentive for the partnership.

In thinking through how to share information about the potential partnership with the food retailer, it is important to consider the mindset of the food retailer and what is important to them. Food retailers operate on monthly or quarterly inventories, and results based on these time frames are often used to gauge the effectiveness of a new initiative. These monthly or quarterly inventories are tied to profit and loss statements, so thinking about how your intervention may affect this is important. If a new initiative is not profitable, it may be cut. Beyond the financial aspect of the project, having buy-in from business leaders and employees is critical for the intervention’s success. Getting a sense of the level of buy-in and commitment early in the process is key. If you find it to be minimal or lacking, it will be worth understanding why (and addressing these barriers) or finding another food retail partner who expresses a higher level of commitment.
Step 4: Set up meeting with your retail partner

Your first meeting with the retail partner will be an important one for building the partnership and being open and receptive to where the collaboration may lead. Not only will you exchange ideas and information around what you each expect to gain, identify overlapping values and goals, and more, you may also begin brainstorming around what is possible for the collaboration. It will be important here to be open to the ideas shared by your retail partner and to work together to explore them.

To help you prepare, you may want to review Ideo’s Interview method and develop a set of questions to help you reach the goals of your conversation (identified in Step 3). The question bank below provides some general questions and intervention-specific questions for you to consider.

We want to acknowledge that the number of meetings and content covered with your retail partner at each meeting will vary and is unique to how you work and collaborate. It may be that your first meeting is just focused on getting to know your retail partner to help make sure your partner is the right fit for the work, or it may be that you jump into brainstorming ideas. The pace at which you move through this process is dependent on your approach and the level of trust and rapport with your partner, and what we share with you are larger ideas and aspects of the retail partnership that are important to consider along the way. It will be important to adapt what we share to an approach that works for you.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Questions</th>
<th>Meal Box Questions</th>
<th>Rewards Program Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Does your store(s) have a health and wellness initiative?</td>
<td>- What existing meal solutions or prepared meal programs do you already have?</td>
<td>- What existing rewards program do you already have?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- What are your current priorities around community engagement?</td>
<td>- Where do you prepare the meals? Who develops the recipes?</td>
<td>- What is working or not working?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- How have you partnered with other community partners in the past? What worked? What didn’t work?</td>
<td>- What equipment or space would you be willing to provide to test out this idea?</td>
<td>- What are the rewards? (e.g., type, redemption rate, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- What ideas are you interested in testing out that might help low-income families purchase healthy food on a budget?</td>
<td>- Could there be a dedicated space to merchandise the meal boxes in the store?</td>
<td>- How personalized are the rewards?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Are there store policies that might limit outside engagement (e.g., no solicitation policies)?</td>
<td>- What would be feasible to include in the box? What items might be add-ons?</td>
<td>- Does the program incentivize healthy purchases at all? If yes, what recommendations or method(s) does the store use to classify “healthy purchases?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- How frequently could you update or modify the meal boxes and/or recipes?</td>
<td>- How are the rewards given?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- What price promotions could be offered to help people who utilize SNAP benefits purchase healthy foods during the periods of the month when their benefits may be lower?</td>
<td>- If you don’t have a rewards program, what types of rewards program do you really like (e.g., cashback, coupons, prizes)? What could be your goal and vision for this program? What do you see as potential barriers to the program’s success?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- What resources (e.g., staff capacity, funding, marketing) do you currently have available to support the program?</td>
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Step 5: Utilize decision trees and supporting guidance to work toward identifying an intervention option

As you work toward your intervention option after initial conversations with your retail partner, there are various decisions to make with your retail partner and intervention features to consider. In this section, we explore the meal box and rewards program ideas in more detail, sharing findings and insights learned from our co-creation sessions. For each idea, we have a decision tree, which presents a larger overall look at the idea and identifies some key decision points along the way to help you to move toward your intervention option. Additionally, we have supporting information and guidance to help you think through the potential features or components of the intervention. Some of these components are more distinct to the specific intervention idea (e.g., supplies needed for the meal box options), whereas others are discussed for both ideas (e.g., opportunities for including nutrition/food skills education). Please note that the format of the supporting guidance is different for the meal box versus the rewards programs, as the information we share extends from what was learned in the co-creation sessions.
If you do move into brainstorming during this first session, keep Ideo’s Rules of Brainstorming in mind:

- **Defer Judgment**: Creative spaces are judgment-free zones—they let ideas flow so people can build from each other’s great ideas.
- **Encourage Wild Ideas**: Embrace the most out-of-the-box notions. There’s often not a whole lot of difference between outrageous and brilliant.
- **Build on the Ideas of Others**: Try to use “and” instead of “but,” it encourages positivity and inclusivity and leads to tons of ideas.
- **Stay Focused on the Topic**: Try to keep the discussion on target. Divergence is good, but you still need to keep your eyes on the prize.
- **One Conversation at a Time**: This can be difficult—especially with lots of creative people in a single room—but always think about the challenge topic and how to stay on track.
- **Be Visual**: Use colored markers and Post-its. Stick your ideas on the wall so others can visualize them.
- **Go for Quantity**: Crank your ideas out quickly. For any 60-minute session, you should try to generate 100 ideas.
Meal Box
Decision tree for meal box
Overview

The Meal Box intervention consists of a set of ingredients and instructions, either pre-assembled, displayed together, or suggested via a list, that customers can purchase to make a low-cost meal, which can integrate food skills education. Caregivers of young children prioritized this idea because of 1) its potential to reduce cognitive burden by decreasing the number of decisions to make in the store and offering new ideas for meals and 2) its potential to help manage variable food budgets by offering a set price for multiple meals. Caregivers also were excited about the potential opportunities to engage their kids in learning through this process; for example, by highlighting steps kids can help with in the kitchen on the meal box’s recipe cards.

Per FY 2022 SNAP-Ed Guidance, “FNS has determined that States may not use SNAP-Ed funds to convey negative written, visual, or verbal expressions about any specific brand of food, beverage, or commodity. FNS encourages State agencies to consult with their SNAP-Ed Regional Coordinators to ensure that the content and program efforts appropriately convey the DGA and MyPlate.” In addition to consulting with your SNAP-Ed Regional Coordinator if needed, we encourage you to visit SNAP-Ed Connection, which includes resources such as Recipes from SNAP-Ed Partners and Retail Success Stories. These resources can provide you with examples of materials and programming developed by SNAP-Ed Implementing Agencies that comply with SNAP-Ed Guidance.
Assumptions

When developing this intervention, several assumptions were generated to allow the stakeholders to brainstorm what could be possible if these requirements were satisfied. It is important to identify the assumptions your team may have about this intervention functioning with your food retail partner throughout the planning process to ensure you are on the same page and to ensure you are centering the stated needs generated through the caregiver sessions.

These are the assumptions stakeholders identified during the co-creation sessions; however, your organization may have different and/or additional assumptions to consider:

- SNAP-Ed staff can assume that shoppers have staple items like cooking oil, salt, and pepper when considering what to include in the meal box.
- Food retailers may need to cover cost of labor and supplies (e.g., unallowable SNAP-Ed costs like refrigeration or other equipment) and this should be discussed upfront.
- The meal box is at a price that is possible for the shopper and still profitable for the food retailer.
- Food retailers’ biggest constraints and/or concerns are staff capacity and floor space when assessing the feasibility of an intervention or healthy retail strategy.
Some questions to help you assess assumptions:

What assumptions have I made about….

● how caregivers who are SNAP eligible will learn and/or access these interventions?
● how we may be limiting or reducing stigma around the intervention?
● resources my retail partner can or cannot contribute?
● my retail partner’s values, needs, and constraints?
● what types of foods caregivers in my community prefer?
● dietary restrictions and food allergies?
● the cooking equipment that is readily accessible to priority caregivers?

Components

During the co-creation sessions, stakeholders brainstormed several options for how to design and implement a meal box intervention based on the retail partners’ capacity (e.g., staff labor), financial resources, store layout, and resource availability (e.g., endcaps, coffin cases).

After meeting with your food retail partner and working through the decision tree, review the following tables to learn more about each option’s key components as well as the alignment with stated caregiver needs and your retail partner’s capacity.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention Option Summaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overview</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resembles other meal kits; pre-packaged ingredients to prepare specific recipes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supplies Needed</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Boxes or bags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Recipe cards for using ingredients in the box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Handouts with ideas for using leftovers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Pre-developed shopping lists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities for Nutrition Education</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Include recipe cards in the box (highlight steps young kids can help with)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Include a link/QR code to an online video demonstrating how to make the recipe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Include information on how to use leftovers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Include tips for selecting produce or other perishable items (if not included) like selecting seasonal produce, comparing unit prices, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Include activities for kids in the box to do at home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retail Considerations</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Presents opportunities to partner to develop meal solutions (e.g., recipes, meal tips, food safety tips, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Potential to incorporate meal boxes through e-commerce platforms for SNAP-eligible customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examples</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\text{denotes those that are SNAP-Ed allowable expenses.}$
The table below ranks how closely each meal box option aligns with the four main insights caregivers of young children shared about what they need from a meal box option.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Insights</th>
<th>Box Pick-Up</th>
<th>One-Stop-Shop Area</th>
<th>List of Ingredients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presents opportunities to engage their kids in the process</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduces cognitive burden</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offers flexibility and customization for family needs and preferences</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintains fixed cost to help with food budgeting</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Low = Minimally Aligned, High = Very Aligned*

The stakeholders with expertise in the grocery retail setting identified three main resources in grocery store settings that will need to be considered when selecting the right meal box option (in order from most important to least important): staff labor, dedicated space, and external funding. The availability of these resources will impact which option may be feasible to test now. The table below specifics how many resources (from low to high) may be needed to implement each option.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retail Partner Resources Needed</th>
<th>Box Pick-Up</th>
<th>One-Stop-Shop Area</th>
<th>List of Ingredients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff labor</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated space</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External funding</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Low = Few resources, High = A lot of resources*

[Note: This is assuming SNAP-Ed staff can help create or source the recipes, menus, list of ingredients, and any shopping tips to be included. Stores without a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN) could not do this.]
Assembly Options

Despite which format you and your retail partner select, there are some general considerations for what to include in the box, how to tie in nutrition education, and how to incorporate kids in the process.

When designing the recipes and/or meal box ingredients, you may want to consider:

- Offering diverse types of meal boxes (dinner, breakfast, snacks)
- Offering different meals based on dietary preferences (vegetarian, kid-friendly)
- Offering recipes and guidance for the use of leftovers
- Basing the weekly offerings on sale or seasonal items
- Selecting recipes that young kids could help prepare
- Packaging that ensures food safety and limits wastes

When considering how to bolster food skills through this intervention, you could provide caregivers with information on:

- Food safety
- Ideas for how to repurpose leftovers
- Ideas for how to prepare similar meals with other ingredients (e.g., “Did you like this meal? You could also try substituting quinoa for brown rice” or “Instead of cumin, try Mediterranean flavors by using basil and oregano.”)
- Tips for adding more fruits and vegetables into the meal
- Simple culinary skills (e.g., how to cut a pepper or mango, knife skills, etc.)
- Links to the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines educational materials, MyPlate
When thinking through how to make this a fun, engaging experience for caregivers and their kids, you might consider:

- Adding kid-friendly activities into meal boxes (e.g., coloring books, puzzles, etc.)
- Including culinary and food trivia cards into the meal boxes for caregivers to ask their kids (e.g., meal time conversation starters)
- Highlighting steps on recipes that young kids can help with at home
- Linking to other organizations or sources of support for parents and caregivers in the local area

The combination of these ideas and considerations will be what you and your food retail partner will explore as you plan and test the option that works best for you both and still attends to the needs and values of caregivers of young children we engaged in this process and that you serve locally.
Considerations for SNAP-Eligible Populations

During the caregiver and co-creation sessions, caregivers of young children specified preferences and insights that SNAP-Ed staff should consider when designing the most appropriate intervention option.

- The meal box price should stay consistent from week-to-week, so shoppers are able to budget for the box.
- Ingredients should be low-cost.
- Ingredients should be commonly found and high-quality.
- To reduce stigma around participation, the SNAP program should not be specifically referenced in marketing materials. While the marketing materials may specify that shoppers can purchase the boxes with SNAP benefits, the meal box intervention should be widely available and appropriate for caregivers of young children across socioeconomic status. The materials developed by and printed using SNAP-Ed funds will need to include the non-discrimination statement.

“I think it’s important to remember what reality is like for low income families. Well the reality is that every family is wildly different so there is no right answer there either. In my time as a parent, I have lived in a homeless shelter, lived in a single room with my husband and kids, been on SNAP, "made too much" to qualify for SNAP, and lived in a lovely home with a full kitchen and no food insecurity. I have stayed home full time, and I have worked two jobs simultaneously while my husband worked double shifts six days a week. My point is that the barriers to healthy nutritious eating can be very different for different people. Some people may be fine cooks, and they don't have the means to cook fresh food. Some people may have a functioning oven, but by the time they get home at night the last thing they have energy for is turning on that oven. Some people may need the guidance of the recipe/meal planning because they no longer teach those things in public schools. These programs will work best and have staying power if they also offer some amount of flexibility.”
- Caregiver

Ultimately, it will be important for you and other SNAP-Ed staff to check-in with caregivers of young children you serve at various time points during planning, testing, and implementation to ensure their needs and preferences are centered throughout the process and to remove any barriers to participation.
Rewards Program
Decision tree for rewards program
Supporting Guidance

Overview
The Rewards Program intervention option could include short- and long-term rewards provided to participants based on their purchasing of items that support healthy eating and on their participation in nutrition/food skills educational activities. While collaboration between the SNAP-Ed Implementing Agency and retail partner is needed to determine the exact items and rewards, cash back/food bucks was identified as the optimal reward by SNAP-eligible caregivers of young children. Short-term rewards could be redeemed immediately at the point of purchase, whereas long-term rewards could be based on a tiered system involving participation in direct education activities and examination of healthy eating behaviors over time. Long-term rewards earned by participants could include cash back/food bucks or other tangible rewards.

Assumptions
When developing this intervention, several assumptions were generated to allow the stakeholders to brainstorm what could be possible if several requirements were satisfied. It is important to identify the assumptions your organization may have about this intervention functioning with your partner throughout the planning process to ensure you and your partners are on the same page.
These are the assumptions stakeholders identified during the co-creation sessions; however, your organization may have different and/or additional assumptions to consider:

- Retail stores or other partners will cover costs not allowable by SNAP-Ed (e.g., point-of-sale (POS) systems).
- Food retailer has a point-of-sale system to accommodate the logistics of a reward system.
- Any increased worker labor will not affect costs.
- Retail staff will be properly trained to execute program.
- Efforts need to be made to sustain participation in the program by retail partners and SNAP-eligible recipients.
- Value of program needs to be clear for participants and retail partners.
- Rewards could be provided through existing store rewards programs and/or through SNAP/EBT card.

Components
As shown in the grey boxes at the end of the decision tree, there are various components or features of an existing or new rewards program that will be important to consider. Additional details and guidance around these features are included below. Much of this information was raised during the co-creation sessions and can help you to think through what is best as you move forward with developing your intervention option.
Determine/modify and track rewards

Whether you will be modifying an existing rewards program or creating a new rewards program with your retail partner, you will need to work together to identify which food and beverage items are included in the rewards program and what type of reward will be provided. The following table provides a guide to thinking through these program components with your retail partner:

1 Food and beverage items for the rewards program that support healthy eating could include fruits and vegetables (fresh, frozen, canned, dried, and 100% juice), whole grains, nuts and seeds, seafood, lean proteins, dairy and alternatives, and plant oils. In addition, rewards could be given for decreases in sugar-sweetened beverages/high sugar goods. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA), 2020-2025 can be used as a reference for the selection of food and beverage items that support healthy eating, meet nutrient needs, and are a part of healthy dietary patterns. The 2020-2025 DGA have also identified the following nutrients and dietary components that are currently under-consumed in the general U.S. population: calcium, potassium, dietary fiber, and vitamin D. Low iron intake has also been identified for women of childbearing age and infants. Information on food sources for these nutrients and dietary components can be found on the DGA website: Food Sources of Select Nutrients.

2 In order to track the items for rewards, the retail partner needs to have some type of point of sales (POS) system. A POS system (or point of purchase) system includes the hardware and software that allows the food retailer to receive payments from the customer and to keep track of sales. For example, a bar code scanner is used to look up and determine the price of a particular item. Using this system, certain food or beverage items can be identified as being part of the rewards program. When these items are scanned during the check-out process, they can contribute to earning reward points and/or receiving cash back at the time of purchase. In the co-creation sessions, cash back/food bucks were identified as the optimal reward by SNAP-eligible caregivers of young children. These rewards could be redeemed for immediate cash back on the current purchase or food bucks/money off future purchases.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Retail partner has existing rewards program: Modify and track rewards</th>
<th>Developing a new program with retail partner: Determine and track rewards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Get a sense of your starting point                                     | - What has worked well with the existing rewards program?  
- What would the retail partner like to improve on with the existing rewards program?  
- Who currently manages the rewards program?                                           | - How could the rewards program benefit or not benefit the retail partner?  
- What resources can the retail partner contribute to the program? What are they not able to contribute? Think about resources in terms of staff capacity, available equipment, funding, etc. |
| Think more broadly with your retail partner                            | - What are the retail partner’s interests and expectations of the program?  
- How could the rewards program bring in more customer traffic?  
- How could the rewards program build customer loyalty?  
- Think about how the rewards program is personalized to the customer while also incentivizing healthy purchases. |                                                                                                                                 |
| Identify food and beverage items for the rewards program1             | - What types of items are currently included in the rewards program?  
- What are some potential challenges to modifying the items?  
- Are there items the retail partner wants or needs to keep included?  
- What is important for the food retailer to consider when modifying the list of items to include? | - What is important for the food retailer to consider when selecting food or beverage items to include?  
- Are there items the retail partner wants or needs to include in the rewards program, such as the store’s private brands?  
- Are there certain items the retail partner does not want to include on the list? |
| Brainstorm around the list of items                                   | - To what extent is the selection of food and beverage items going to be food retailer-driven or SNAP-driven?  
- Are certain foods always rewarded or are there weekly specials? |                                                                                                                                 |
| Discuss how to track and provide rewards2                             | - What does the tracking system look like for the rewards?  
- What type of reward is currently provided?  
- Is the retail partner open to changing the rewards provided if needed?  
- What are the steps needed to modify the type of reward if needed? | - Does the retail partner have a point-of-sale system in place?  
- What sort of capacity and capability does your retail partner have for developing a tracking system for the rewards?  
- What preferences does your retail partner have for the type of reward provided?  
- Is your retail partner open to collaborating with an external partner, such as Solutran or Double Up Food Bucks? |
| Think more broadly about the rewards program and SNAP-Ed              | - Could cash back/food bucks rewards coincide with periods in the month when SNAP benefits may be running low?  
- What assumptions have we made about the SNAP-eligible caregivers who will learn and/or access the rewards program? |                                                                                                                                 |
Funding for Rewards

The following describes some funding ideas and technical support to support the rewards program as well as some guidance from the FY2022 SNAP-Ed Plan Guidance:

- If the partnership is with a larger grocer, there may be funding available from a foundation.
- **Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP) - Nutrition Incentive Grants** can be used to “develop and evaluate projects to increase the purchase of fruits and vegetables by low-income consumers participating in SNAP by providing incentives at the point of purchase.”
- As stated on the [Nutrition Incentive Hub](https://www.gusnip.org) website, “The Nutrition Incentive Hub was created by the GusNIP NTAE Center to provide training, technical assistance, reporting, and evaluation support to GusNIP grantees toward the intended impact of increasing the purchase of fruits and vegetables by nutrition incentive, including SNAP, and produce prescription project participants.”
- It could be helpful to reach out to the [National Grocers Association](https://www.nationalgrocers.org) (for independent grocery stores) for insight and feedback, as they are core partners with GusNIP.
- **Double Up Food Bucks**, managed by the Fair Food Network, matches SNAP funds spent on fruits and vegetables. As stated on their website, “Double Up is a complete package, ready to be adopted by partners nationwide. Our program toolkit includes all resources partners need to bring Double Up in their communities—from a record keeping and evaluation frameworks to branded outreach and marketing materials.”
- Per the [FY2022 SNAP-Ed Plan Guidance](https): “Note that SNAP-Ed funds may not be used to provide the cash value of financial incentives, but SNAP-Ed funds can be used to engage farmers markets and retail outlets to collaborate with other groups and partner with them.” Unallowable expenses include “any material that endorses or promotes brand name products or retail stores.”
Marketing and Opportunities for Nutrition Education

The importance of effective communication and marketing of the rewards program was raised during the co-creation sessions. Stakeholder insight recommended that the rewards program be heavily marketed and communicated for individuals to be fully aware of and take advantage of the program. This will require funding and resources to initially get the program off the ground but will be worth the investment.

During the co-creation sessions, there was discussion around a rewards program that could include short- and long-term rewards based on the purchasing of items that support healthy eating and participation in nutrition/food skills educational activities. Short-term rewards could be redeemed immediately at the point of purchase or could include food bucks for later purchasing. Long-term rewards could be based on a tiered system involving participation in direct education activities and/or examination of healthy eating behaviors over time. Long-term rewards earned by participants could include cash back/food bucks or other tangible rewards.

As you consider the following opportunities, we suggest you consider one of the insight statements from our caregiver workshops which states the following:

“I prepare for the grocery store before I leave the house so I can focus on the task at hand while I’m there. If I came across new information at the store, I would like it to be something I can quickly read or something I can take home to read later so that I can focus on shopping.”

- Caregiver
The tracking of the food and beverage purchases at the store using the POS system could be integrated with a platform or mechanism for SNAP-eligible participants to track progress toward earning and redeeming rewards. This could be an app-based program that could not only be linked to the in-store purchases but also to nutrition/food skills education activities (e.g., online educational video or tip sheets). The app-based program could also be integrated with in-store marketing components, such as use of QR codes for educational material or games linked to food or beverage items that support healthy eating (see details in the Table below).

Several opportunities for marketing and nutrition/food skills education were raised during the co-creation sessions. The ability to implement these ideas is dependent on the capacity, interest, and shared goals of all partners. The table below discusses some of these opportunities for nutrition/food skills education while thinking about some important considerations of each:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Considerations</th>
<th>In-store signage</th>
<th>In-store food demonstrations</th>
<th>In-store scavenger hunt</th>
<th>Use of QR codes</th>
<th>Phone app using GPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td>Promotes items in the rewards program</td>
<td>Promotes items in the rewards program; Could share info for learning during or after shopping</td>
<td>Gives children an activity to do while shopping</td>
<td>Features items in the rewards program; Could share info for learning during or after shopping</td>
<td>Gives children an activity to do while shopping (e.g., Pokémon Go)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presents opportunity to engage children</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High, especially if children are engaged after the shopping experience</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity for nutrition education</td>
<td>Low, but provides environmental supports for healthy eating</td>
<td>Low, but could be used to share recipes or handouts for later learning</td>
<td>Medium, could incorporate learning into the process</td>
<td>High, allows for learning during or after the shopping experience</td>
<td>Medium, could incorporate learning into the process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of technology required</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High, especially if linked to an app for learning after the shopping experience</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other considerations</td>
<td>Requires resources to develop and set up</td>
<td>Requires resources to set up and manage</td>
<td>Requires capacity to develop the activity and materials</td>
<td>Requires customer to have Smartphone; requires capacity to develop the material; requires app if there is learning after shopping experience</td>
<td>Requires customer to have Smartphone; requires app; requires capacity to develop the activity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All the opportunities above could be integrated into a system for earning reward points. For example, participation by children in the in-store scavenger hunt could earn reward points for the family. Later viewing of materials accessed via the QR codes (e.g., videos, recipes, tip sheets, etc.) could also earn reward points. Direct education activities outside of the shopping experience could include watching single videos or a series of videos for a more comprehensive understanding on a particular topic. Points could be assigned to these activities, with a greater number of points assigned to activities that were more time intensive. These activities could also provide opportunities to engage children in the learning process and allow children to earn reward points for their families.

Longer-term changes in healthy eating behaviors could also be assessed through review of food purchasing behaviors over time along with an evaluation of individual-level changes in healthy eating behaviors. These individual-level changes could include setting goals or intentions to change healthy eating behaviors (ST1: Healthy Eating) and making changes in healthy eating behaviors (MT1: Healthy Eating). Reward points could be assigned to longer-term food purchasing behaviors that reflect shifts toward healthier eating and/or positive changes in healthy eating behaviors.

Ideas and considerations for including children in the rewards process was a constant consideration during the co-creation sessions. There was discussion around how best to motivate children in the process, given a child’s motivation could support the parent’s motivation. The primary motivator shared by caregivers was that the activities include some element of competition. There was discussion around partnering with schools, creating some sort of competition among classes that could increase participation.
Step 6: Plan for testing of the intervention option

We have used a human-centered design process to get to this point and encourage you to embrace design thinking mindsets like empathy, make it, and learn from failure to continue this very important work as you transition to testing and implementation.

**Empathy**: Engage directly with members of our target audience – SNAP-eligible caregivers and their children – and meaningfully involve them in collecting feedback and making decisions.

**Make it**: Theorizing in our heads or on paper can only get us so far. There are real assumptions and hypotheses to test for each of these intervention options and the best way to gather feedback from SNAP-eligible caregivers and their children is to test these ideas at a small-scale (i.e., over a few days or weeks and at low or no-cost). It’s easier for people to respond to bits and pieces of actual interventions than to guess how they would respond to or react to something that doesn’t exist yet.

**Learn from failure**: Part of the intervention design and implementation process is collecting data and using it to inform future decision-making. Rather than testing a complex, multi-component intervention at once and over a series of weeks and months, we recommend running lots of smaller experiments where we can isolate and refine specific aspects of the intervention before putting multiple pieces together.

In order to implement interventions that are desirable, feasible, and viable we have put together a new **testing template** with specific guidance for how SNAP-Ed IAs to approach this next prototyping phase.
How to use this template:

This template is designed to help you think through the process of trying out key elements of your chosen intervention. As you work through this document, the questions will help you develop a testing plan. Each test will last no more than a few days or a week. There are also two example templates to help guide you through this process.

To develop your testing plan, fill out each section of the template in order from 1 to 8 as it relates to the specific goals and needs of your chosen intervention in your unique food retail setting. Use this template as a roadmap for planning a test of your chosen intervention option with your food retail partners.

What is testing and why is it useful?

Testing (or prototyping) is building a basic version of a product, program, or service and collecting real-time feedback from its intended audience.

Prototyping lets you test out different components of a program or a potential service on a small scale and make adjustments before investing considerable resources in the entire program.

Testing can also help us answer the question, “Why are we doing this? Is it even the right thing?”, by helping identify and test our assumptions in the real world.

By testing your intervention option and collecting specific data and feedback from a subset of your intended audience, you have time to tweak and adapt your intervention model to better meet your overall goals before you launch a large-scale implementation project.
What are we testing?
Enter the meal box or rewards program option you selected with your food retail partner using the decision tree support documents in the intervention model.

Who is on our testing team? Consider the skillsets you need to test this intervention option. Are they people on your team; who? Are they people in the food retail environment; who?

- What technical skills are needed for this intervention option?
- Who will be responsible for marketing and outreach?
- What about nutrition education?
- Who will collect and analyze data?
- Who at the store or regional level will inform metrics, implementation, etc.?
- Whose might we need buy-in from (e.g. State or Regional Coordinator)?
Who is the intended audience of our intervention? What do we know about them?

We learned the following from our Inspiration sessions with caregivers of young children (0-5). They:

- Value time-saving services in the food retail environment
- Value services that reduce cognitive burden to help them budget and staying at a fixed cost
- Value kid-friendly meals and engaging kids in shopping and cooking

What additional unique needs, values, and desires have your identified about your priority audience?

Things to consider: Transportation needs/modes of your audience, cultural or regional food traditions and food preferences of your intended audience, etc.

What are we trying to learn through prototyping?

- How well aligned is the intervention option we have chosen with the desires and needs of our intended audience?
- What assumptions have we made that we need to test out?
- Will a sufficient number of people in our intended audience use/purchase/engage in this intervention audience to make it time and cost effective?
- What specific questions are we trying to answer that are unique to our food retail environment and/or intended audience?
What resources do we need to try out our intervention option?

Think about the materials, people, and resources needed.

- **SNAP-Ed IA Inputs**
  - **Staff support**
  - **Materials**
    - Examples include recipe cards, marketing materials, etc.

- **Food Retail Partner Inputs**
  - **Staff support**
    - Examples include someone accountable at the store, POS/IT manager, etc.
  - **Materials**
    - Examples include refrigerated storage space, designated shelves, rewards cards, POS systems, etc.
What is our plan?

- **Timeline:**
  - How much time do we need to prepare to test our intervention option?
  - How much time do we need for the actual testing phase for our intervention?
  - How much time do we need to review the test data and feedback?
  - How much time do we need to plan our next iteration?

- **Testing Plan:**
  - What main assumptions are you testing?
  - What kind of data will you need to collect to test your assumption?
  - Consider questions like: When will you launch a test of your intervention option: a weekday? Weekends? Where in the store they will be located? Who will be assembling the prototype product?

- **Data Analysis Plan:**
  - Consider questions like: How will we collect and review the feedback data? Who will report out on the data? What happens next after we review the data? Who makes decisions about what to do after data are collected and shared?
How will we know if we’re on the right track?
Our team, including our food retail partner, will feel confident that we are on the right track if _____ (e.g., there are $X$ meal boxes purchased in the week we offer them, $X$ of people sign-up for the rewards programs).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Data collection method</th>
<th>Data collection item</th>
<th>Goal for prototyping (threshold goal)</th>
<th>Actual results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Example:</strong> # of meal boxes purchased in X timeframe</td>
<td>Point-of-Sale tracking using barcode?</td>
<td>Store sales records and shrink records (waste from outdated boxes)</td>
<td>10 meal boxes purchased</td>
<td>20 boxes purchased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Example:</strong> # of meal boxes purchased in X timeframe</td>
<td>QR code for Qualtrics feedback survey in mailboxes</td>
<td>4 item survey</td>
<td>80% (8 of 10) purchasers rate satisfaction as satisfied or very satisfied</td>
<td>70% rating of satisfied or very satisfied</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. What are we testing?

2. Who is on our testing team?
3. Who is the intended audience of our intervention? What do we know about them?

What additional unique needs, values, and desires have you identified about your priority audience?

4. What are we trying to learn through prototyping?
What resources do we need to try out our intervention option?
What is our plan?
How will we know if we’re on the right track?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Data collection method</th>
<th>Data collection item</th>
<th>Goal for prototyping (threshold goal)</th>
<th>Actual results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 7: Iterate and refine using human-centered design methods

After the initial round of testing the intervention components, the next step in the process is to take the feedback you received from your target audience as well as your food retail partner and other members of your implementation team and make tweaks and changes to your intervention components as needed to better align your chosen intervention elements with the expressed needs and wants of your target audience. In human-centered design terms, this process is called iteration.

Integrating the feedback you receive from your target audience, the people you are designing for, is a key part of the human-centered design process. Each time you iterate, test and receive feedback from your target audience, the more you can refine your intervention components to align with your goals. It can be helpful to have both quantitative (numbers) and qualitative (comments, stories, notes) from your target audience. Box 7 of the Testing Template you used in Step 6 contains a table to record your feedback measures and results.

Some human-centered design methods for integrating feedback into the iterative process of refining your intervention design are included below.

**Download Your Learnings**

Downloading your Learnings is a method from IDEO.org’s Design Kit that can be completed individually by members of your implementation team and then processed together as team. To use the Download your Learnings method, each team member takes time to write down on sticky notes, paper, or in an electronic format such as Jamboard, all the key information they’ve gathered from the target audience feedback as well as their own impressions. Team members then spend time sharing their key takeaways with the group. Similar feedback and takeaways are clustered together on a white board or electronically so that the team can begin to see any clear patterns that are emerging from the feedback.
It can be helpful to engage in the Download your Learnings activity soon after initial feedback has been received from your target audience and while aspects of the testing phase are still fresh on your mind. Use the feedback you’ve recorded in Box 7 of your Testing Template to facilitate the sharing of feedback and key insights from testing.

After your team has reviewed initial feedback from your testing phase, it’s time to iterate. It can be helpful during the iteration process to write down as concisely as possible what your team learned from the testing process. This means synthesizing your findings from testing and writing them in a way that makes them actionable as you plan for your next round of testing. Going back to your Testing Template, you can consolidate your learnings and type them in Box 8, the final section of the Template.

There are no set number of iterations (testing and tweaking your chosen intervention components) you need to complete before moving on to full-scale implementation. Using the metrics for success you developed when using your Testing Template(s) for each round of testing, your team will decide when you feel the intervention components align with the goals and needs of your target audience. Human-Centered Design encourages ongoing iteration even when you’ve launched your intervention. Incorporating methods for ongoing feedback from both your target audience and your implementation team will help you continue to develop and refine an intervention that maximizes benefits for your target audience and your implementation team.
Step 8: Develop an evaluation plan and ideas for dissemination

Develop an Evaluation Plan

The following indicators from the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework could be used to evaluate the meal box or reward program’s progress and success. For more specific examples of intervention components, associated SNAP-Ed indicators, and indicator descriptions, see Appendix 5 for the meal box and Appendix 6 for the rewards program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Readiness and Capacity – Short Term (ST)</th>
<th>Changes – Medium Term (MT)</th>
<th>Effectiveness and Maintenance – Long Term (LT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>ST1, ST2</td>
<td>MT1, MT2</td>
<td>LT1, LT2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Settings</td>
<td>ST7</td>
<td>MT5</td>
<td>LT5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sectors of Influence</td>
<td>ST8</td>
<td></td>
<td>LT18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another way to evaluate your project is through key informant interviews. These interviews could be conducted with customers, store managers, store merchandisers and clerks. These interviews would be used to determine the reception to the meal boxes or rewards program by customers and the experience with the process of administering the program. Sample questions can be found in Appendix 7.
Ideas for Dissemination

- SNAP-Ed Connection Success Stories: Submitting a Success Story to the SNAP-Ed Connection is a great way to share your program’s success. SNAP-Ed Connection provides a tip sheet for getting started and has a webinar to support and guide writing SNAP-Ed Success Stories.
- SNAP-Ed Toolkit Submission: If there is intention to submit the intervention for potential inclusion in the SNAP-Ed Toolkit, there are some aspects worth considering. See the Submit an Intervention page on the Toolkit website for more details. There are webinars provided that are helpful for intervention developers and organizations submitting an intervention for review. These webinars provide an overview of how to apply the RE-AIM Framework to your application and submit your intervention through the online submission portal.

The SNAP-Ed Toolkit includes interventions that are classified as emerging, practice-tested, and research-tested. For the emerging classification, the intervention may not have been formally evaluated, but it is based on an underlying theory or logic that has the potential for obesity prevention. Emerging interventions tend to be newly created and/or growing in strength or evidence. For the practice-tested classification, positive effects on individual behaviors, food or PA environments, or policies have been documented. Often, practice-tested interventions include published or unpublished evaluation reports and/or case studies with evidence derived from work in the field. With the research-tested classification, significant effects on individual behaviors, food or PA environments, or policies have been shown, and these findings have been published in the peer-reviewed literature and/or have been evaluated by an external partner. These varying levels of testing and reporting on the intervention are associated with varying levels of scientific rigor.
Considerations for SNAP-Ed

As you choose the food items to include, be mindful that you do not promote or discourage the use of any specific brand because SNAP-Ed Guidance does not allow this. Specifically, the Fiscal Year 2022 SNAP-Ed Guidance makes clear that “States may not use SNAP-Ed funds to convey negative written, visual, or verbal expressions about any specific brand of food, beverage, or commodity.” For further guidance, check with your SNAP-Ed Regional Coordinator to ensure that the items you include in your meal box option adhere to SNAP-Ed Guidance.

If you are interested in writing this intervention option into your state plan, it may be helpful to cite these as emerging using the Checklist for Evidence-Based Approaches. Specifically, these interventions options:

- Reflect the budgetary and time constraints of the low-income population (Step 2)
- Reflect solutions that would make healthy eating and physically active lifestyles easier and more appealing to SNAP-Ed participants (Step 2)
- Reflect the social, cultural, and/or linguistic needs and resources of the low-income population(s) serve (Step 3)

Additionally, we offer recommendations for how to evaluate these intervention options using the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework in Appendix 5 and Appendix 6. Evaluation is a critical component of human-centered design as well as it helps us make informed, values-based decisions during the testing phase.
Resources

*A Researcher’s Checklist for Working with Sales Data to Evaluate Healthy Retail Interventions* provides an overview of key considerations for researchers who wish to use sales data to evaluate the effectiveness of healthy retail interventions. This brief discusses key considerations for identifying the research question, forming a partnership with food retailers, and data collection and analysis.

*Healthier Food Retail: An Action Guide for Public Health Practitioners* includes guidance for public health practitioners on how to develop, partner, and implement with food retail on initiatives to improve access, availability, and affordability of healthier foods and beverages.

The *USDA ERS Food Environment Atlas* includes SNAP-authorized food retailers that report accepting SNAP (and WIC).

*How to Create a Tiered Loyalty Program* shares actionable takeaways for how to create a successful tiered loyalty program.
Appendices

Appendix 1 – HCD methods and products from the caregiver workshops

The descriptive information in Step 1 on the HCD methods is from Adapting Design Thinking Methods and Best Practices to a Virtual Environment: Lessons Learned and Future Considerations. We encourage you to visit this paper, as it provides additional details around the various activities conducted during the caregiver workshops. We discuss what worked and what we would do differently next time.

Appendix 2 – Stakeholder map and prioritization matrix

Stakeholder map
As described in Miro’s What is Stakeholder Mapping, “start by identifying all the potential stakeholders — people, groups, or organizations affected by our project, those who have influence over it, or have an interest or concern in its success...Each project has internal and external stakeholders and drawing a clear line between the two will help set the right priorities and find the approach that works for the specific situation. Internal stakeholders are people on the team who are participating in building the model or delivering a project. Their level of engagement may vary but they all have an influence because they are a part of our organization. External stakeholders are those who will be impacted by the project, though they don’t directly participate in working on it.”
Prioritization Matrix

Also described in the Miro article: “There are different ways we can prioritize the stakeholders. When we are dealing with a lot of internal and external stakeholders, it’s important to prioritize them. One way to do this in Miro is to use a matrix to analyze the power that stakeholders have over the project and their level of interest in it. The matrix in Miro shows how all stakeholders can fall into four categories: High power, highly interested people (Manage Closely); High power, less interested people (Keep Satisfied); Low power, highly interested people (Keep Informed); Low power, less interested people (Monitor).
Appendix 3 – HCD methods and products from the co-creation sessions

Prior to the first co-creation session, the FFORC team provided all stakeholders with a 10-minute orientation video that introduced the FFORC team, shared background information on the project, provided an overview of the roles of the stakeholders, communicated group norms for the sessions, and outlined goals for the work. A brief survey was also conducted to collect initial thoughts on program ideas generated by caregivers of young children who participated in the design thinking workshops.

At the first co-creation session, there was open discussion around the results from the pre-session survey:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>First</th>
<th>Second</th>
<th>Third</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caregiver: Interest</td>
<td>Meal boxes that are consistent in price each week to help with budgeting and satisfy a range of food needs and preferences (e.g., kid friendly, plant-based, etc.)</td>
<td>In-store signage around the store to engage kids and parents in learning about healthy food</td>
<td>App to help customers learn about healthy shopping and find items on sale while in the store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caregiver: Helpfulness</td>
<td>App to help customers learn about healthy shopping and find items on sale while in the store</td>
<td>Meal boxes that are consistent in price each week to help with budgeting and satisfy a range of food needs and preferences (e.g., kid friendly, plant-based, etc.)</td>
<td>In-store signage around the store to engage kids and parents in learning about healthy food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Retail Professional: Practicality</td>
<td>Recipe ideas for items going on sale in the next week</td>
<td>In-store recipe demos (tied)</td>
<td>In-store installations in the produce section to help customers learn about seasonal produce (tied)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Retail Professional: Interest</td>
<td>Recipe ideas for items going on sale in the next week</td>
<td>Meal boxes that are consistent in price each week to help with budgeting and satisfy a range of food needs and preferences (e.g., kid friendly, plant-based, etc.) (tied)</td>
<td>In-store installations in the produce section to help customers learn about seasonal produce (tied)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNAP-Ed Implementer: Innovation</td>
<td>In-store signage around the store to engage kids and parents in learning about healthy food</td>
<td>Meal boxes that are consistent in price each week to help with budgeting and satisfy a range of food needs and preferences (e.g., kid friendly, plant-based, etc.) (tied)</td>
<td>Link to recipe ideas on receipt that incorporates items purchased (tied)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In a large group, stakeholders were asked to share (1) What excites you about these ideas?; (2) What are some opportunities or possibilities for these ideas to come to life?; and (3) What insights do you have from past experiences or projects that can be applied to these ideas? Following this, two small group (breakout groups) activities were conducted; thoughts and ideas were collected on Jamboards (i.e., collaborative digital whiteboards) for each breakout group. The two activities included the following:

- Group brainstorm to look more closely at how the caregiver insight statements support the creation of the intervention options and to discuss what guiding principles and/or values should be considered from the insight statements.

- The Top Five activity to write down and share the top five ideas jumping out at the stakeholders and to think about what these ideas look like in practice (see Jamboard excerpt below).
At the second co-creation session, the focus was on prototyping and building out the two ideas more. First there was brainstorming and small group discussion around how the idea might be helpful and appealing to caregivers, how it might remove a cognitive burden or make things easier for caregivers, and how it might creatively incorporate nutrition education. Key metrics for success were discussed for each idea, which included answering how we would know the idea was successful and how would we know it meets the needs of caregivers and the store. Following this, stakeholders were asked to independently sketch a draft of the idea with as much detail as possible. These sketches were shared among group members and ideas from the various sketches were integrated into one model for each idea.
Prior to the third co-creation session, all stakeholders were asked to provide feedback on the consolidated intervention ideas for the meal box and rewards program. This feedback was reviewed during the session with time for the groups to share what they learned from the other group’s idea and what remaining questions they had. A second prototyping phase was done in the breakout groups, where stakeholders were asked to various questions to gather additional feedback on the ideas and contribute to the iterative process of refining drafts of both ideas.
In the final co-creation session, there was continued discussion and working through unanswered questions related to each intervention idea. All questions and responses from stakeholders were captured on Jamboards.

See Jamboard content from each session below:
Appendix 4 – Example of recipes to accompany List of Ingredients intervention option

Dinnertime, especially during the week, requires tasty solutions that can be prepared quickly from simple, healthy ingredients on hand. That’s why we love sheet pan meals! Prep is minimal and cleanup is a snap. Registered Dietitian Shari Steinbach, MS, RDN has created a 7-day family-friendly dinner menu that features sheet pan meals and recommends a few basic guidelines for success:

**Position Everything Wisely** - Place whole proteins in the center of the sheet pan, and scatter the vegetables on both sides.

**Aim for Uniform Sizes** - Cut vegetables to the same size and shape. Look for meat cuts of the same thickness so they’ll cook evenly.

**Don’t Overcrowd the Ingredients** - Allow room on the pan for air to circulate.

**Test for Doneness** - It’s hard to tell when meats are done so use a meat thermometer to confirm temperature (145 degrees for pork).

Resource developed by Shari Steinbach, MS RDN, Owner/President, Shari Steinbach & Associates., LLC

---

**Day 1**
- Prosciutto Wrapped Pork w/ Sweet Potatoes and Pears
  - Serve with: Prepared Green Salad
  - Light Balsamic Dressing 1% Milk

**Day 2**
- Sheet Pan Beef Nachos
  - Lay tortilla chips on a sheet pan covered in foil. Pop with lid, cooked, taco seasoned, lean ground beef. Cover with shredded, canned corn, sliced black beans, sliced black olives, pimiento slices (if desired), and 2% shredded Cheddar cheese. Broil until cheese is melted and bubbly. Serve with guacamole and salsa.

**Day 3**
- Honey Mustard Chicken & Veggies Sheet Pan Dinner
  - Serve with: Clementines Frozen Vanilla Yogurt

**Day 4**
- Pork with Wild Rice and Herbs
  - Serve with: Frozen Peas Frozen Vanilla Yogurt

**Day 5**
- Cheese & Veggie Sheet Pan Pizza
  - Preheat to 450°F. Coat a rimmed baking sheet with cooking spray. Spread a package of frozen pizza dough over entire sheet. Lightly press surface of the dough with some olive oil. Spread pizza sauce over the dough. Top with favorite chopped vegetables. 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese & 1/4 cup grated Parmesan. Bake for 18-20 min, rotating once, until the crust is crisp & golden brown.
  - Serve with: Sliced Peaches

**Day 6**
- One Pan Parmesan Pork Chops & Veggies
  - Serve with: Fresh Strawberries

**Day 7**
- Sheet Pan Teriyaki Salmon with Broccoli
  - Serve with: Instant Brown Rice Fresh Grapes 1% Milk
Appendix 5 – Example meal box components, SNAP-Ed indicators, and indicator descriptions

Individual Level

If the meal box program incorporates direct education to promote changes in healthy eating behaviors as part of purchasing a meal box (such as through provision of recipe cards with nutritional information, incorporation of cooking demonstrations either virtually or in-store), the following SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework indicators can be used to evaluate those efforts. Please note that you will need to report on demographics for direct education reach. If using a virtual or pre-recorded platform for direct education, you will need to develop a strategy for tracking participation and reporting on participant demographics. Please visit the following webinar that discusses reporting on virtual direct education: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z59h313FhD8.

Examples of potential intervention components and the associated SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework indicators are provided on the next page:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of intervention component</th>
<th>SNAP-Ed Indicator</th>
<th>About the Indicator as described in the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online or in-store direct nutrition education classes, recipe videos, and/or learning games for children</td>
<td>ST1</td>
<td>Measures changes in intentions and goals resulting from a one-time lesson or a series of direct nutrition education classes with SNAP-Ed adults and youth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MT1</td>
<td>Changes in individual and family healthy eating behaviors on the pathway to achieving the current <em>Dietary Guidelines for Americans</em> recommendations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LT1</td>
<td>Measures which behaviors are sustained at a minimum of 6 months post-direct education program.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of intervention component</th>
<th>SNAP-Ed Indicator</th>
<th>About the Indicator as described in the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online food resource management classes, videos, and/or learning games for children</td>
<td>ST2</td>
<td>Measures intent to change and goals resulting from a single education lesson or a series of food resource management classes with SNAP-Ed adults and youth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MT2</td>
<td>Changes in individual and family behaviors that reflect smarter shopping and food resource management strategies, enabling participants to stretch their food resource dollars to support a healthier diet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LT2</td>
<td>Measures which behaviors are sustained at a minimum of 6 months post-food resource management classes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Environmental Level

If there is in-store signage, demonstrations, use of QR codes for additional information or games, and/or other technology used during the shopping experience, the following SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework indicators can be used to evaluate efforts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of intervention component</th>
<th>SNAP-Ed Indicator</th>
<th>About the Indicator as described in the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships with retail store(s) or other partners</td>
<td>ST7</td>
<td>Partnerships with service providers, organizational leaders, and SNAP-Ed representatives in settings where people eat, learn, live, play, shop, and work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail store(s) with in-store signage/prompts or QR code to promote healthy food items</td>
<td>MT5a</td>
<td>Number and proportion of sites or organizations that make at least one change in writing or practice to expand access or improve appeal for healthy eating (e.g., point-of-purchase and distribution prompts).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of retail stores that make PSE change(s) along with direct education component</td>
<td>LT5a</td>
<td>Number of sites or organizations that report a multi-component and multi-level intervention with one or more changes in MT5 (PSE changes). Multi-component intervention refers to sites making at least one PSE change (MT5) implemented together with evidence-based education, marketing, parent/community involvement, and/or staff training on continuous program and policy implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Components (total and types) adopted by each retail store</td>
<td>LT5b</td>
<td>Total number of components per site or organization, and types of components (e.g., evidence-based education, marketing, parent/community involvement).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Sectors of Influence Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of intervention component</th>
<th>SNAP-Ed Indicator</th>
<th>About the Indicator as described in the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SNAP-Ed Implementing Agency partnerships with retail stores and other sectors</td>
<td>ST8</td>
<td>Number of state SNAP-Ed programs or local communities with multi-sector partnerships or coalitions that include at least five diverse sector representatives that address nutrition-related community changes, such as policies, practices, or other elements of the framework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail store(s) implementing the meal box program to support healthy eating behaviors</td>
<td>LT18e</td>
<td>Number of retail food stores that have established marketing practices that promote the choice of healthier foods and beverages (e.g., in-store merchandising, labeling, promotion, and family-friendly placements that intentionally encourage the choice of foods/beverages-to-encourage).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 6 - Example rewards program components, SNAP-Ed indicators, and indicator descriptions

**Individual Level**

If there is a component of the rewards program that incorporates direct education and/or changes in healthy eating behaviors to earn rewards, the following SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework indicators can be used to evaluate efforts. Please note that you will need to report on demographics for direct education reach. If using a virtual or pre-recorded platform for direct education, you will need to develop a strategy for tracking participation and reporting on participant demographics. Please visit the following webinar that discusses reporting on virtual direct education: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zS9h313FhD8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zS9h313FhD8).

Examples of potential intervention components and the associated SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework indicators are provided:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of intervention component</th>
<th>SNAP-Ed Indicator</th>
<th>About the Indicator as described in the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online direct nutrition education classes, recipe videos, and/or learning games for children where participants earn reward points</td>
<td><strong>ST1</strong></td>
<td>Measures changes in intentions and goals resulting from a one-time lesson or a series of direct nutrition education classes with SNAP-Ed adults and youth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>MT1</strong></td>
<td>Changes in individual and family healthy eating behaviors on the pathway to achieving the current <a href="https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/">Dietary Guidelines for Americans</a> recommendations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>LT1</strong></td>
<td>Measures which behaviors are sustained at a minimum of 6 months post-direct education program.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Individual Level (*continued*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of intervention component</th>
<th>SNAP-Ed Indicator</th>
<th>About the Indicator as described in the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online food resource management classes, videos, and/or learning games for children where participants earn reward points</td>
<td><strong>ST2</strong></td>
<td>Measures intent to change and goals resulting from a single education lesson or a series of food resource management classes with SNAP-Ed adults and youth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>MT2</strong></td>
<td>Changes in individual and family behaviors that reflect smarter shopping and food resource management strategies, enabling participants to stretch their food resource dollars to support a healthier diet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>LT2</strong></td>
<td>Measures which behaviors are sustained at a minimum of 6 months post- food resource management classes.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Environmental Level

If there is in-store signage, demonstrations, use of QR codes for additional information or games, and/or other technology used during the shopping experience, the following SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework indicators can be used to evaluate efforts.

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<tr>
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<td>ST7</td>
<td>Partnerships with service providers, organizational leaders, and SNAP-Ed representatives in settings where people eat, learn, live, play, shop, and work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail store(s) with in-store signage/prompts or QR code to promote healthy food items</td>
<td>MT5a</td>
<td>Number and proportion of sites or organizations that make at least one change in writing or practice to expand access or improve appeal for healthy eating (e.g., point-of-purchase and distribution prompts).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of retail stores that make PSE change(s) along with direct education component for the rewards program</td>
<td>LT5a</td>
<td>Number of sites or organizations that report a multi-component and multi-level intervention with one or more changes in MT5 (PSE changes). Multi-component intervention refers to sites making at least one PSE change (MT5) implemented together with evidence-based education, marketing, parent/community involvement, and/or staff training on continuous program and policy implementation.</td>
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<td>Components (total and types) adopted by each retail store</td>
<td>LT5b</td>
<td>Total number of components per site or organization, and types of components (e.g., evidence-based education, marketing, parent/community involvement).</td>
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## Sectors of Influence Level

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<tr>
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<td>ST8</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail store(s) implementing the food rewards program to support healthy eating behaviors</td>
<td>LT18e</td>
<td>Number of retail food stores that have established marketing practices that promote the choice of healthier foods and beverages (e.g., in-store merchandising, labeling, promotion, and family-friendly placements that intentionally encourage the choice of foods/beverages-to-encourage).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 7 – Sample questions for use with key informants to evaluate interventions

- How do you feel the [name of the retail strategy, project, etc.] went in your store? Please describe.
- What barriers, if any, did you face in implementing this [retail strategy, project, etc.] in your store? Please be as specific as possible.
- How did customers respond to the [name of the retail strategy, project, etc.]?
- How would you improve this [retail strategy, project, etc.] to make it work better in your store?
- What additional resources/assistance would be needed to make the project more successful and sustainable?
- What other [retail strategies, projects, etc.] do you think should be tried to get customers to buy healthier foods in your store?
- What concerns, if any, did your employees report about [the retail strategy, project, etc.]?
  - How might these concerns be addressed?