

impact

University of Idaho Extension programs that are making a difference in Idaho.

Long Live Idaho! Let's get healthy together

AT A GLANCE

University of Idaho Eat Smart Idaho worked with 43 partners to launch a statewide healthy lifestyle messaging campaign that reached over 400,000 parents and care providers of young children.

The Situation

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), childhood obesity is still a serious problem in the United States, putting children and youth at risk for poor health. The CDC National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) data brief, reports the prevalence of obesity was 18.5 percent in 2015-16, and affected about 13.7 million children and adolescents. In 2018, in a collaborative study between the CDC and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), it was shown that obesity disproportionately affects low-income children.

The CDC has defined health marketing as “creating, communicating, and delivering health information and interventions using consumer-centered and science-based strategies to project and promote the health of diverse populations.” The use of marketing to enhance circulation of evidence-based guidelines has potential to change communities and promote healthy living. Social marketing in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) can provide both reinforcement and exposure to nutrition messages.



Photo of one of the marketing campaign posters encouraging one hour of physical activity a day.

Our Response

In 2015, a committee within Idaho's Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) network was organized to develop common health and wellness messages to reach parents and care providers of young children across Idaho. This committee was led by Eat Smart Idaho, a University of Idaho Extension program funded in part by SNAP-Ed.

Focus groups were conducted to determine current health habits of families with children, including awareness of the 5-2-1-0 guidelines, general health and wellness guidelines, and previous health campaigns. One focus group was conducted at a Head Start center in Caldwell, Idaho among Spanish-speaking

participants and another at the Boys and Girls Club in Garden City among English-speaking participants.

Applying feedback from these focus groups, the committee selected a brand identity and logo for the campaign “Long Live Idaho!” and finalized the messaging concept based on the “5-2-1-Almost None” nutrition and physical activity guidelines for children. Specific messages included: 1) Feed your kids a rainbow — Serve 5 fruits and veggies a day, 2) Playtime, not screen time — Cut screen time to 2 hours or less a day, 3) Kids grow best in motion — Encourage 1 hour of physical activity a day and 4) Water is just fine, thanks — Serve water or low-fat milk instead of soda.

Promotional materials were developed in English and Spanish, including print and digital posters, social media items, billboards and radio ads on Spanish and Tribal radio stations. The campaign was officially launched at the Idaho Public Health, Collaborating for Health Conference in May 2016. Utilizing the Idaho HEAL network, organizations and agencies were encouraged to join the campaign and download materials via the Long Live Idaho! website. Eat Smart Idaho partnered with several groups to distribute the messages, including the Idaho Department of Education, Department of Health and Welfare State WIC, Community Action Partnership, Farmers Market Association, Boys and Girls Clubs, community centers, hospitals and emergency food pantries.

Program Outcomes

The reach of the campaign was evaluated quarterly, using an electronic survey distributed via Survey Monkey. Through print posters, social media and billboards, the messages reached over 400,000 individuals. Forty-three partners joined the campaign and reported reach, with most partners (85 percent) reporting displaying the messages via hard copy materials (e.g. fact sheets, flyers, pamphlets, activity books, posters, banners, postcards, recipe cards or newsletter

mailings). The messages were displayed at schools, childcare centers, food banks, clinics and other sites.

When asked, 55 percent of partners responded that they remembered seeing the campaign’s billboards and 18 percent remembered hearing the ads on Spanish radio. Partners believed that the “Kids Grow Best in Motion” poster had the most positive impact on their clientele, with 90 percent responding a positive impact, and the “Water is Just Fine, Thanks” poster the least positive impact with 78 percent reporting a positive impact.

On average, 40 percent of the target audience surveyed stated they recognized the messages, with most reporting viewing them on social media or posters at schools, childcare centers or health facilities. Overall, the campaign designs were well received by partners and the target audience. Respondents found them attractive and motivating. However, both partners and the target audience reported the font was difficult to read and had some negative responses to two of the images used.

The Future

This feedback was positive enough for the HEAL Messaging Committee to determine to make revisions and relaunch the campaign. Strategic recommendations to improve the Long Live Idaho! campaign included design tweaks, including a website/landing page, digital advertising, social media marketing, content marketing, organic social media and more printed materials. Two areas were identified, design tweaks and more printed materials, to address with the relaunch of the campaign in 2019. New images replaced the images that received negative feedback and the font was changed to a non-cursive font to improve legibility. In 2020, the focus is to incorporate Idaho specific images into the campaign materials and engage participants to actively share how they are following the guidelines through a social media promotion.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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