



## Social Marketing Healthy Drinks, Healthy Kids Pilot Results

### Capital Area Head Start Parents Perceptions of Sugar Sweetened Beverage Messages

Michigan State University Extension helps people improve their lives through an educational process that applies knowledge to critical issues, needs and opportunities.

The Sugar Smart Coalition (SSC) is a collaboration between organizations in our community that are committed to educating and advocating on behalf of Greater Lansing residents to reduce the negative and inequitable health impacts related to excessive hidden sugar consumption through common foods and beverages. Michigan State University Extension and the Sugar Smart Coalition partnered together to provide sugary beverage social marketing messages to parents of Head Start aged children to promote the reduction of sugar-sweetened beverages.



#### Background

Sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) are among the largest sources of calories in childrens' diets and account for nearly half of kids' added sugar intake.<sup>1</sup> Nearly two thirds (61%) of U.S. children and youth consume sugary drinks each day; among children ages 2 to 4, nearly half (46%) do.<sup>2</sup> On average, kids are drinking more than 30 gallons of SSBs per year. These include sports drinks, energy drinks, sodas, fruit-ades, sweetened waters, sweetened coffee and tea.<sup>2</sup> Consuming sugary drinks increases children's risk of excess weight gain and tooth decay and preventable diseases such as obesity. It's estimated that 2 million cases of type 2 diabetes are attributable to consuming sugary drinks in the U.S. over the last 10 years.<sup>2</sup>

#### Methods

Capital Area Head Start parents were recruited to provide input after a pilot 6-week social marketing campaign via electronic survey and focus group. Parents were invited to participate by electronic communication and social media posts. Participants who completed the focus group and survey received a \$10 electronic gift card for their participation.

#### Results

- A total of 8 parents participated in the focus group/Interview. Of the participants, 38% identified as Hispanic, 25% African American and 100% female. All participants also participated in the Women, Infants and Children program.
- Five participants completed the electronic survey. Four participants responded that they saw the newsletter messages, one saw the poster and zero participants saw the social media messages.
- Although participants suggested that they serve and drink less sugary drinks and more water since seeing the messages, the response rate is too low to determine if an intention to change a behavior occurred throughout the Head Start parent group. The message campaign will need to be repeated with another audience to reach data saturation.
- "Healthy drinks, healthy kids" was ranked the top message tag line theme compared to Rethink Your Drink and Drink More Water Michigan. Participants said, "Healthy Drinks, Healthy Kids is clear and precise."

| Theme   | Participant Quotes   |
|---|--|
| Preferred Information Dissemination Method        | <p>If I come across it on social media, it's something that I would look into</p> <p>If it's something that comes to my email, is something that I might stay a little consistent with</p> <p>If I see videos about it would make me more interested</p> <p>Email, text message, or through social media</p> <p>WIC and head start</p> <p>Handouts sent home</p> |
| Preferred Information needed for Beverage Choices | <p>What they put in them and what they are consisted of</p> <p>The nutrition content and serving size</p> <p>Mostly ingredients</p> <p>Nutritional info</p> <p>If it says organic, or it has caffeine in it or not</p>   |
| Preferred Message Communication method(s)         | <p>I like the recipes</p> <p>The recipes have been nice when I received them</p> <p>I did like it (newsletter), there was some things I didn't know.</p> <p>I did like the softness of the background (poster)</p>   |

