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# SOCIAL MARKETING TO PROMOTE NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS



# Overview



- Household Food Security
- Nutrition Assistance Programs
- Social Marketing/Social Marketing Process
- Application of Social Marketing Process to Nutrition Assistance Programs
  - ▣ *Planning and Strategy Development*
  - ▣ *Developing and Pretesting Concepts, Messages, and Materials*
  - ▣ *Implementing the Program*
  - ▣ *Assessing Effectiveness and Making Refinements*
- Directions for Future Research



# Household Food Security



## Food secure

- **High food security:** have access at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life.

## Food insecure

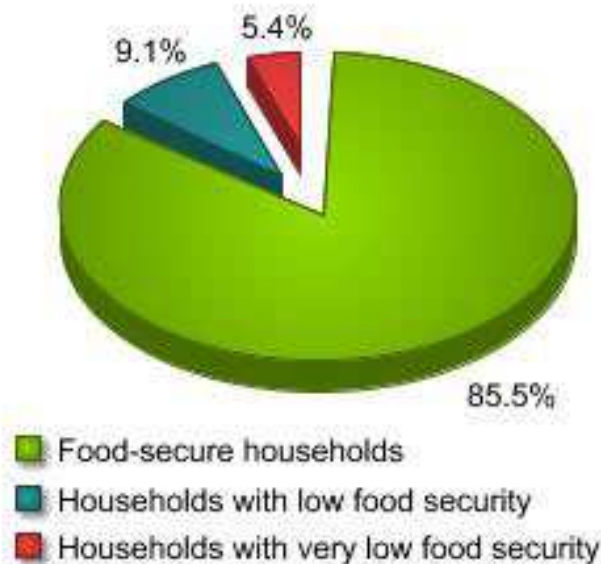
- **Low food security:** unable to acquire enough food because they have insufficient money and other resources for food.



# Food Insecurity in the U.S.

- 17.2 million households with low food security in 2010

Food security status of U.S. households, 2010



- Higher rates among households:
  - near or below the Federal poverty line
  - with single parents
  - identifying as black or Hispanic
  - in large cities



**Note:** Food-insecure households include those with low food security and very low food security.

Source: Calculated by ERS using data from the December 2010 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.



# Nutrition Assistance Programs

The USDA administers 15 nutrition assistance programs serving approximately one in four Americans each year.



- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- National School Lunch Program
- School Breakfast Program
- Child and Adult Care Food Program





# Use of Nutrition Assistance Programs



- Underutilization of resources.
  - 1 in 3 people who are eligible for SNAP do not receive the benefit.
  - Nearly half of the children who are eligible for free and reduced price breakfast do not participate.
- Efforts are needed to:
  - Improve access
  - Increase awareness and participation
  - Build capacity



# Social Marketing



- Social marketing: application of commercial marketing strategies to develop, implement, and evaluate health promotion programs
- Social marketing offers a promising technique for enhancing public awareness and use of nutrition assistance programs
- Social marketing represents a powerful tool for engaging both the recipients and advocates of social or political change



# Examples of Social Marketing

- CDC VERB Campaign

- ▣ Improve adolescents' knowledge, attitudes and beliefs about physical activity; increase opportunities and support for physical activity.



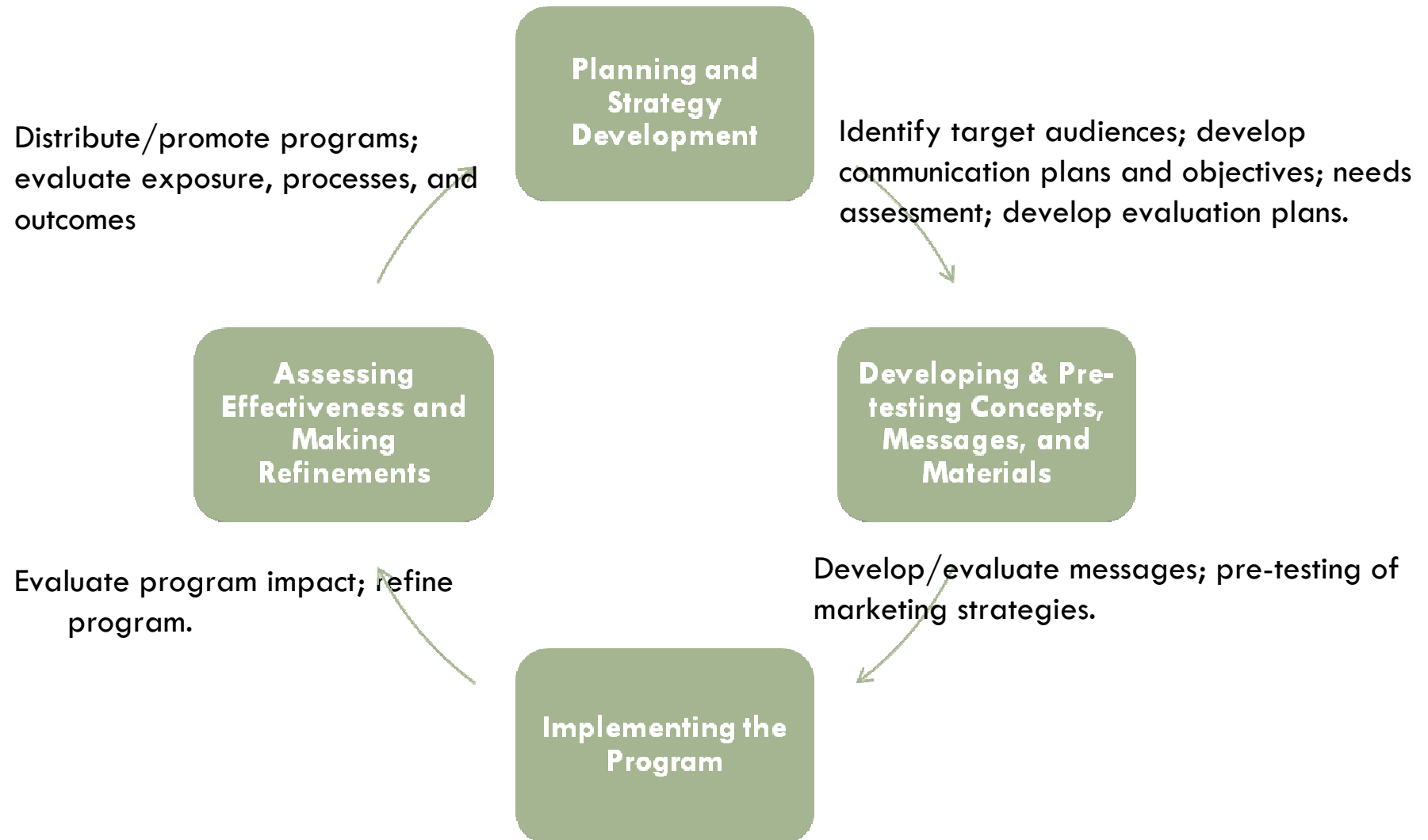
- Fruits and Veggies: More Matters (formally 5-A-Day)

- ▣ Increase consumption of fruits and vegetables



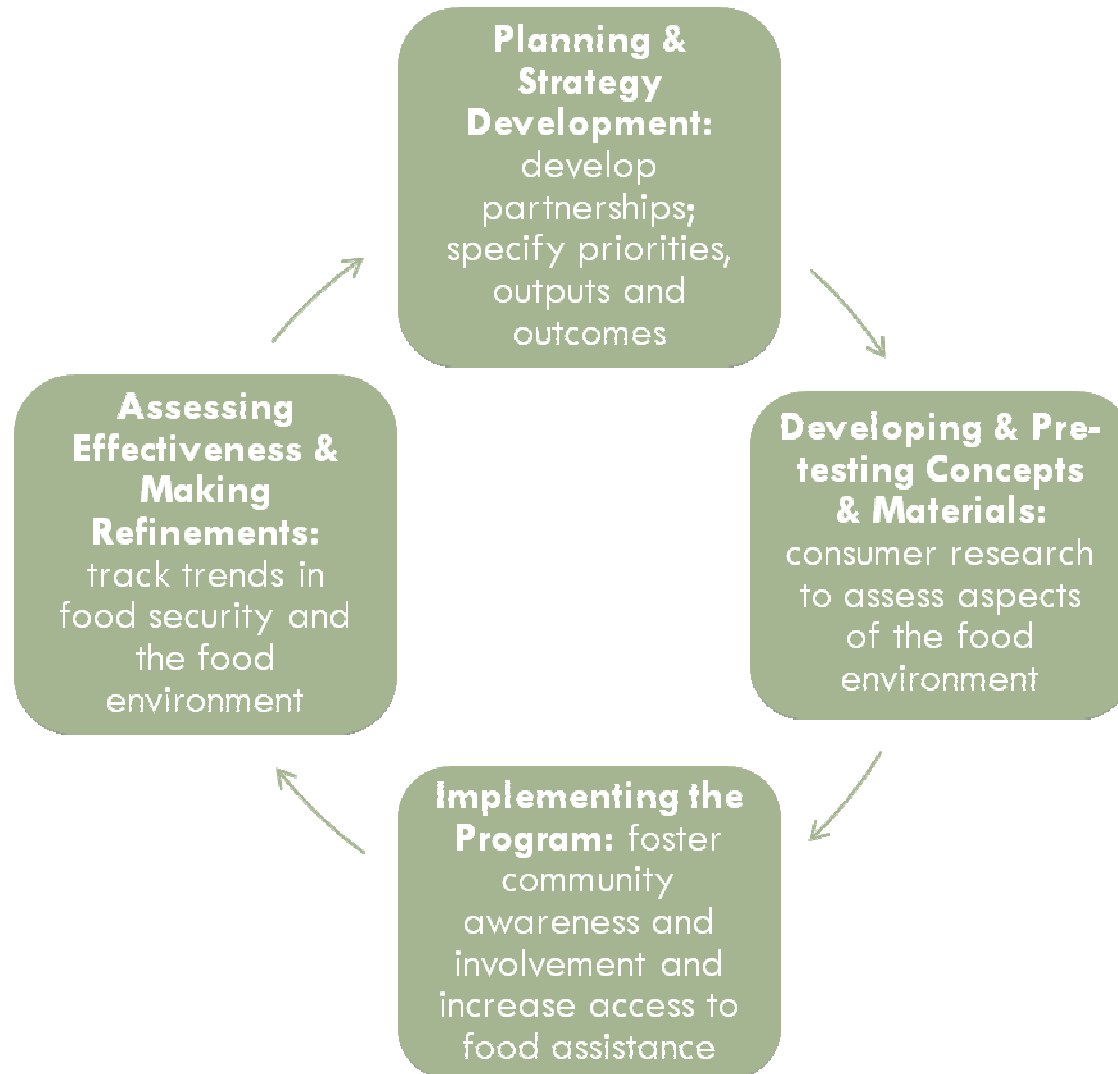


# Social Marketing Process





# Application of Social Marketing to Nutrition Assistance Programs





# Planning and Strategy Development



Implement consumer research with hunger advocates and food insecure populations; discern areas of need to inform program objectives.



Establish key partnerships; build interdisciplinary teams; involve stakeholders from multiple sectors; engage multiple perspectives to inform program objectives.

Develop communication and evaluation plans consistent with the community needs and the organizational processes of stakeholders.



# Developing and Pretesting Materials



```
graph TD; A[Qualitative research with target audiences] --> B[Formative evaluation of program messages and distribution channels];
```

Qualitative research with target audiences

Formative evaluation of program messages and  
distribution channels



# Implementing the Program



```
graph TD; A[Promote nutrition assistance programs] --> B[Evaluate program exposure, processes, and outputs]; B --> C[Identify and evaluate physical, social, and economic factors];
```

Promote nutrition assistance programs

Evaluate program exposure, processes, and outputs

Identify and evaluate physical, social, and economic factors



# Assessing Effectiveness and Making Refinements



```
graph TD; A[Evaluate program impact] --> B[Compare program objectives with outcomes]; B --> C[Evaluate program processes and impacts serve to guide corresponding program refinements];
```

Evaluate program impact

Compare program objectives with outcomes

Evaluate program processes and impacts serve to guide corresponding program refinements



# Priorities for Future Research

## Descriptive Research

- Characterize experiences and coping strategies of food insecure populations; examine barriers to participation; examine individual, community, social factors, and food system factors related to food insecurity; assess challenges to and resources for reaching at risk populations.

## Intervention Research

- Implement and evaluate campaigns to raise awareness of nutrition assistance programs; assess creative solutions to improve program uptake; assess policy level interventions on school and individual participation in nutrition assistance.

## Methodological Research

- Improve measures of food insecurity and participation in nutrition assistance programs; conduct longitudinal studies of food insecurity and participation in nutrition assistance programs; assess short- and long-term impact of participation in food assistance programs on food insecurity and health outcomes.



# Conclusions



- Despite recent economic hardship in the U.S., nutrition assistance programs remain underutilized.
- Efforts are needed to improve access, bolster program capacity, raise awareness and increase participation in nutrition assistance programs
- Social marketing can potentially be an effective means to plan and evaluate public health efforts to raise awareness of and participation in nutrition assistance programs



# Questions?

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