

A photograph of a wooden desk with a pencil holder and a notebook. The background is a wall of vertical wooden planks. In the foreground, a black mesh pencil holder is filled with several blue pencils. To the left, a brown leather notebook is partially visible. The right side of the image features a dark teal overlay with white text and a red square in the top right corner.

Legislative Education 101

**SNAP-ED PROGRAM
DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION
COMMITTEE**

Housekeeping

- ▶ Please put your questions in the chat box for speakers to address at the end of the presentation.
- ▶ The session is being recorded and will be available for registrants after the webcast today.
- ▶ Please keep your lines muted to maintain sound clarity.

Land Grant University (LGU) SNAP-Ed Program Development Team (PDT)

- ▶ **Purpose:** Improve the consistency and effectiveness of Extension SNAP-Ed programming to address national health and nutrition-related problems facing individuals with low income in the context of Extension's broader low-income nutrition education portfolio.
- ▶ **Representation:**
 - ▶ SNAP-Ed Coordinators and Program Leaders
 - ▶ Representing all Extension regions
 - ▶ 1862s and 1890s
 - ▶ EFNEP program liaison

Legislative Education Matters



EDUCATING DECISION-MAKERS
ALLOWS THEM TO MAKE DECISIONS
GROUNDED IN A SOLID
UNDERSTANDING OF THE
PROGRAM'S DELIVERY, IMPACT,
AND VALUE.



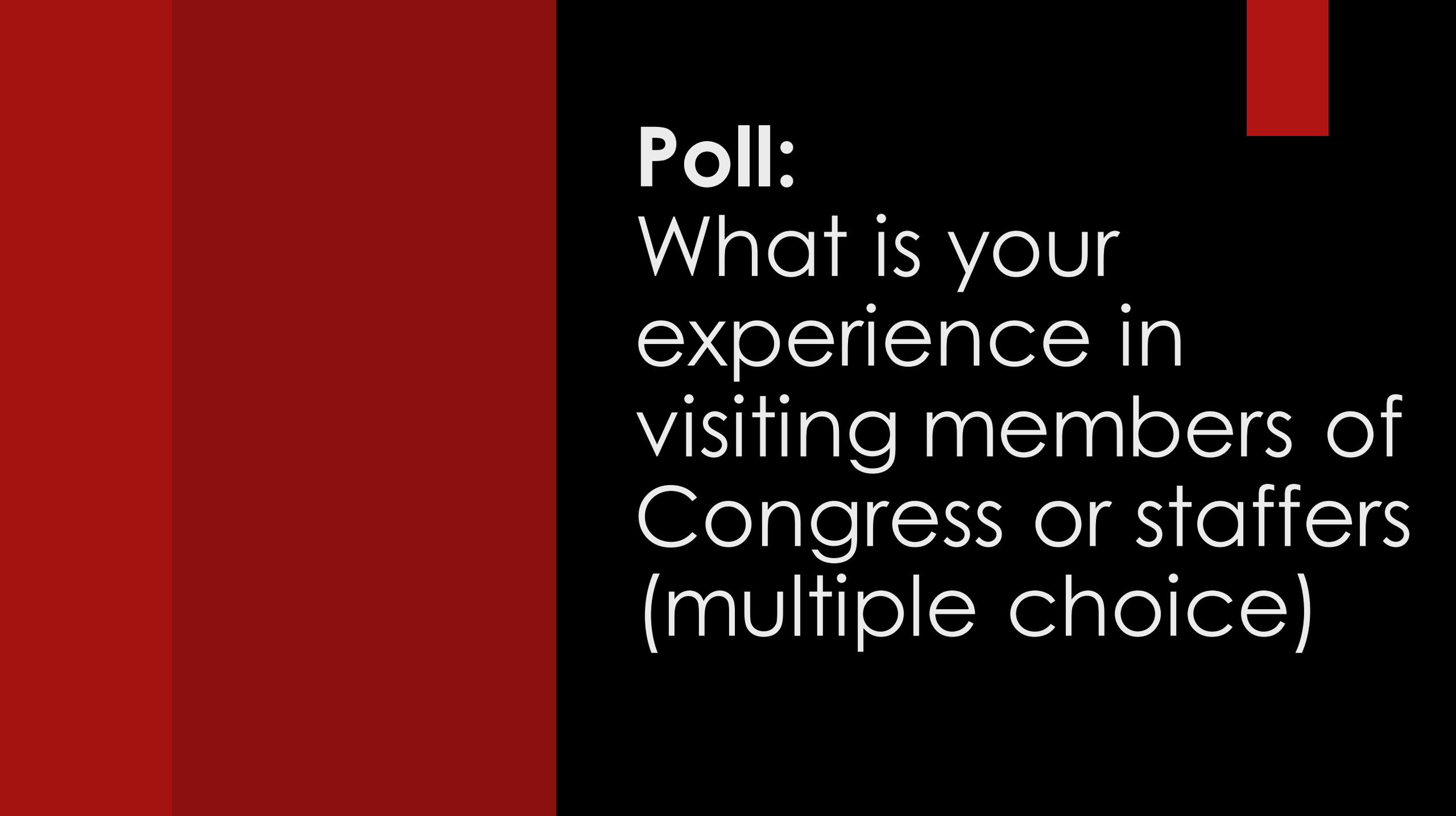
YOU HAVE THE POWER TO **MAKE**
YOUR PROGRAM VISIBLE TO
DECISION-MAKERS.



FORMING A RELATIONSHIP WITH
DECISION-MAKERS AND THEIR STAFF
INCREASES THE LIKELIHOOD THEY
WILL CONSULT YOU WHEN FACED
WITH DECISIONS RELATED TO SNAP-
ED OR OTHER NUTRITION
EDUCATION PROGRAMS.



IF DECISION-MAKERS DON'T KNOW
WHAT THEY ARE FUNDING, IT IS
EASIER TO DISCONTINUE THE
FUNDING.



Poll:

What is your
experience in
visiting members of
Congress or staffers
(multiple choice)

Farm Bill

- ▶ The Farm Bill is the primary agricultural and food policy tool of the United States' federal government. The comprehensive omnibus (comprising of several items) bill is renewed every 5 years or so and deals with all affairs under the purview of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).
- ▶ Last passed in 2018-2019 legislative cycle
- ▶ Next scheduled - 2023
- ▶ <https://www.usda.gov/farmbill>

Farm Bill Titles

- ▶ Commodity Programs
- ▶ Conservation
- ▶ Trade
- ▶ Nutrition
- ▶ Credit
- ▶ Rural Development
- ▶ Research and Extension
- ▶ Forestry
- ▶ Energy
- ▶ Horticulture and Organic Agriculture
- ▶ Crop Insurance
- ▶ Miscellaneous

Child Nutrition Reauthorization

- Maintains current SNAP-Ed funding formula and caps the overall program spending
- Sets policies for child nutrition meals programs, Child and Adult Care Feeding Program (CACFP) and Women, Infant, and Children (WIC)
- Last reauthorization was in 2010 with the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act (discussion of reauthorization this year)

Legislative Education 101

- ▶ Know your institution's rules.
 - ▶ Some allow staff to visit law-makers and their staff in an official capacity; others do not.
 - ▶ Many LGUs have a process staff follow to schedule visits which may involve working through a legislative liaison. You may need to send your infographics and talking points ahead for approval.
- ▶ Know the boundaries of your role.
 - ▶ Typically, LGU staff meet with law-makers and/or their staff to provide education about how federal programs are implemented in their state and answer their questions.
 - ▶ Typically, LGU staff do not advocate in support of a particular policy decision.



Poll:

Do you know your
institutions policy?

Preparing for your visit

- ▶ Plan ahead
 - ▶ Identify local elected officials and the committees on which they serve.
 - ▶ Prioritize which ones to visit based on committee service and SNAP-Ed programming in their districts.
 - ▶ House Agriculture
 - ▶ House Education and Labor
 - ▶ House Appropriations
 - ▶ Senate - Agriculture
 - ▶ Leave time between visits for breaks and unexpected delays
 - ▶ Look for opportunities for state coffee hours or meet and greet with the member

Preparing for your visit

- ▶ Resources for advice
 - ▶ University Legislative Liaison – both in state and in Washington DC
 - ▶ Extension colleagues that have participated in Public Issues Leadership Development (PILD)
 - ▶ Colleagues from other states – possibly shadow a visit with them
 - ▶ ASNNA Advocacy Committee
 - ▶ SNAP-Ed Program Development Team

Considerations for after an election

- Identify newly elected officials
 - ▶ May need additional background
- ▶ Members may have new committee assignment
- ▶ New or changed staff

Visiting during a pandemic



Travel may not be allowed



Video Conferencing or Phone Conference



Have website, videos, or materials being shared cued up



Meeting with more than one Legislative Aide



Virtual meeting protocol

Virtual background from your LGU

Dress for success

Preparing for your visit

- ▶ Materials
 - ▶ Items should be quick to read and highlight the key points you plan to make
 - ▶ Geared for lay audience
 - ▶ Contact information
 - ▶ Photos and stories (use a tablet to scroll through photos)
 - ▶ Customize information to your elected official's district when possible
 - ▶ Have a success story from their district ready - Ground truthing
 - ▶ Something to hang up in their office
 - ▶ Nothing bulky and no sealed envelopes (security)



Preparing for your visit



- ▶ Prepare your remarks
 - ▶ Familiarize yourself with the elected official's committee assignments and consider how they may intersect with SNAP-Education or SNAP or influence their position on the topic.
 - ▶ Create talking points that are simple and clear.
 - ▶ You may have as few as 10 minutes and the person you talk to may have no background in SNAP-Education.
 - ▶ Include a closing request that staff reach out to you should they ever have questions related to nutrition education for SNAP clients.
 - ▶ Walk through the plan in your head if you're nervous.

What to expect

- ▶ Most visits happen with a Legislative Aide aka a 'Staffer'
 - ▶ The "Staffer's" gather information and assist with the decision making processes.
 - ▶ These are often young people from the elected official's home state.
 - ▶ They may or may not have a working knowledge of SNAP-Ed. Ask about this so you can tailor your remarks to *their level* of understanding.
 - ▶ Listen to their stories or interests and make connections
 - ▶ They may have many consecutive appointments, be mindful of time.

What to expect when in D.C.



Take business cards

You will be asked for them in most office lobbies and during visits



Lots of walking



Time in airport-style security lines – you will need your photo ID



Unpredictable time to converse



Unconventional meeting spaces which may include the hallway

Do not plan for an electrical outlet or an internet connection

You may be asked to walk with them to their next meeting

Be Prepared



For visits to be 5-45 minutes long (day of the week matters)



To explain the difference between SNAP-Ed and EFNEP and how the programs complement each other through collaboration



Consider what is happening on Capitol Hill that week such as high-profile votes



Listen for their interest or for areas of interest – make the connection



To connect to visits from others at your university

Why does SNAP-Ed matter?

- ▶ SNAP-Ed programs make healthy choices easier for Americans who are eligible for or participate in SNAP.
 - ▶ SNAP-Ed is the educational component of SNAP which helps participants make healthier choices.
 - ▶ SNAP-Ed is in all states and territories.
 - ▶ SNAP-Ed documents behavior change impacts on an annual basis.
 - ▶ SNAP-Ed can be delivered by a variety of implementing agencies with Land Grant Universities being one of them.

THE IMPACT

ADULT GRADUATES

-  **76%** improved food resource management behaviors
-  **73%** improved food safety behaviors
-  **71%** improved physical activity behaviors
-  **44%** eat fruit more often
-  **42%** eat vegetables more often

YOUTH GRADUATES

-  **47%** improved food safety behaviors
-  **37%** drink fruit-flavored drinks less often
-  **35%** improved physical activity behaviors
-  **33%** eat vegetables more often

While reviewing the lesson from the previous week, which was about reading the Food Label, a young girl in the classroom told me she showed her mother how to look at a food label in the grocery store. She told us that her mother was going to buy Sunny D for the family. She had her mom to look at the ingredients list and the first item was water and the second sugar. Her mother was surprised and put it back. She told the class her mom bought 100% orange juice. I have been telling the kids that they have the power to show their parents what they have learned from the classes. That made my day.

- Muskogee County

A family was referred to our program from a local home health agency. The individual, a 700+ pound male in his 20s, lives with his parents and is home bound and unable walk. The family reports that they are enjoying the new recipes and cooking healthier foods. They have learned about portion sizes, are reading food labels, and decreased fast food. The participant reports he is getting up to eat meals at the table with his family and is no longer drinking soda. While working with our program and his physical therapist, he has been more active and is now able to walk the length of the home daily. He states his life has changed as "[his] body has changed, [there is] less fluid on [his] body and [his] mood and mental health have improved." He has set a one-year goal to be out of the house and working.

- Oklahoma County

An adult male began the program while in court-ordered drug/alcohol rehab and parenting courses in order to regain custody of his children. The children's mother was also in the same situation and attended the program as well. He was into bodybuilding and was interested in his personal health. He had very little knowledge as to what foods are healthy, and was relying on protein shakes and easy-to-prepare processed foods at home. He was very enthusiastic throughout each lesson, commenting and questioning, in order to learn as much as possible. Several times he related how they had tried a new vegetable for dinner while the kids were visiting and the kids had enjoyed it too. After the lesson on Nutrition Labels, he mentioned that he now reads labels in the grocery store and knows what to look for. He and their mother are preparing fresher foods for meals several nights a week. Additionally, they are including the kids in meal preparation and encouraging them to try the new, healthier foods.

- McCurtain County

Sample infographic

How to wrap up

State

State that you are available for follow up

Confirm

Confirm your contact information and offer to serve as a resource for Extension or nutrition education issues.

Invite

Invite staff to observe programming when they are in your home state.

Example: Invite them to be a "guest chef" during a cooking class

Thank

Thank them for their time, service and support.

Send

Send a follow-up email thanking them for their time and attach an electronic copy of your infographic or other materials you left behind.

What to avoid

- ▶ Political party biases
- ▶ Personal biases about the functioning of the US Government, Congress or USDA
- ▶ Large amounts of literature and detailed research
- ▶ Getting caught up in opinion-based conversations about policy
- ▶ Wasted time or directionless conversations, time may be very short

Helpful Habits

- ▶ Remember you are the content expert.
- ▶ Try to visit the same staffer each year to build a relationship.
 - ▶ Get to know a bit of personal information about them, such as where they went to school, so you can connect with them easily next time.
- ▶ In years when you cannot visit offices, send infographics and success stories by email*
- ▶ Remind partners and professional groups of SNAP-Ed's funding structure
- ▶ Follow members and staff on social media*
 - ▶ Tag them in your posts*
- ▶ Share what you learned and what was discussed at your meetings with colleagues back at your university
- ▶ Take a picture with the folks you meet with for posting on your LGU social media accounts.

*If allowed by your institution

Throughout the Year



VISIT IN THE LOCAL
DISTRICT OFFICE



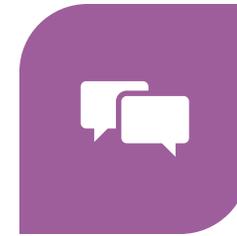
HOST/ATTEND LOCAL
EVENTS & INVITE ELECTED
OFFICIALS OR STAFF



SEND COMMUNICATION
FLYERS/FACT SHEETS TO
OFFICE/EMAIL



SEND INFORMAL
PROGRAM UPDATES VIA
EMAIL



TAG REPRESENTATIVE IN
PROGRAMS SOCIAL
MEDIA

SNAP-Ed Resources

- ▶ SNAP-Ed Connection:
<https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/>
 - ▶ Guidance
 - ▶ Evaluation Framework and Interpretive Guide
 - ▶ SNAP-Ed Toolkit
- ▶ ASNNA Advocacy Committee (National Association of SNAP-Ed Coordinators)
- ▶ SNAP-Ed Program Development Team

PDT Resources

*(Will be sent to you in
follow-up email)*



Infographic Teconomy



Infographic EFNEP-
SNAP-Ed Comparison



Infographic of
Legislative Process

Legislative Resources

- ▶ Find your Representative: www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative
- ▶ Find your Senator: www.senate.gov/senators/index.htm
- ▶ Senate Legislative Calendar: www.senate.gov/legislative/2019_schedule.htm
- ▶ House Legislative Calendar: www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/Calendars+and+Schedules
- ▶ Child Nutrition Authorization Information: <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/IF10266.pdf>

What is one action
you will do this
year to educate
your Congressional
Delegation?

(Type your answer in the chat box.)



What
questions
do you
have?



Thank you