

Husky Nutrition
SNAP4CT Online Platform: Formative Evaluation Report
SNAP-Ed Annual Report, FY 2019

Name: SNAP4CT Online Platform

Type of Evaluation: Formative

Questions

- What is the prevalence of internet use?
- What devices are used to search for information online, visit websites, or use social media?
- Where are internet users when they usually access the internet?
- How common and frequent is use of the following communication platforms among internet users: email, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, blogs, texting?
- What nutrition-related information is of interest to the SNAP-eligible population?
- What are the preferred platform(s) for receiving information on healthy eating, recipes, cooking tips, and budget shopping?

The SNAP4CT Online Platform delivers nutrition and physical fitness education to the SNAP-eligible population through the internet (e.g., SNAP4CT.org website, email, social media platforms).

Prior evaluation: In FY 2018, Husky Nutrition conducted a formative survey of the SNAP-eligible population to help ensure that SNAP4CT better reaches its target population through relevant, easy-to-use, quality programming delivered through the SNAP4CT.org website and social media. The survey collects information on the internet use, device use, preferred modes of contact, and nutrition-related interests among persons living in households with food assistance. Survey distribution occurred in a number of community settings, targeting the general adult population. Survey responses (n=59) indicated Facebook and email as the most used modes of electronic media for our audience and that 85% of SNAP participants surveyed used their smartphones to obtain information.

Evaluation Design: For FY 2019, the SNAP4CT technology use and interest survey design focused on assessing the type of platforms and content of interest to SNAP-eligible parents ages 18-44. The FY 2019 survey includes new items to further measure the types of devices used, topics of interest, and the places where respondents would like to see certain types of information, as well as, revisions to the FY 2018 survey items in order improve clarity. Survey administration occurred in Hartford, CT at three community sites that serve families meeting the SNAP-eligible definition. The sites included an early care and education center, an elementary school, and a local WIC office with which Husky Nutrition collaborates. A convenience sample of adults at these community locations were invited to complete a survey. Survey responses were entered into an ACCESS database. Analyses included descriptive statistics and bivariate analyses of the 58 surveys using SPSS.

Planned use: Results will be used to inform the type of content and to prioritize which social media platforms will be used to disseminate specific types of SNAP4CT messages in a manner that best reaches the SNAP-Ed target population of parents/adults ages 18-44.

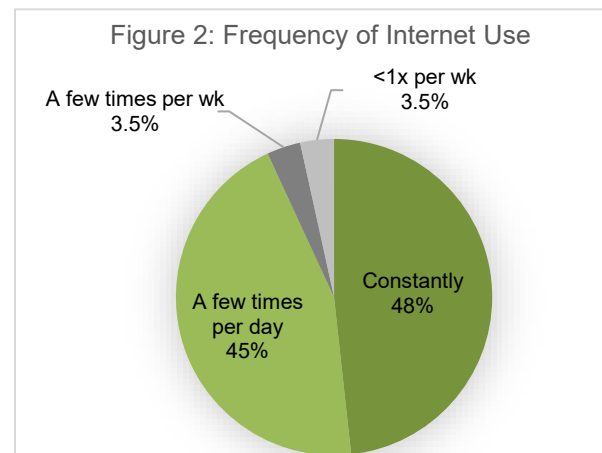
Use of SNAP-Ed Priority Indicators: not applicable.

Results

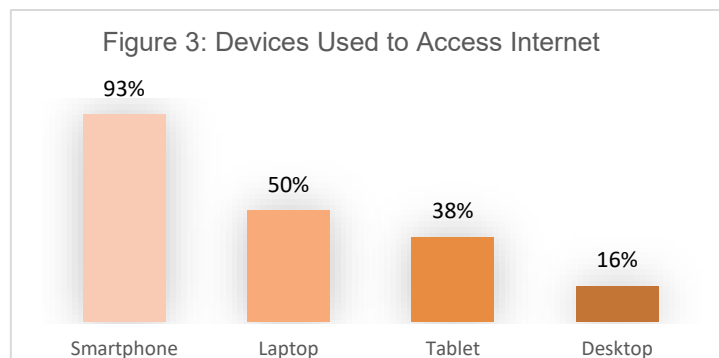
Fifty-eight people completed the survey, 35 of whom reported living in a household that received food assistance in the past 12 months. Seventy-one percent of the survey respondents were ages 18-34. Half of the respondents were ages 25-34. Adults age 55 and older account for less than 2% of the completed surveys. Approximately 33% of survey participants reported familiarity with SNAP4CT.org.

Age range (n=58)	%	n
18-24	20.7	12
25-34	50.0	29
35-44	15.5	9
45-54	6.9	4
55-64	1.7	1
Unreported	5.2	3

Internet use (Figure 2). Almost all respondents (97%) reported using the internet; both of the respondents who answered “no” to the question of whether they use the internet indicated that they use the internet in subsequent question; therefore, all respondents are included in the analyses. Overall, 93% of the survey respondents reported using the internet constantly (48%) or a few times a day (45%). Only two respondents (3.5%) reported using the internet less than twice per week.

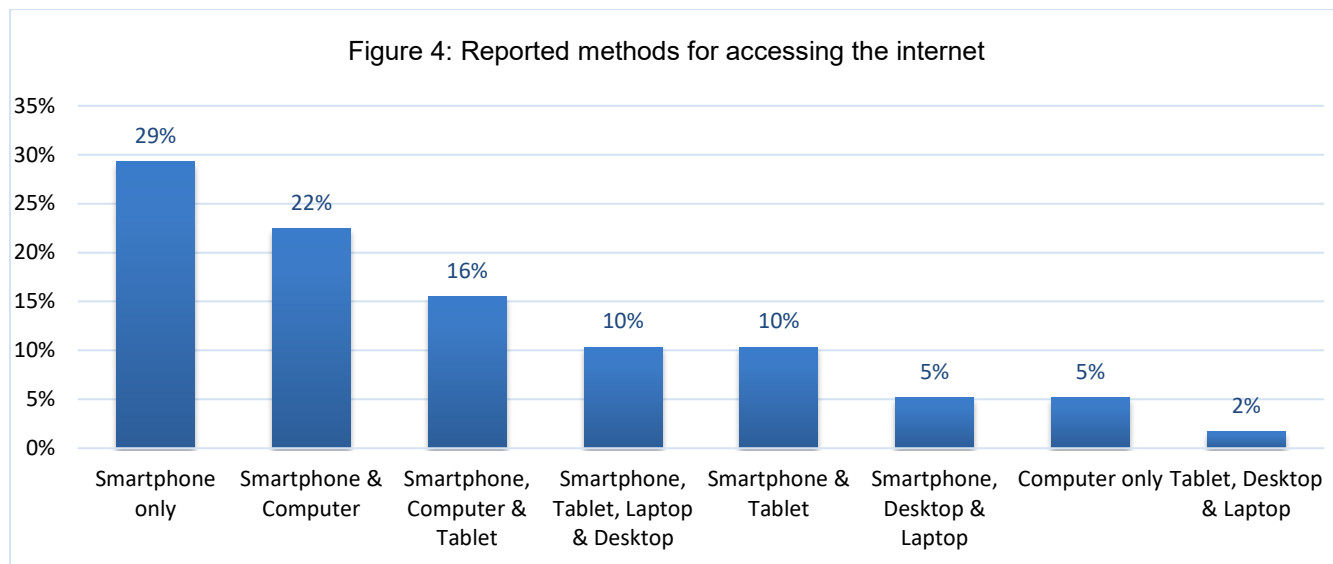


Devices used to access internet (Figures 3 & 4). Survey participants were asked about the devices they use to search for information online, visit websites, or use social media. As shown in Figure 3, 93% of participants reported using a smartphone (n=54), 50% reported using a laptop (29), 38% reported using a tablet (n=22), and 28% reported using a desktop (n=16).



Almost two-thirds of survey participants (n=38) reported using more than one

type of device to access the internet. Of the 20 survey participants who indicated using only one device, seventeen reported using a smartphone while the other three participants used either a desktop (n=2) or laptop (n=1).



More than half of respondents (53%) reported using a smartphone along with a desktop and/or laptop to access the internet, while only 5% reported use of only a desktop or laptop (Figure 4). All 22 respondents who reported using a tablet for the internet, also reported using at least one additional device; all but one tablet user reported using a smartphone in addition to a tablet. More than two-thirds of the tablet users reported that they also use a smartphone and a computer (desktop and/or laptop) for internet activities. Among the tablet users, 68% reported (n=15) that they also use a smartphone and a computer (desktop and/or laptop) for internet activities.

Smartphones. Out of 54 people who reported using a smartphone to access the internet, 22% reported worrying about whether they would run out of data. This may under-report the extent to which survey participants worry about running out of data given that almost 19% of the 54 people who reported using a smartphone for the internet did not provide an answer to this survey item.

Usual location when accessing internet. Survey participants were asked to indicate whether they are usually at home, at work, the library, “anywhere I want with my smartphone,” or in another location when they access the internet. Figure 5 shows that about one-third of the respondents (n=19) selected multiple options rather than to “choose one.” Ten respondents indicated they usually access the internet anywhere, at home, and at work. An additional two respondents selected both anywhere and home as where they accessed the internet.

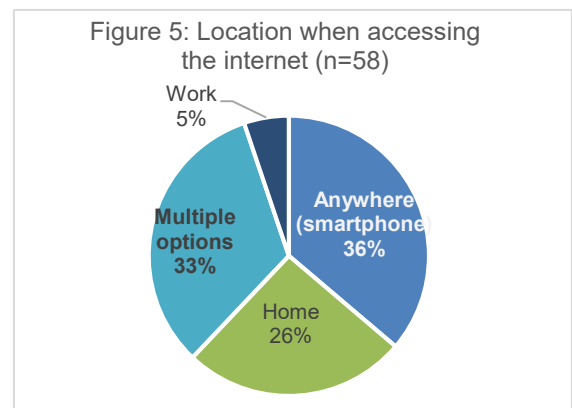
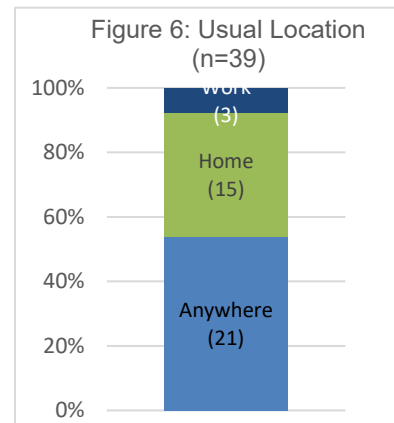
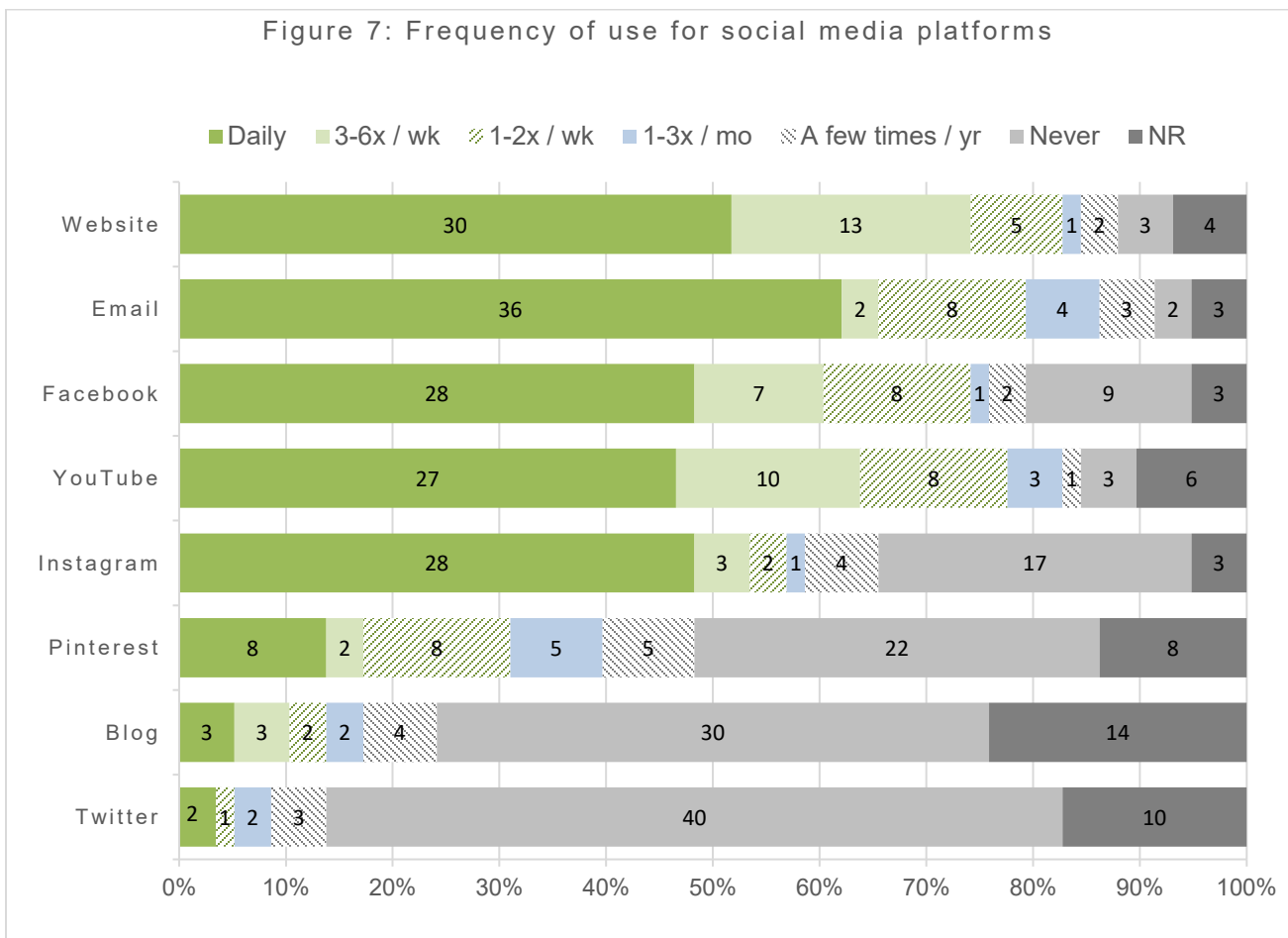


Figure 6 shows results for the 39 respondents who selected one location. More than half reported accessing the internet anywhere with their smartphone (54%), 38% reported being at home, and 8% reported being at work for their usual place when accessing the internet.



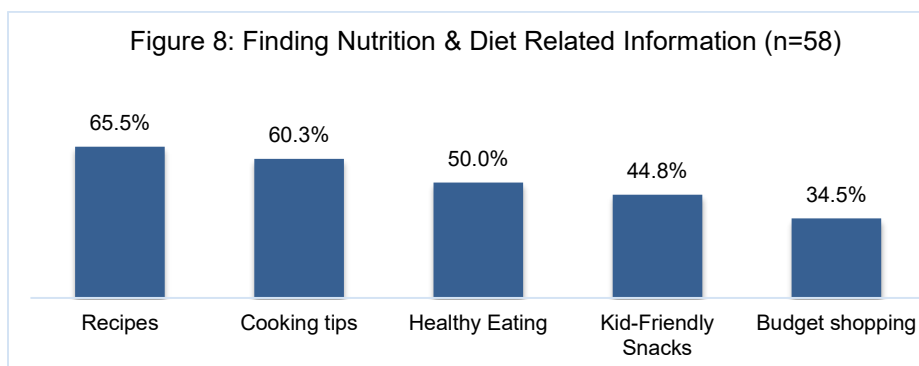
Library use. Responses for a separate question found that 17% of survey participants report going to the library to access the internet. None of the survey respondents indicated the “library” as their usual location for using the internet.

Social media platform use. Survey participants were asked about their use of social media platforms and other web-based communication. As shown in Figure 7, at least 75% of survey participants reported using websites, email, Facebook, and YouTube on a weekly or daily basis. Roughly half of respondents (46-62%) reported daily use of these resources and Instagram. Blog and Twitter use were least common with many users reporting infrequent use of a few times per month or year.

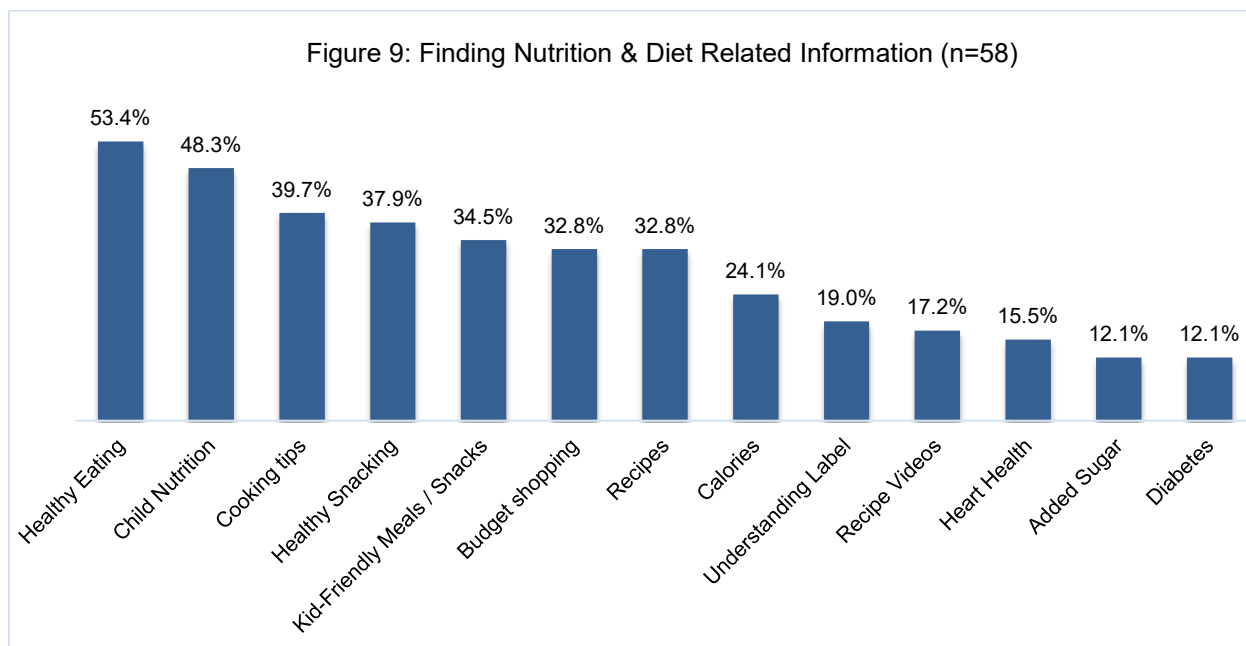


Nutrition & diet-related internet searches. Survey participants were asked if they search on the internet for information related to healthy eating, recipes, healthy shopping on a budget, kid friendly snacks / meals, cooking tips, or other topics. More than 80% of respondents reported searching for two or more of the nutrition-related topics and 55% reported searching for three or more topics.

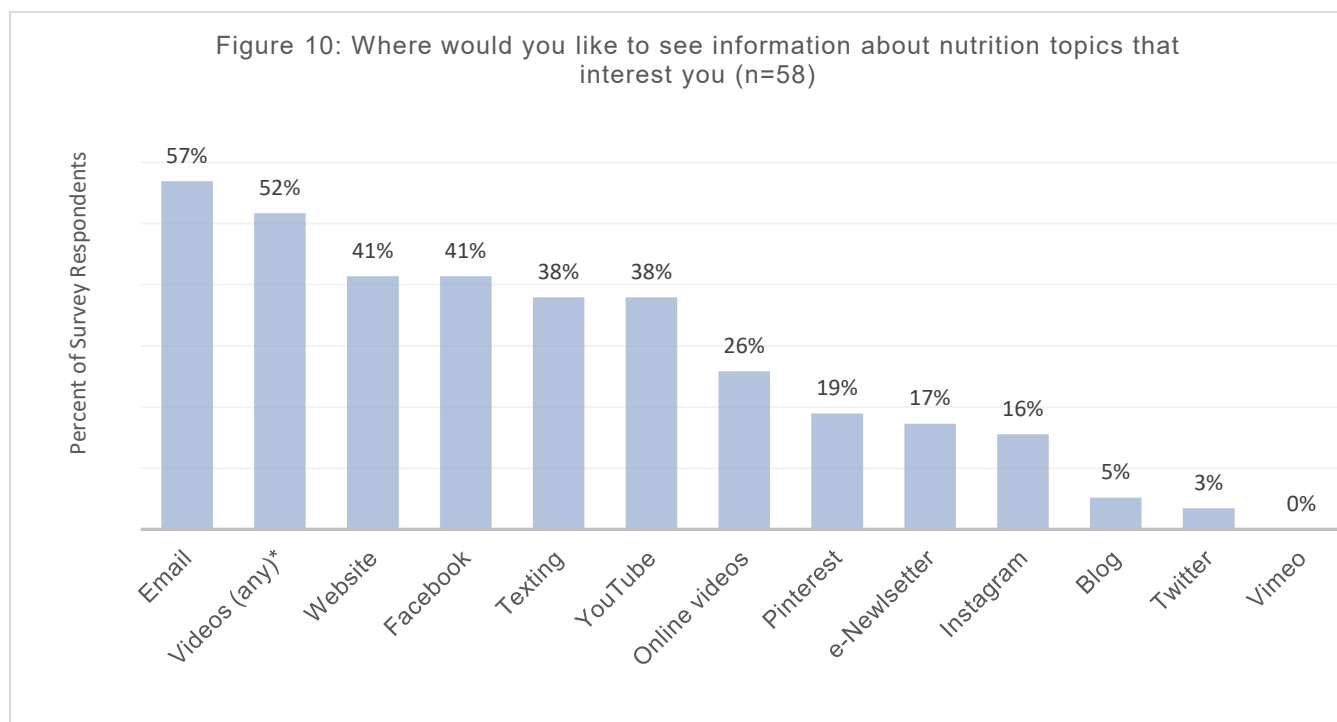
As shown in Figure 8, more than 60% of survey participants search for recipes (66%) and cooking tips (60%), 50% for healthy eating topics, 45% for kid-friendly meals / snacks, and more than one-third of participants reported searching for budget shopping tips.



Nutrition topics of interest. Survey participants were also asked if they would like more information about 13 nutrition topics. Participants selected an average of 3.8 topics that they would like more information about. More than one-third of the survey respondents indicated interest in at least five nutrition topics. Figure 9 shows the percent of respondents interested in each topic. The topics with the most interest were healthy eating (53%), child nutrition (48%), cooking tips (40%), healthy snacking (38%), and kid-friendly meals / snacks (35%).



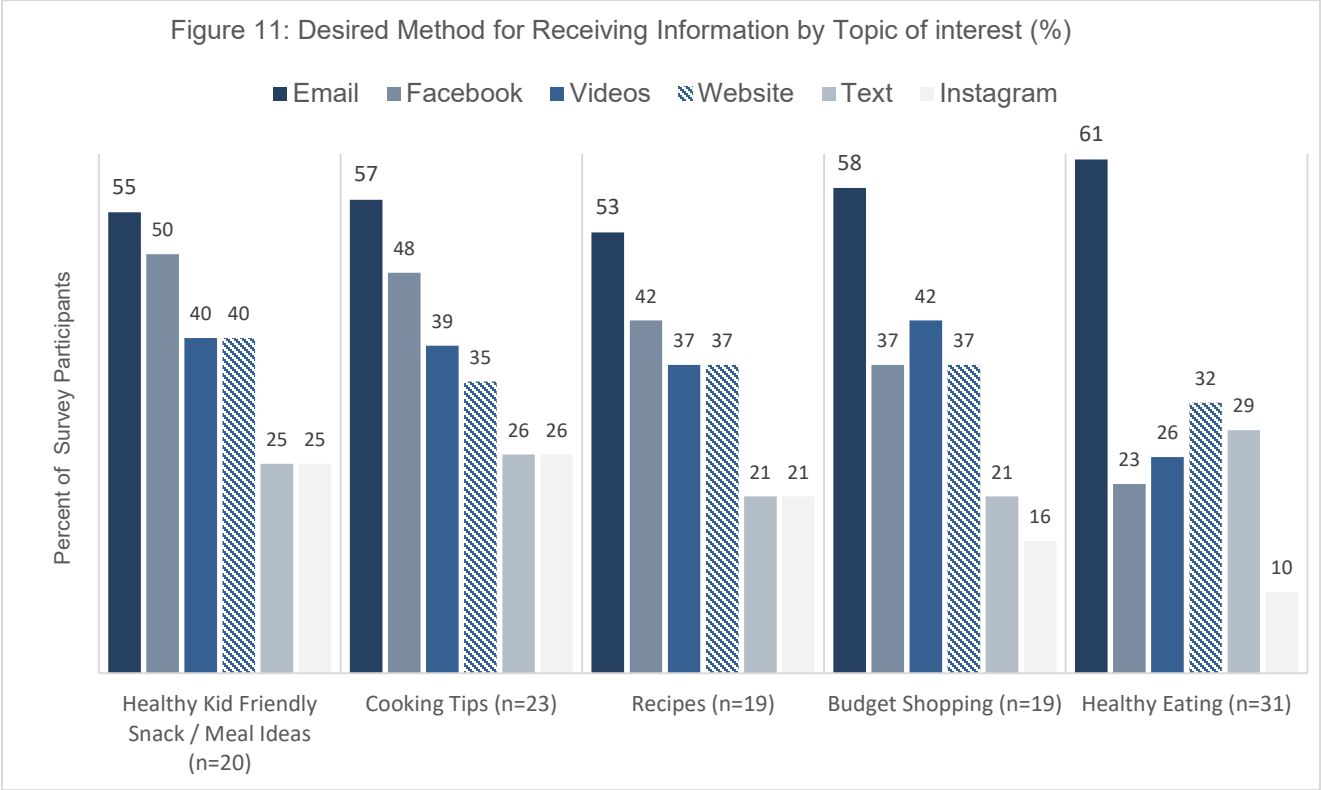
Preferred method(s) of receiving nutrition-related information. Survey participants were asked to check all options for “where they would like to see information about food and nutrition topics that interest you?” Twelve internet-based options, such as email, Facebook, and YouTube were presented. On average, participants selected three web-based communication platforms where they would like to see nutrition-related information. The most popular communication platforms included email (57%), websites (41%), Facebook (41%), YouTube (38%), and texting (38%). More than half of the survey participants (n=30) indicated online videos and/or YouTube as where they would like to see nutrition information. Figure 10 shows the percent of survey participants who selected each of the twelve communication platforms.



*Videos. The three options presented for videos had varied results with YouTube at 38%, “online videos” at 26% and Vimeo at 0%. Out of the 30 survey participants interested in at least one of the video options, half selected YouTube only, 27% selected online videos only, and 23% chose both YouTube and online videos.

The survey also asked participants about their interest in four approaches for nutrition education that SNAP4CT has offered. Among the survey participants: more than 70% (n=41) indicated interest in short videos online about recipes, cooking, healthy eating or nutrition; one-third (n=19) indicated interest in email newsletters, websites or blogs to find out about healthy eating; 31% (n=18) indicated interest in online videos with shopping tips; and 21% (n=12) indicated interest in asking a registered dietitian any questions about nutrition related topics.

Figure 11 summarizes how survey participants interested in a given nutrition topic would like to receive that information. For each topic, more than half of the population interested indicated that they would like the information via email. Facebook was selected by almost half of the survey participants interested in healthy kid friendly snack / meal ideas and cooking tips, 42% of participants interested in recipes, and 37% of participants interested in budget shopping. Finding information on Facebook, videos, and websites was indicated by at least 35% of survey respondents interested in topics of kid friendly snack/meal ideas, cooking tips, recipes and budget shopping.



Note: Given the small number of respondents for each topic area, these results are preliminary; however, it appears that among the population interested in information about healthy eating, there is a preference for receiving information via email, websites, and text messages rather than Facebook or web-based videos.