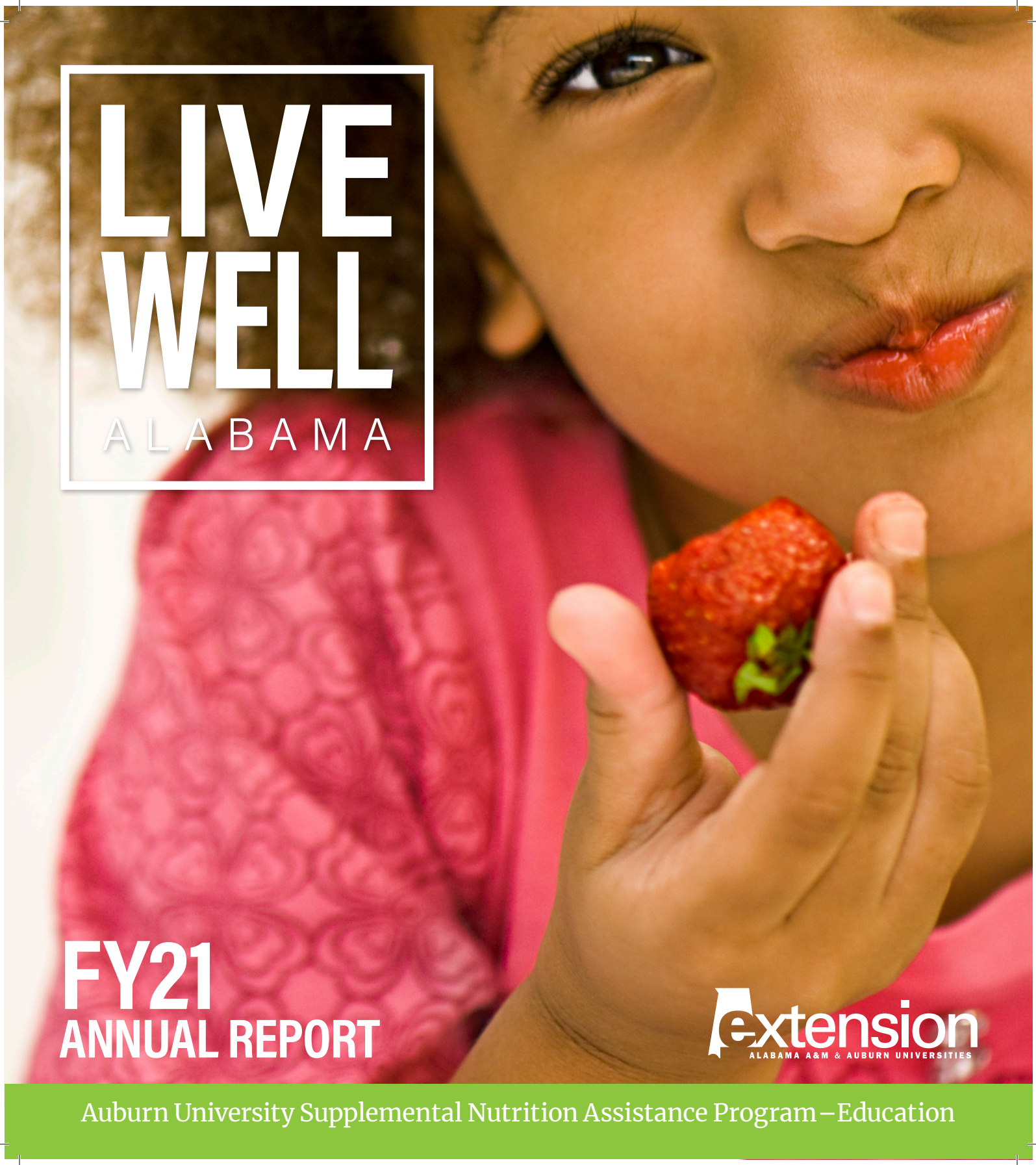

LIVE
WELL
ALABAMA
FY21
ANNUAL REPORT
Extension
ALABAMA A&M & AUBURN UNIVERSITIES
Auburn University Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education

LIVE WELL ALABAMA

Live Well Alabama is more than a catchy phrase used by Alabama Extension at Auburn University Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program–Education (SNAP-Ed). It is our vision for a healthier Alabama. SNAP-Ed experienced another successful year in 2021, partnering with Alabamians to make the healthy choice the easy choice in their homes, schools, and communities.

SNAP-Ed uses an evidence-based, multilevel approach to support the health of Alabamians, especially those with limited resources. To accomplish this mission, SNAP-Ed educators provided nutrition education to **32,956 people** across a wide variety of settings, such as schools, food pantries, grocery stores, and many more.

With the COVID-19 pandemic still present in the everyday life of residents in Alabama, SNAP-Ed continued to share nutrition education with its audience through virtual platforms, such as social media and videoconferencing software.

SNAP-Ed educators also partnered with local communities to facilitate **387 unique policy changes, systems changes, environmental improvements,** and promotional efforts to make it easier for **75,557 people** to choose healthy foods, healthy beverages, and physically active lifestyles.

In addition, SNAP-Ed targeted **744,000 people** through Live Well Alabama, a statewide social marketing campaign encouraging Alabamians to Eat Better, Move More, and Make a Change.

34
Educators

55
Counties

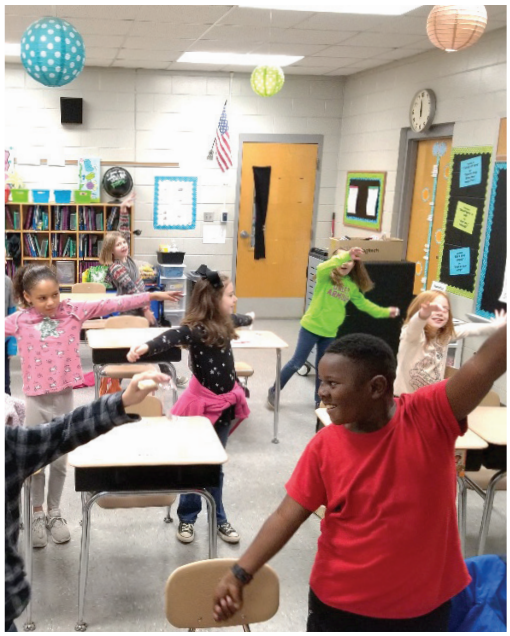
33K
Impacted by Education

387
Policy, Systems, and Environmental Changes

75K
Impacted by Healthier Communities

744K
Impacted by Social Marketing

Body Quest student in Chambers County



Body Quest classroom in Geneva County

Body Quest students in Tallapoosa County

Live Well in Schools

The flagship school-based initiative of Auburn University SNAP-Ed is Body Quest, a multilevel, comprehensive obesity prevention initiative, which empowers Alabama's youth and their parents to make healthier choices. The 2020–2021 school year was disrupted by closures and abrupt pivots to virtual learning because of the COVID-19 pandemic. AU SNAP-Ed introduced a 9-week curriculum offered remotely by educators to students in their classrooms or home learning environments to meet the need for virtual learning experiences.

The virtual Body Quest program consisted of student education kits, worksheets, virtual assessments, and prerecorded lesson videos. The videos introduced lesson concepts to students in an interactive, visual format. SNAP-Ed educators followed the video by joining classrooms virtually and leading students through hands-on activities to complete each lesson.

"The students learned so much about eating healthy, and they looked forward to your class each week. Even though it was virtual, the Body Quest teacher did an amazing job of bringing this valuable information to our students in an inventive way."

– Third-grade teacher

"The videos are great to keep the children engaged during this era of virtual learning." – Third-grade teacher

"I want to be like that friendly Body Quest teacher! She's smart and brave and wants to help others. I'm going to try and be brave and strong just like her."

– Body Quest student

During the 2020–2021 school year, SNAP-Ed educators provided Body Quest to 4,191 third graders in 41 Alabama counties, 89 schools, and 242 virtual, in-person, or hybrid classrooms. All schools were SNAP-Ed eligible, with more than 50% of students receiving free or reduced-priced meals through the National School Lunch Program.

Classes included a mix of educator-led discussions, guided vegetable tastings, and iPad app reinforcement lessons narrated by the Body Quest Warriors, who possess superpowers from eating healthy foods.

Students and parents participated in self-reported pre- and post-assessments. Data were analyzed and significant differences ($p < 0.05$) were observed from pre- to post-assessment in healthy nutrition behaviors, physical activity participation, nutrition knowledge, and preference for healthy foods.

BODY QUEST MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Fruit & Vegetable Consumption: At the end of Body Quest, students ate vegetables and fruits more times per day compared to before Body Quest.

Beverage Consumption: At the end of Body Quest, students drank more water compared to before Body Quest.

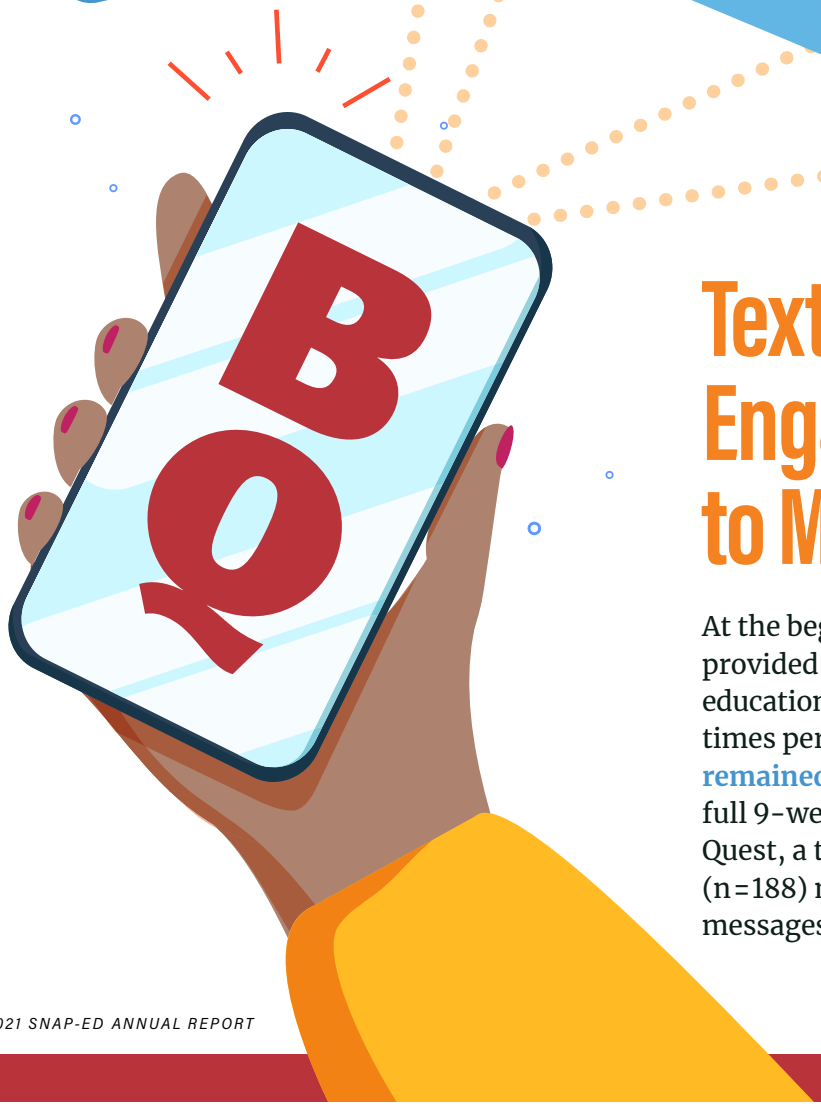
Physical Activity: At the end of Body Quest, students spent less time in front of screens and participated in physical activity more often compared to before Body Quest.

Thanks to BQ, we are drinking more water than ever!

My daughter loves to help prepare the BQ recipes! She decided it would be an awesome idea for us to create our own recipes and cook them together! She has also helped think of healthier snacks and lunches she can prepare for the whole family.

We are being more active by making a music playlist to dance for 30 minutes and dancing in between wait times while cooking.

My son never ate vegetables. Now, because of BQ, he eats carrots and spinach!



Text Messaging Engaged Parents to Make a Change

At the beginning of Body Quest, **1,867 parents** provided their cell phone numbers to receive educational, action-oriented text messages three times per week. The majority **(73%) of parents remained active** in the texting program for the full 9-week intervention. At the end of Body Quest, a texting poll with participating parents (n=188) measured the effectiveness of the text messages and self-reported behavior change.

From Live Well Alabama social media.

94% FOUND BODY QUEST TEXTS TO BE HELPFUL

97% USED TIPS PROVIDED IN TEXT MESSAGES

90% NOTICED THEIR CHILD ATE MORE FRUITS & VEGETABLES, TRIED NEW FOODS, OR BOTH

84% NOW KEEP FEWER SUGARY BEVERAGES IN THEIR HOMES

88% FOUND MORE WAYS TO BE ACTIVE WITH THEIR 3RD GRADER

Body Quest Parents Make a Change

Body Quest engaged parents in educational activities to support healthy home environments. Parents joined the *Body Quest Recipe Tester Club* and received inexpensive, simple, and kid-friendly vegetable recipes to prepare and test with their children at home. Parents received educational materials and weekly text messages, and they were encouraged to interact with Live Well Alabama on social media by following, liking, tagging, and sharing content. **At the end of Body Quest, parents reported drinking more water and fewer sugary beverages than before the lessons.**

Body Quest Schools Make a Change

Making healthy food and physical activity priorities at school is critical. Research shows that kids who have healthy eating habits and get regular physical activity are more likely to have better academic performance, attendance, self-esteem, classroom behavior, and lower obesity rates. **SNAP-Ed educators leveraged strong partnerships with 45 Body Quest schools to facilitate 117 positive changes creating healthier school environments for more than 13,800 students.**

- Policy changes encouraged the establishment of new food distribution sites, such as food pantries, and supported healthy nutrition in schools.
- Systems changes increased availability of fresh, local produce in school cafeterias.
- Environmental improvements established or sustained edible school gardens and improved opportunities for physical activity, such as hosting bike rodeos.
- Promotional efforts provided tastings and signage throughout the school encouraging students to make healthy choices.

45	SCHOOLS
19	COUNTIES
13K	PEOPLE
117	POSITIVE CHANGES
3	POLICY CHANGES
35	SYSTEMS CHANGES
55	ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS
24	PROMOTIONAL EFFORTS

SNAP-Ed educator ***Dominguez Hurry*** sustained large school gardens in ***Bullock and Macon Counties.*** These gardens serve as teaching spaces for the kids and provide extra produce for school lunches.

Children at a ***Calhoun County*** community center learned about growing fruits and vegetables, thanks to SNAP-Ed educator ***Tammy Hall.*** The children enjoyed the harvest by tasting their hard work at the end of the summer season.

SNAP-Ed educator ***Ginger Eatman*** established multiple school food pantries and school gardens in ***Marion and Walker Counties***. The pantries are a fantastic resource for children to take home additional healthy options to their families. The school gardens serve as an outdoor teaching resource, helping youth learn about growing and trying all kinds of new vegetables.

SNAP-Ed educators ***Desiree Hutcherson-Bates (Jefferson County), Tammy Hall (Calhoun County), and Michelle Puckett (Henry and Barbour Counties)*** all hosted successful bike rodeos this year. These rodeos taught kids and parents about bicycle safety and fun ways to move more.

Eat Better, Move More

helps kids stay healthy and have fun during the summer.

When school was dismissed for the summer, Alabama youth stayed active and healthy with Eat Better, Move More, even when face-to-face opportunities remained limited. Six engaging nutrition and physical activity lessons were offered in person and virtually through Boys & Girls Clubs, school summer programs, and local community centers. In the summer of 2021, Eat Better, Move More empowered **2,930 kids** to improve their health behaviors.

Community garden participant in Geneva County

Live Well in Communities

Food Pantries

SNAP-Ed educators helped food pantries offer more healthy options to their clients through connecting pantries with school and community gardens and other donation sources. Helping to ensure that clients accepted healthy items, SNAP-Ed educators promoted new or unfamiliar foods through nutrition education. This effort helped **18,477 food pantry clients per month** enjoy nutritious meals during times of need.

Grocery Stores

SNAP-Ed educators partnered with 7 local food stores to support shoppers in making healthy food choices. SNAP-Ed educators also worked with store owners to suggest enhancements to product offerings, store layouts, and promotional signage. Together, these efforts directed more than **1,367 shoppers per day** toward healthier food and beverages.

GRAB & GO!

During 2021, new and innovative ways to connect with shoppers in local food retail outlets were established. Barbour County SNAP-Ed Educator **Michelle Puckett** and Calhoun County SNAP-Ed educator **Tammy Hall** implemented Grab & Go! meal kits and open cooler displays in partnering food retail stores. These options incorporated the Live Well Alabama recipes, making the ingredients quick and easy to purchase in stores.

Scan for the full story.

Gardens

SNAP-Ed educators supported the establishment and sustainability of 40 school and community gardens, making fresh vegetables available to **32,082 Alabama residents.**

SNAP-Ed educators played a vital role in connecting community organizations to ensure that garden harvests were distributed to places serving the population needing it the most. Food pantries, soup kitchens, school cafeterias, and summer feeding sites received fresh fruits and vegetables to distribute to their clients.

SNAP-Ed educators and community garden volunteers weighed produce and determined a total harvest weight from gardens and gleaned excess produce from farmers. **In FY21, gardens supported by SNAP-Ed produced almost 2,900 pounds of produce valued at $6,200. This equated to 11,113 servings of fruits and vegetables, enough for 2,470 adults to meet the USDA daily recommendations.**

Farmers Markets

SNAP-Ed educators helped farmers increase fresh produce sales by providing nutrition education, encouraging **2,822 customers per market day** to purchase and eat more locally grown fruits and vegetables. SNAP-Ed educators partnered with local farmers and community organizations to make produce at farmers markets more accessible to people with limited resources. Promoting SNAP EBT payment, coupon programs, and improvements in days and hours of operation were vital contributions to this effort.

Parks and Recreation Centers

SNAP-Ed educators promoted physical activity in many ways. Educators incorporated active game and movement breaks into nutrition education, supported walk and bike to school efforts, and initiated community walking groups. Educators also provided information at community recreation events and displayed promotional signs and mile markers at parks, trails, and recreation centers serving **6,995 Alabamians every day.**

Giving Garden

Geneva County SNAP-Ed educator **Sicily Stacy** reinvigorated raised bed gardens by rallying community members in Geneva County. The community turned out to support this effort through donations of soil, plants, time, and hard work. With Sicily's guidance, the fresh produce harvested from the Giving Garden went to the local food bank to help families in need.

Have you seen our
BILLBOARDS?

176 BILLBOARDS

50 COUNTIES

152,000 SNAP-ED ELIGIBLE ADULTS REACHED

165 MILLION VIEWER IMPRESSIONS

Live Well Social Marketing

Live Well Alabama messages to Eat Better, Move More, Choose Water, and Make a Change for better health reached more than **744,000 Alabama residents** in multiple ways every day.

SNAP-Ed partnered with Altarum Institute to evaluate the social marketing campaign with a phone survey. The survey included 376 respondents from across the state. **Almost half (47%) of those surveyed recognized the Live Well Alabama campaign name, and 92% were exposed to the specific messages, Eat Better, Move More, and Choose Water through billboards, online ads, social media, or materials from their child's school.**

Respondents who were repeatedly exposed to campaign messages were more likely to take action toward better health. In fact, **73% of those who recalled campaign messages said they were led to do something to promote health for themselves or their family.** The most common actions included drinking more water, eating more fruits and vegetables, and exercising more regularly.

Reaching Communities

In addition to billboards, Live Well Alabama uses a variety of original campaign materials and approaches for engaging with the SNAP-Ed target audience in local communities.

1. Social media experienced growth across all platforms. Facebook alone reached more than 350,000 people and increased its reach by 48%.

2. Digital advertisements made more than 20 million impressions and drove viewers to visit the Live Well Alabama Facebook page more than 47,000 times.

3. A new Instagram handle was launched on June 28 and quickly accumulated more than 100 followers. By the end of FY21, it reached more than 10,000 accounts.

4. Stories written for Live Well Alabama social media were shared by other news outlets, likely reaching 172,000 people online and more than 165,000 people by print media.

5. The Live Well Alabama text messaging campaign reached 6,000 people.

6. Promotional signs placed in schools, grocery stores, and parks and trails reminded Alabamians to Eat Better, Move More, and Choose Water wherever they went.

7. SNAP-Ed educators continuously spread Live Well Alabama messages, reinforcing healthy living concepts through recipe demonstrations, nutrition education sessions, and community-based projects.

SPOTLIGHT SUCCESS

Live Well Alabama's social media hashtag campaigns expanded its reach to thousands of new people.

#SnapEdSuperheroes

The #SnapEdSuperheroes social media campaign by Live Well Alabama was designed to highlight success stories from SNAP-Ed educators throughout Alabama. From October 2020 to the end of March 2021, this campaign reached nearly **40,000 people** and made more than **61,000 impressions**.

#FoodFriday

On June 28, Live Well Alabama launched a new #FoodFriday recipe video series on all social media platforms. From its launch until the end of September, the campaign reached more than **85,000 people**.

SNAP-Ed Professionals

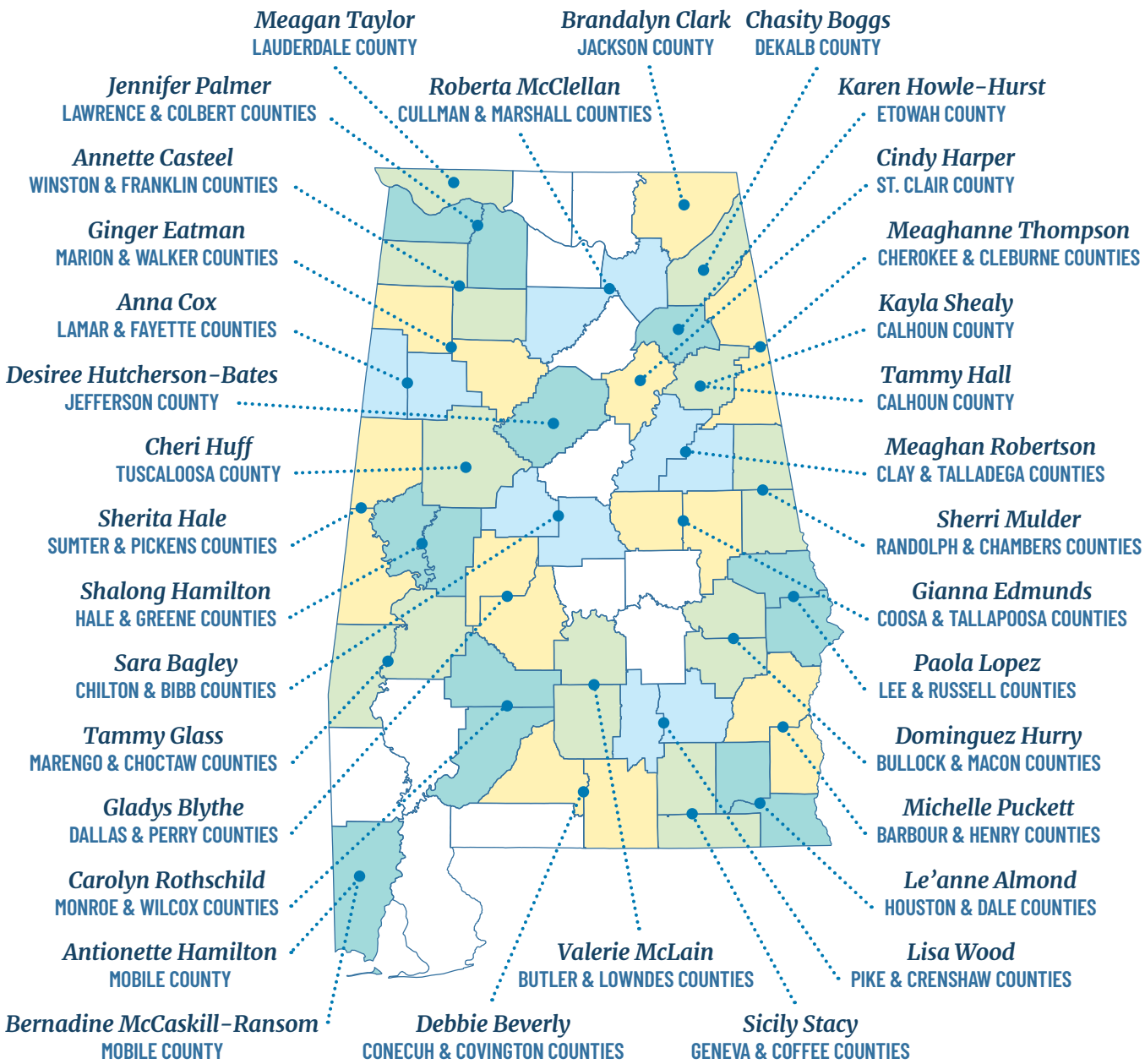
Creating a Culture Shift in Alabama

Alabama Extension at Auburn University SNAP-Ed is uniquely positioned to help reduce and prevent obesity in Alabama. SNAP-Ed's statewide network of passionate nutrition educators is committed to improving the environment around health and well-being for Alabamians, focusing on the hardest-to-reach. With strong partnerships at the local, state, and national levels, widespread and lasting change is achievable. Improving dietary and physical activity behaviors of individuals and families and building partnerships to improve the health of communities are among key SNAP-Ed efforts to Eat Better, Move More, and Make a Change.

State Staff and Authors

Barb Struempler, PhD
Sondra M. Parmer, PhD
Katie Funderburk, PhD, RD
Erin Reznicek, MS
Sofia Sanchez, MBA, RD, LDN
Mitch Carter, MS
Dustin Duncan
Melanie Smith
Kelly Mailen
Jamilah Page, PhD

SNAP-Ed Educators



LIVE WELL ALABAMA

www.LiveWellAlabama.com

Extension
ALABAMA A&M & AUBURN UNIVERSITIES

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-SNAP. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M University and Auburn University) is an equal opportunity educator and employer. Everyone is welcome! Please let us know if you have accessibility needs. Trade and brand names are given for information purposes only. No guarantee, endorsement, or discrimination among comparable products is intended or implied by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. FCS-2613

©2021 by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. All rights reserved. **www.aces.edu**