Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ):

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Questions about Surveys

My clients are English language learners and have trouble reading the survey. Can I read it to them?

Yes. Educators may read surveys and answer choices aloud. Educators may use the scripts provided in the SNAP-Ed evaluation guidance or follow along on a copy of the survey they are using. Reading surveys aloud is required for K-2nd grade surveys.

Are surveys available in Russian?

SNAP Happy Surveys and Demographic Cards are available in Russian. The K-2nd grade survey, Eat Well and Move, is only available in English and Spanish.

What is happening with demographics?

Local agencies should use the Washington State Demographics Card to collect demographics with adults when using paper surveys, or the online Adult SNAP Happy Survey when using online surveys. With youth, local agencies should collect classroom-level demographics when possible. Educators may need to work with the classroom teacher, school administrators, or their Implementing Agency to gather youth demographic information. Educators should collect demographic information for every direct education series.

Is the goal to survey all participants?

Yes, educators should do their best to give all participants in direct education series pre- and post- surveys.

What survey do we use if there is a person under 18 in a mostly-adult class?

Educators should use the adult surveys in a mostly-adult class. If most people in the class are under 18, educators should use the youth 9-12th grade survey.

Do I have to print surveys in color?

Yes. Surveys must be printed in color to ensure participant engagement and understanding. Surveys were validated in color, using color copies of the surveys also ensures in implementation.

I teach a mixed 2nd/3rd grade class. Which survey do I use?

In most cases, use the survey for the younger age group. However, if there are very few younger participants in a class that is mostly participants in another age group, use the survey for the older age group. In all cases, please mark which surveys are from students outside of the intended age range.
There seem to be several questions in the youth surveys on topics that are not covered in our curriculum. Is that a concern if we don’t see improvement?

No. The evaluation team will look at results statewide and by curriculum. Educators should ask all questions on the survey.

Can we skip survey questions on topics that we do not cover in the curriculum?

No. Educators should ask all questions in the survey.

How do I transition into the lesson after giving the survey?
The following strategies have been used effectively by some educators:

- Exercise break. If your programming has a physical activity component, and your population is physically able, physical activity can help refocus students. Try a few jumping jacks.
- Snack time.
- Thank participants for filling out surveys.
- Have a relevant, quiet activity that participants who finish early can work on until the rest of the class has completed their surveys.
- Have a time limit and provide verbal cues to help participants know when the lesson will begin.
- Discuss the agenda for the day, noting what the activity will be before the survey starts and after the survey ends.
- Have participants quietly discuss a topic relevant to the lesson in pairs until the class is ready to move on.

What do we do with completed surveys?

Completed surveys should be entered into PEARS. Implementing Agencies may have a protocol or procedure regarding data entry, so local providers should contact their IA prior to beginning survey data entry.

Do we need to give the Demographics Card and the Adult SNAP Happy Survey to every series we teach with adults?

Both the Demographics Card and the Adult SNAP Happy Survey are required with for all series that use paper surveys. Demographics cards are not required when using online surveys. If an LIA is teaching Cooking Matters, they should use that survey, not the SNAP Happy Survey or the Demographics Card.

How long will the SNAP Happy Survey take?

When testing SNAP Happy surveys, they took about 7 minutes to proctor. The evaluation team anticipates SNAP Happy surveys should take no more than 15 minutes to proctor.

With youth, some students use TVs, computers, smartphones, etc. during school hours. Should they count that for the screen time question?

Educators should ask the question as written. If students have a clarifying question, then educators may clarify that using screens for schoolwork does not count.
The eating habits of my students change from weekend to week, and from day to day. Can I ask them about their average or usual habits?

No. Educators should ask the question as it is written. This will help ensure consistency among different educators. It may help to avoid proctoring the survey on a Monday or the day after a holiday.

Can there be a 4+ sports drinks per day section on youth survey?

No. Students should mark 3+.

Are the K-2 surveys meant to be completed by the student or will they need adult help?

Educators should use the guiding method and the Eat Well + Move Script when they proctor this survey. Educators can find the script on the EFNEP evaluation resources website (this link downloads from external website).

What survey do you use for Food Smarts?

- 3rd-5th graders: SNAP Happy for 3rd-5th graders
- 6th-8th Graders: SNAP Happy for 4th-8th graders
- 9th-12th Graders, including emancipated minors: SNAP Happy for 9th-12th graders
- Adults: SNAP Happy for Adults and Demographics Card

Questions about Online Surveys

Is the PEARS Program Activity Number the same as the participant ID number?

No. The PEARS program activity number is associated with your PEARS entry. The participant ID number is associated with a participant. You do not need participant ID numbers for virtual education.

How do I find the PEARS Program Activity Number?

To get the PEARS program Activity ID, you have to create a program activity in PEARS. Once you create your program activity and save it, it will be assigned a PEARS Program Activity ID Number. To find the ID number, you have to navigate out of the program activity after you save it, and then click on the activity you just created. You’ll find the PEARS Program Activity ID number on the summary page before you click “edit”. It is below “modified” and above the “collaborators” section.

Save your program activity ID number and make note of which program activity it’s associated with. You’ll need to provide the PEARS Program Activity Number to the participants in your VE class.
When can I use the “out of school” online surveys for 3rd-5th graders?
The 3rd-5th grade “Outside of School” survey is piloting a new physical activity question to account for participants who may not have structured PE or recess while online learning and over the summer. The new question asks about the time of day 3rd-5th graders were active yesterday, instead of prompting them about recess, PE, team sports, etc. LIAs can use the “outside of school” pilot surveys with 3rd-5th graders doing the CATCH, CHFFF, and Food Smarts curricula if students do not have PE or recess as part of their regular schedule. If an LIA is unsure whether or not participants have PE and recess, they should use the standard 3rd-5th grade SNAP Happy survey. The “outside of school” pilot surveys are particularly relevant for those who may not have a structured schedule while online learning, and over the summer when school is out of session.

Questions about ID Numbers
Will there be written instructions on how educators should assign codes?
Yes. Local agencies can find the instructions in the Washington SNAP-Ed Evaluation Guidance documents in the Unique Identification Number section.

Where and how should we collect youth demographic information and assign ID numbers?
Local agencies should assign SNAP-Ed ID Numbers to youth the methodologies listed in the Unique ID Number section of the evaluation guidance document. Please assign codes using the process listed Youth ID Number Pilot when possible. Local agencies should collect classroom-level demographic information when possible. Local agencies may need to work with their Implementing Agency to collect this information.

Questions about PEARS
Is there a success story requirement?
There is no success story requirement for the evaluation. There may be success story requirements for regional reporting, so local agencies should check with their IA. Remember, success stories are especially powerful tools to convey SNAP-Ed’s impact on Washington State’s low-income residents.

How far back do we go with PSE Reporting?
Local agencies should only report PSE activities they worked on in the current fiscal year. If an agency started PSE activity in a previous year and are continuing to work on it, that should be recorded. Local agencies can use the “copy” function to bring forward a PSE project from a previous reporting period.

Do we enter survey results into PEARS?
Local Agencies should contact their Implementing Agency to find out about the process for their region.
What is commercial market data?

Commercial marketing data refers to data that you can gather when you work with local media companies, like a local radio station or television station. Local commercial media usually have numbers about viewership, listeners, distribution, etc.

How do we add staffers or data entry people to PEARS?

Local agencies should contact their Implementing Agency with the name and email address of the new user.

How do you estimate PSE Reach?

Local agencies should count all people who have been in direct contact with the PSE activity. If a local agency added a food demo station to a food bank as a systems change, then they can count everyone who goes through the line at the food bank. They should not count people who are active at the site but were not in line on a food demo day. If a person is in direct contact with more than one PSE change activity, that person should only be counted once. For more information, see unduplicated reach and direct contact in the glossary. The evaluation team continues to explore best practices regarding estimating PSE reach and will provide additional guidance and tools as they are available.

What is the difference between a Partnership and a Coalition?

If a local agency works with one individual or one organization on a project, that is a partnership. If a local agency works with several people from several different organizations that is a coalition. Coalitions also typically work over a longer period, and have representatives from multiple sectors, like education, healthcare, retail, and agriculture.

In the PEARS PSE Module, it asks if youth are involved via an “established group”. I have youth involved in decision-making and brainstorming, but it’s not an established group. How do I indicate this?

Include youth who are involved in the leadership process. Do not include youth that are part of the PSE project reach.

I just did part of an assessment tool for my PSE project. Should I still enter it?

Yes. In the “description of results box”, note the part of the tool that you completed.

I talked with the principal and some teachers before starting my PSE project, but did not do a formal needs assessment. Should I still report it?

Yes. Enter it as a “staff readiness” or “organizational readiness” assessment and select “other” as the method. Then add detail in the free text boxes.

How frequently will the evaluation team review PSE and social marketing modules (i.e., modules that represent work which takes place over the course of the year)?

Quarterly.
For male and female – how do we count those who do not identify with either gender? The Demographics sections of the different PEARs Modules only record male, female, and unknown. Any person who does not identify as male or female will need to be recorded in the “Unknown” for the time being. Despite this limitation in PEARs, we highly encourage everyone to include other gender options in your surveys, such as "Nonbinary" or "Prefer to describe" while we work towards a more inclusive reporting system.

**Other Questions**

Some teachers are not comfortable giving demographic data. Do you have a justification we can give to teachers, or gather that data in a different way? The evaluation team wants to ensure that SNAP-Ed programs are appropriate for participants of all ages, races, and ethnicities. Demographic information is key to ensure SNAP-Ed addresses equity in its programming. Demographic information is also necessary for annual SNAP-Ed reporting requirements.

To obtain classroom level demographics, local agencies may work with the school directly, or extrapolate demographics from the OSPI school report card.

What should I do if the school is not comfortable providing State Student ID Numbers? Do you have a justification we can give to teachers, or gather that data in a different way? The evaluation team has worked with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to collect demographic information through a data sharing agreement. Teachers and schools will not have to provide demographics data, just a list of the State Student ID Numbers (SSID), which should be available from school or district administration staff. Several resources are available to educators to help with this process. Please review the ID Number Section of the Evaluation Guidance to learn more. Local agencies can reach out to the evaluation team at SNAPEdEvaluation@doh.wa.gov with questions.

Implementing Agencies have different data entry deadlines in the Evaluation Guidance. Can the evaluation team add IA due dates? No. Each IA should send out their own guidance regarding due dates, and local agencies should follow whichever due date is earlier.

The regional evaluation projects section mentions that local agencies can reach out to evaluate special projects, does this include IA projects as well? Yes.

When will intervention names be updated? Intervention names are currently aligned with the FFY 2021-2023 state plan and will not be updated during this plan cycle.
Why are only Washington-Approved Curricula counted in the direct education definition?

This definition for direct education was established in conjunction with DSHS to promote consistency in data entry across regions. The Curriculum Team is a great resource if a local agency needs help identifying a curriculum that will work for their population.

How long will it be before we get our data back?

PEARS allows local agencies to pull data they have entered any time after it is entered. The evaluation team will pull and analyze data quarterly. Data will be provided via statewide and regional snapshots. If local agencies would like to learn more about how to use their PEARS data, they should view the “Getting and Using Data from PEARS” video. Local agencies may request more localized results from the evaluation team by using the evaluation request form.