



Healthy Schools, Healthy Communities

Healthy Schools, Healthy Communities (HSHC) is a nutrition education and physical activity program with three levels: PreK-K (six lessons), grades 1-2 (eight lessons), and grades 3-5 (eight lessons). Lessons are taught by educators weekly or monthly, generally in school classrooms but also summer or after-school programs. A primary focus is on fruits and vegetables but lessons also include an opportunity to try new foods through food tastings and to participate in physical activity through short, classroom activity breaks. Other topics include MyPlate, food sources, healthy snacks, and proper hand washing.

This report summarizes results from surveys completed by youth participants in the HSHC intervention during FY 2024. Evaluation was accomplished using two surveys. The outcome measure was *That's Me: My Choices*, a validated survey using a post/retrospective pre-test format. This survey was completed by 4,245 youth in grades 3-5 from 16 local SNAP-Ed organizations; the average age of children was 9.9 years. A process evaluation survey, Program Evaluation (Youth), was completed by 4,659 youth (most in grades 2-4) from 17 SNAP-Ed organizations. Total counts, and counts by organization, are provided first (pages 1-2) followed by key findings from both surveys (page 2), data tables/figures for each survey (pages 3-8), results of data analyses regarding evidence base (pages 8-12), and conclusions on page 13.

Evidence Base Established. There was a significant increase between pre and post results for all survey items, suggesting children were performing all behaviors more frequently after participating in HSHC. Behaviors assessed included frequency of hand washing, fruit and vegetable consumption, eating a variety of foods, choosing water healthy beverages, and asking someone at home to buy healthy foods. Findings provide evidence that HSHC results in statistically significant change in all health behaviors assessed for children in grades 3-5 that completed the outcome evaluation.

Counts: That's Me: My Choices

Local SNAP-Ed organization	Number of surveys
Bronson Health Foundation	147
Calhoun Intermediate School District	763
Crim Fitness Foundation	78
Genesee Intermediate School District	245
Gratiot-Isabella Regional Education Service District	354
Health Department of Northwest Michigan	76
Henry Ford Health	158
LARC-Leaders Advancing and Helping Communities	144
Macomb County Health Department	65
NorthWest Initiative	71
SEEDS Ecology and Education Centers	29
Saginaw ISD	553
Tuscola ISD	260
Washtenaw Intermediate School District	551
Western Upper Peninsula Health Department	98
YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids	653

Local SNAP-Ed organization	Number of surveys
Total	4,245

Counts: Program Evaluation (Youth)

Local SNAP-Ed organization	Number of surveys
Bronson Health Foundation	178
Calhoun Intermediate School District	805
Crim Fitness Foundation	121
Genesee Intermediate School District	226
Gratiot-Isabella Regional Education Service District	319
Health Department of Northwest Michigan	118
Henry Ford Health	118
LHC-Leaders Advancing and Helping Communities	109
Macomb County Health Department	60
NorthWest Initiative	69
Oakland County Health Division	10
SEEDS Ecology and Education Centers	62
Saginaw ISD	551
Tuscola ISD	432
Washtenaw Intermediate School District	474
Western Upper Peninsula Health Department	78
YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids	929
Total	4,659

Key Findings

That's Me: My Choices

- Of youth with room to improve, more than half increased frequency of **trying new foods, washing hands before eating, and eating different foods**. Forty to forty-nine percent increased frequency of **eating healthy foods, choosing water and other healthy drinks, liking to try new foods, eating fruit, and liking fruit**.

Program Evaluation – Youth

- At least half of the youth were **eating more fruit, drinking more water, doing more physical activity, eating different fruits, and eating more vegetables** at the end of the lessons, due to the program.
- 96% of youth **enjoyed some, most, or all lessons**, and **found some, most, or all of them to be interesting**.
- 76% of the respondents **rated lessons as good or great**, 21% considered the lessons to be **“okay”**.
- 62% **enjoyed most or all of the physical activity** and 43% **enjoyed a lot of the food they tried**.

- The behaviors with the greatest positive changes, *due to the program*, were **drinking more water** (73% increased), **eating more fruit** (72% increased), **doing more physical activity** (+65%), **eating different fruits** (+56%), and **eating more vegetables** (53%) increased.

Detailed Results: That’s Me: My Choices Survey

Demographic Data

Figure 1. **Gender** (n=3,818)

How would you describe yourself?	Number	Percent
Girl	1,736	45%
Boy	1,674	44%
Prefer not to answer	295	8%
Not listed	113	3%

Figure 2. **Grade** (n=3,943)

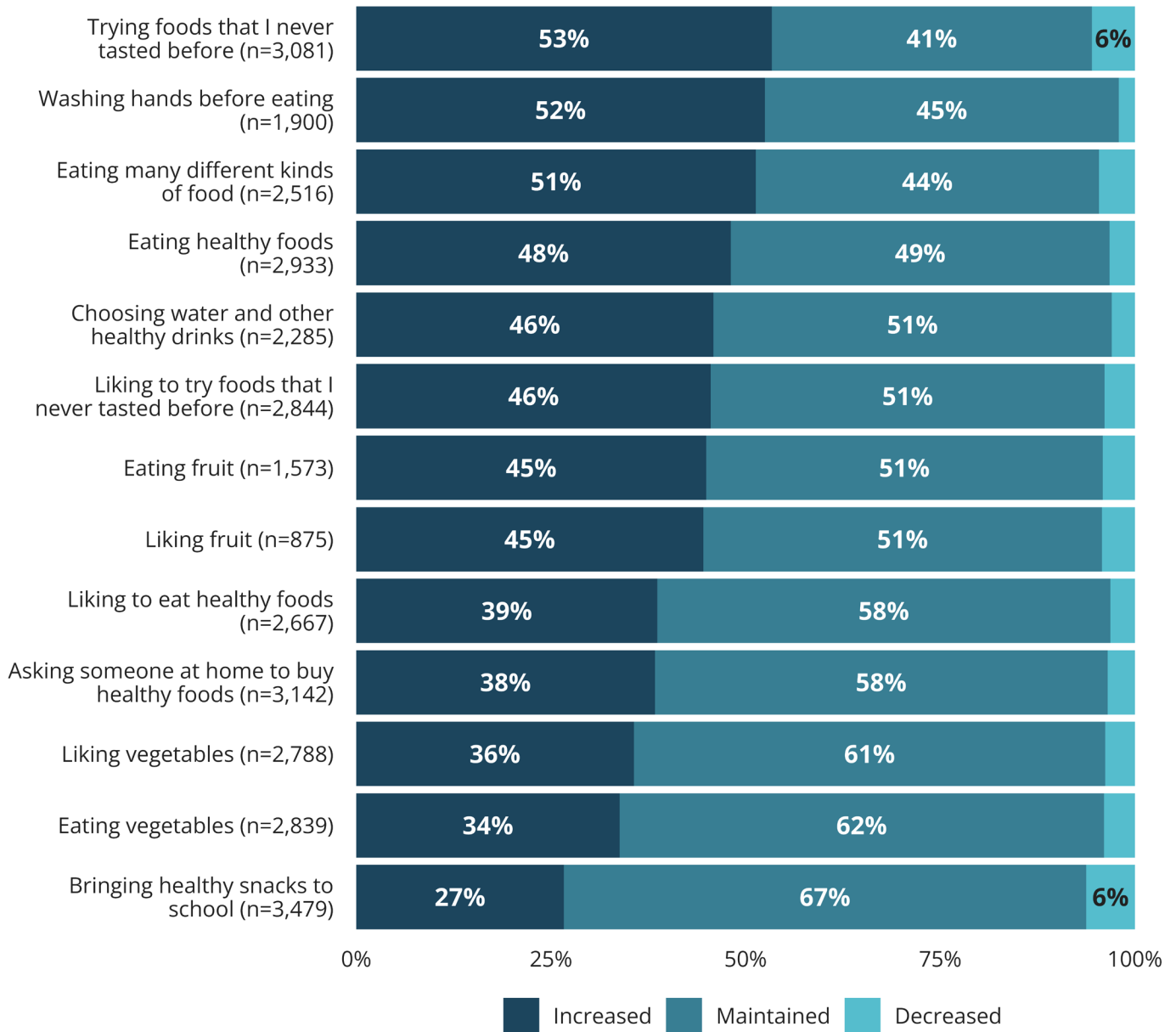
The average age of participants was 9.9 years.

What grade are you in?	Number	Percent
3rd	732	18%
4th	1,910	48%
5th	1,301	32%

Behavior Change Outcomes

Figure 3. Behavior change among respondents with room to improve

Respondents are asked to report behavior frequency from before and after the SNAP-Ed intervention. This figure displays the percent of respondents who increased, maintained, or decreased the frequency of each behavior between the start and end of the intervention.



Note: This figure excludes respondents that reported performing the behavior with the highest frequency (“most or all of the time”) before participating in the intervention.

Detailed Results: Program Evaluation (Youth)

Demographic Data

Figure 4. **Grade** (n=4,496)

What grade are you in? If it's summer, what grade did you just finish?	Number	Percent
3rd	2,060	45%
4th	1,911	42%
5th	525	12%

Participant Feedback

Figure 5. **Enjoyment of lessons** (n=4,601)

Respondents were asked, "Did you enjoy the lessons about food and healthy eating?"

57% of respondents **enjoyed lessons** about food and healthy eating **a lot**.

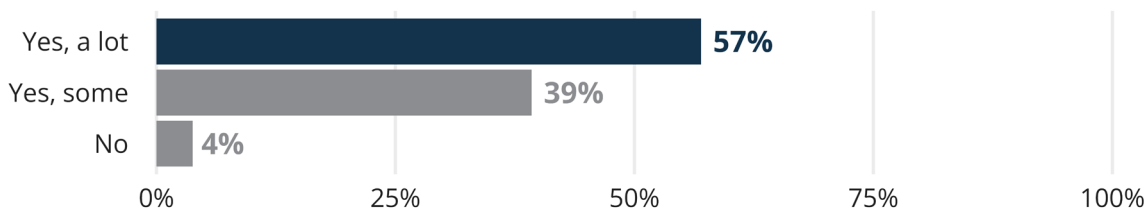


Figure 6. **Lesson interest** (n=4,614)

Respondents were asked, "How many food and healthy eating lessons were interesting?"

50% of respondents thought **most or all** of the lessons were **interesting**.

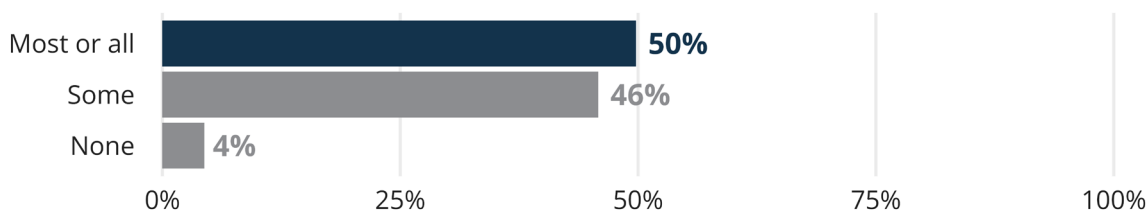


Figure 7. Lesson topics (n=4,640)

Respondents were asked to mark topics that they learned about in the lessons.

The most common topics were fruit, vegetables, and MyPlate.

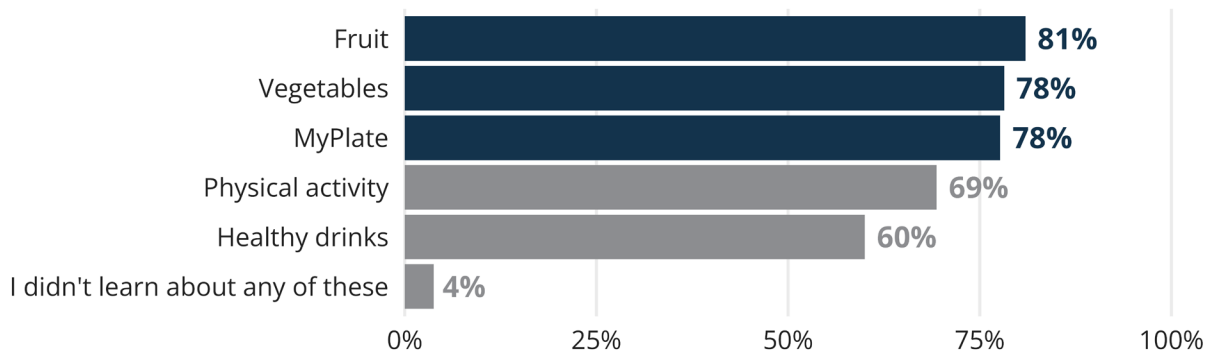


Figure 8. Previous knowledge of lesson information (n=4,594)

Respondents were asked, "How much of the information in the lessons did you already know?"

Some or all of the information was new to **66%** of respondents.

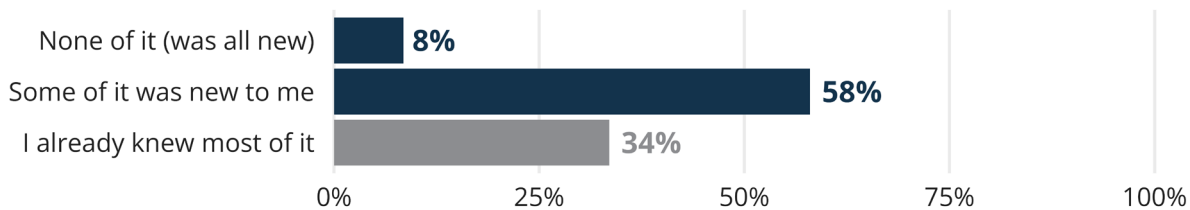


Figure 9. Overall rating (n=4,574)

Respondents were asked, "How would you rate the food and healthy eating lessons?"

76% of youth rated the lessons as either **good or great**.

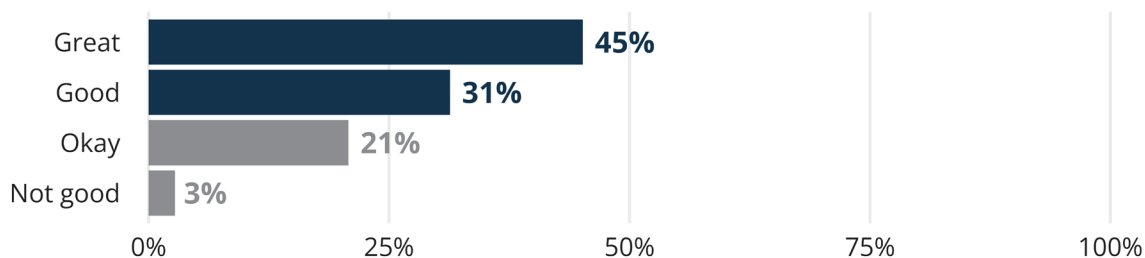


Figure 10. Level of understanding (n=4,594)

Respondents were asked, "How much of the information did you understand?"

65% of respondents understood **most or all** of the information.

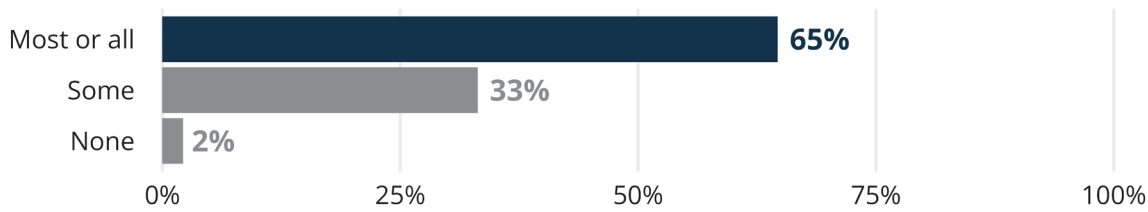
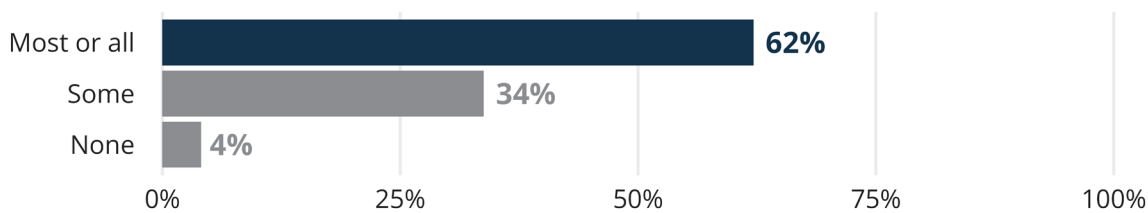


Figure 11. Physical activity enjoyment (n=4,472)

Respondents were asked, "If lessons had physical activity, how much of it did you enjoy?"

62% of respondents enjoyed **most or all** of the physical activity.

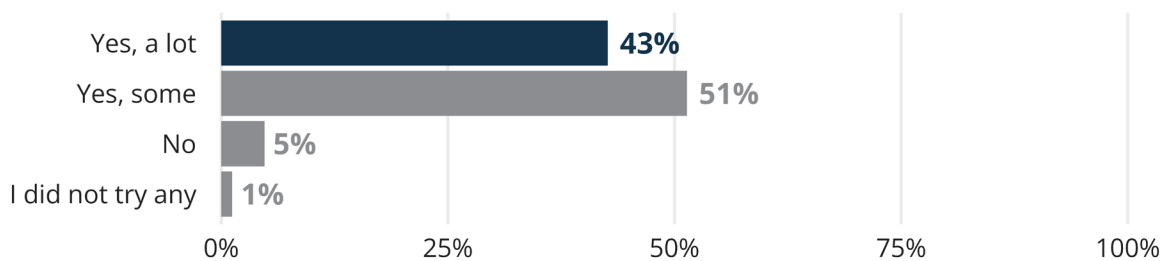


Note: 2% (n=90) of respondents selected "There was no physical activity", those responses were not included in data analysis.

Figure 12. Food enjoyment (n=4,463)

Respondents were asked, "If you tasted foods in the lessons, did you enjoy them?"

43% of respondents enjoyed **a lot** of the food they tried.



Note: <1% (9) of respondents selected "There were no foods to try", those responses were not included in the data analysis.

Behavior Change Outcomes

Figure 13. Self-reported behavior change (n=4,613)

Respondents were asked to mark all behaviors that they are doing because of the lessons.

The greatest percentages of youth are **drinking more water** or **eating more fruit** due to HSHC.

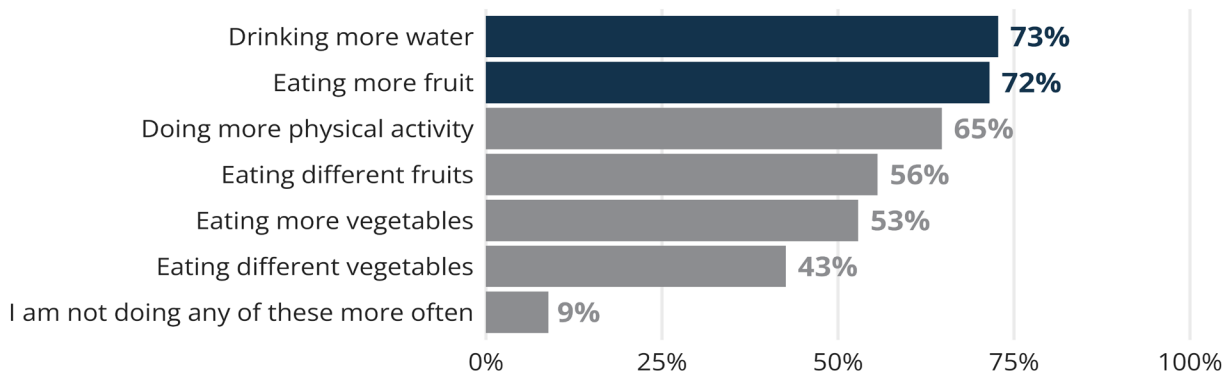
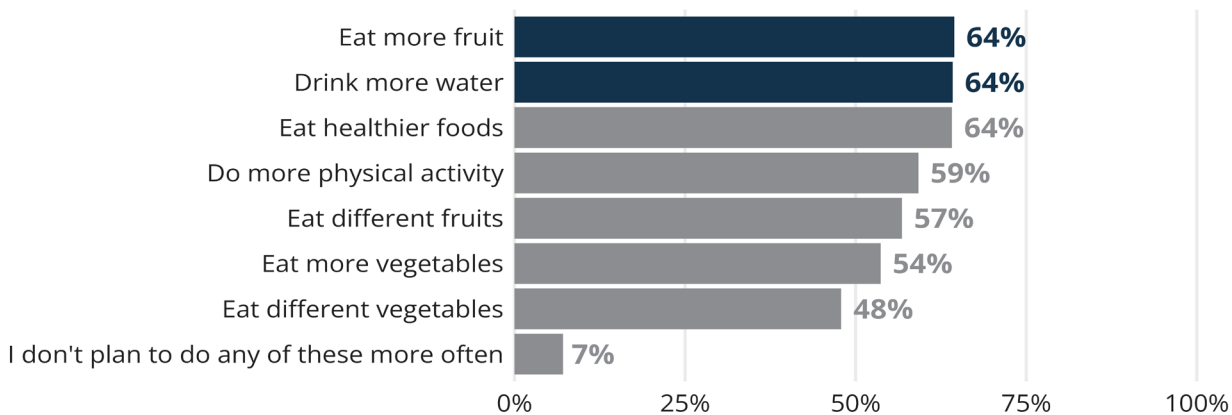


Figure 14. Planned behavior change (n=4,607)

Respondents were asked to mark all behaviors that they plan to do more often because of the lessons.

The greatest percentages of youth plan to **eat more fruit or drink more water** because of the program.



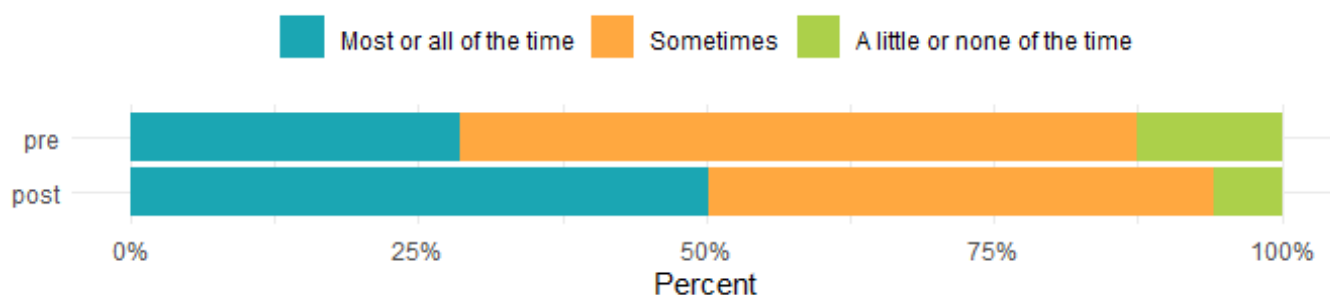
Support for evidence base (HSHC, FY 2024)

Methodology: Paired Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Tests were conducted to identify statistically significant differences related to frequency of healthy behaviors before and after participation in the HSHC intervention. This is a non-parametric test that compares two dependent groups, where each participant is compared to themselves to control for individual variability. Data was provided by the That's Me: My Choices survey for children in grades 3-5 (n=4,245).

To address the increased risk of Type I errors when conducting multiple statistical comparisons, a Bonferroni adjustment was applied to the p-values. Since multiple statistical tests were run on the same sample the Bonferroni adjustment ensures the overall probability of making a Type 1 error is minimized while ensuring findings are robust.

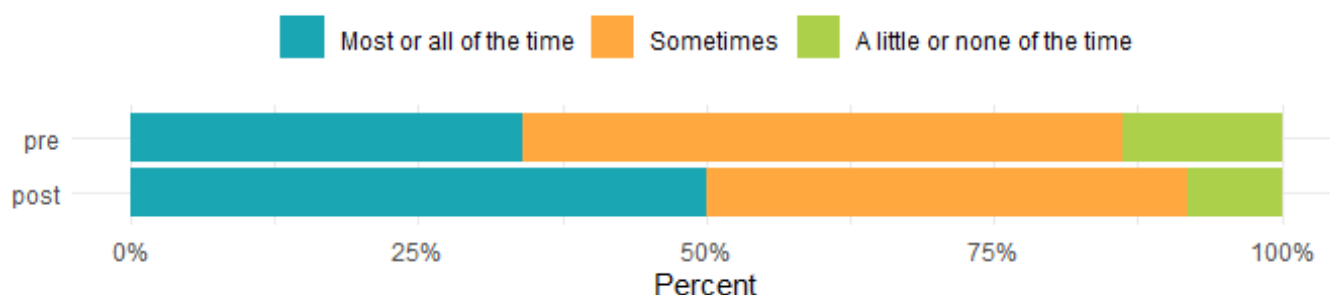
Results: There was a significant increase between pre and post results for all 12 items, suggesting children were performing all behaviors more frequently after participating in Healthy Schools, Healthy Communities intervention. These results provide evidence that the HSHC intervention results in statistically significant change in all health behaviors assessed for children in grades 3-5 that complete at least five of the eight lessons.

Eating healthy foods



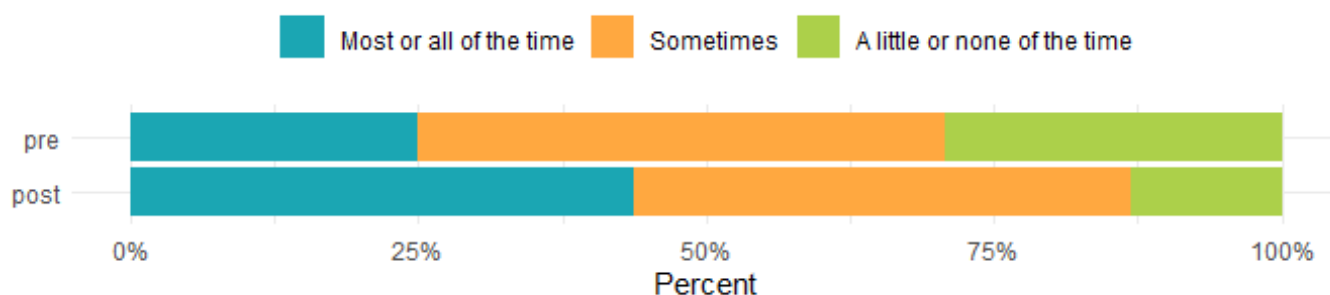
Finding: *There was a statistically significant increase from pre- to post-testing for this item suggesting participants were eating healthy foods more frequently after participating in the HSHC intervention (V=267070.5, $p < 0.001$).*

Liking to eat healthy foods



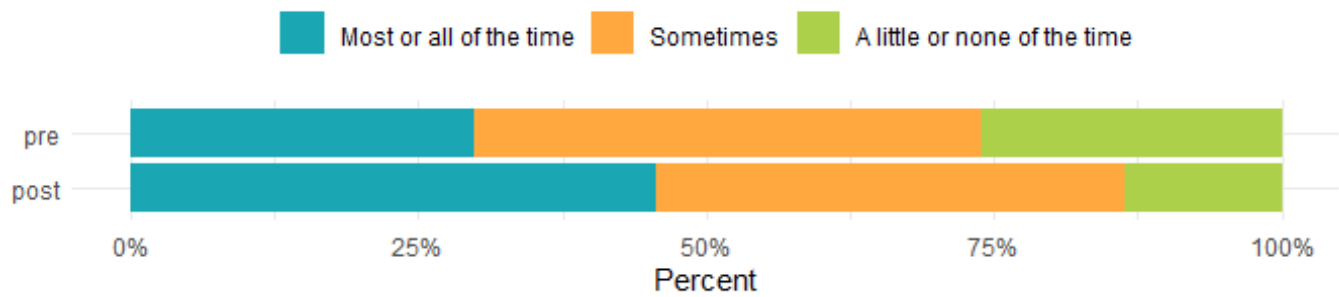
Finding: *There was a statistically significant increase from pre- to post-testing for this item suggesting participants liked to eat healthy foods more frequently after participating in the HSHC intervention (V=144590, $p < 0.001$).*

Trying foods that I never tasted before



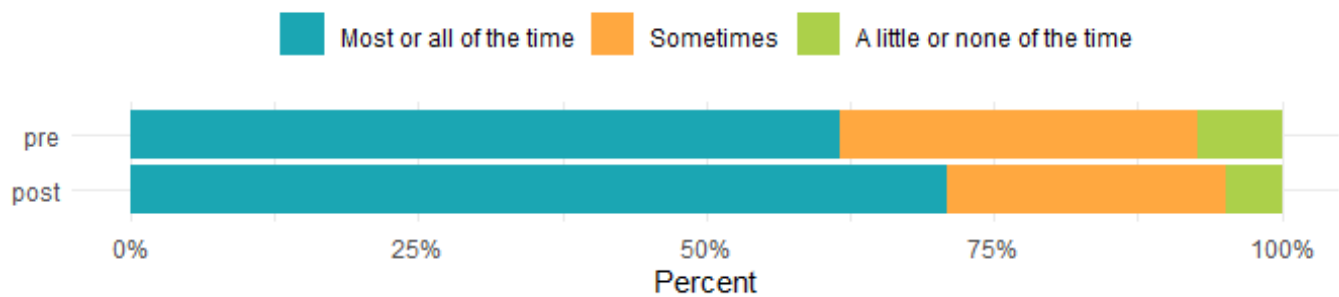
Finding: *There was a statistically significant increase from pre- to post-testing for this item suggesting participants tried new foods more frequently after participating in the HSHC intervention (V=428504, $p < 0.001$).*

Liking to try new foods that I never tasted before



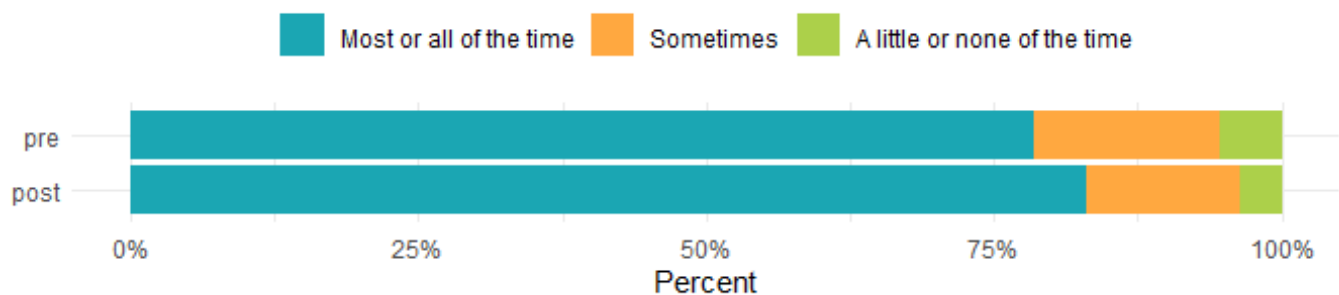
Finding: There was a statistically significant increase from pre- to post-testing for this item suggesting participants liked to try new foods more frequently after participating in the HSHC intervention ($V=241342.5$, $p < 0.001$).

Eating fruit



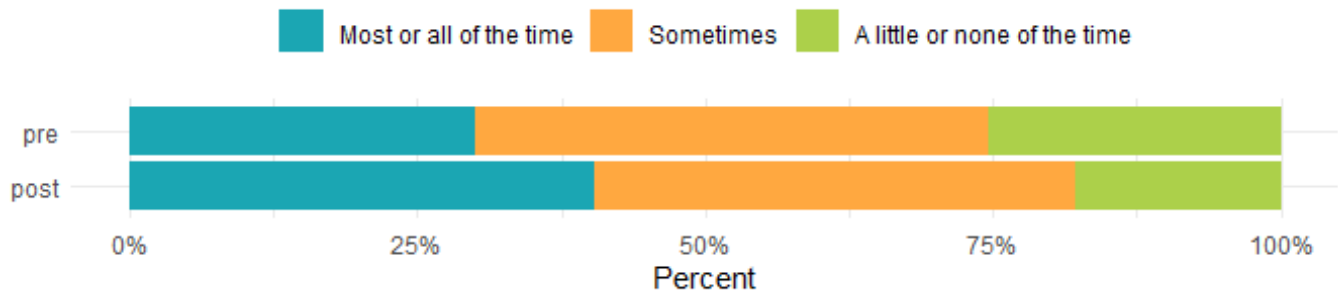
Finding: There was a statistically significant increase from pre- to post-testing for this item suggesting participants ate fruit more frequently after participating in the HSHC intervention ($V=130206$, $p < 0.001$).

Liking fruit



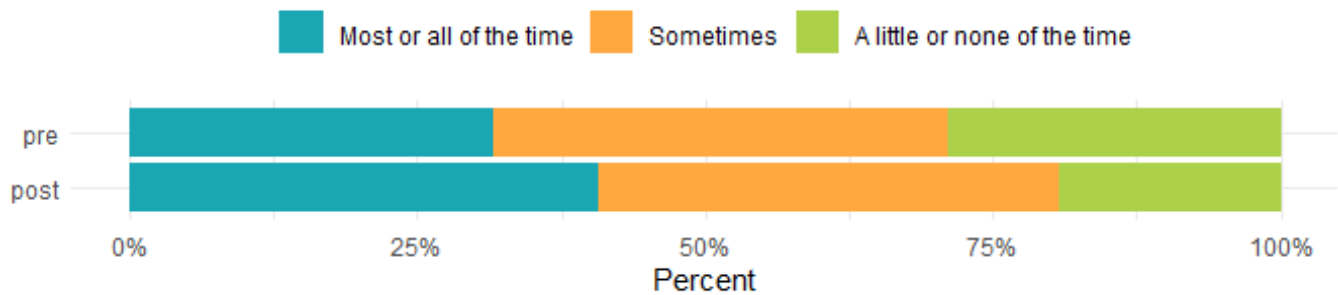
Finding: There was a statistically significant increase from pre- to post-testing for this item suggesting participants liked fruit more frequently after participating in the HSHC intervention ($V=45185$, $p < 0.001$).

Eating vegetables



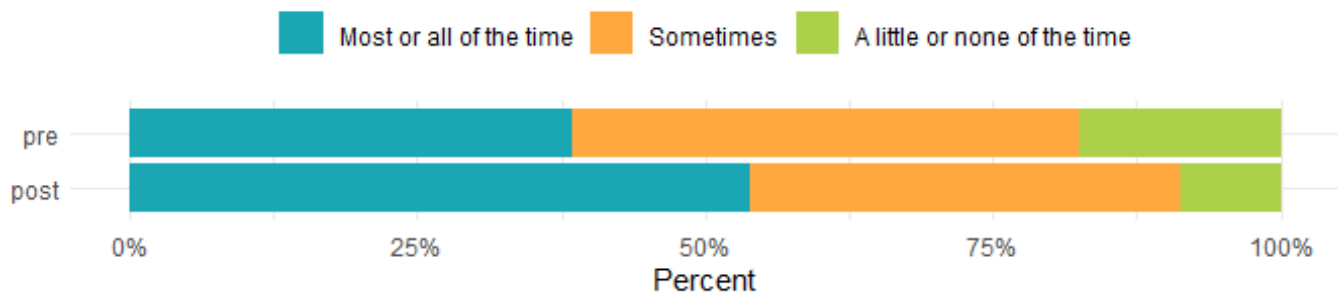
Finding: *There was a statistically significant increase from pre- to post-testing for this item suggesting participants ate vegetables more frequently after participating in the HSHC intervention (V=175980, $p < 0.001$).*

Liking vegetables



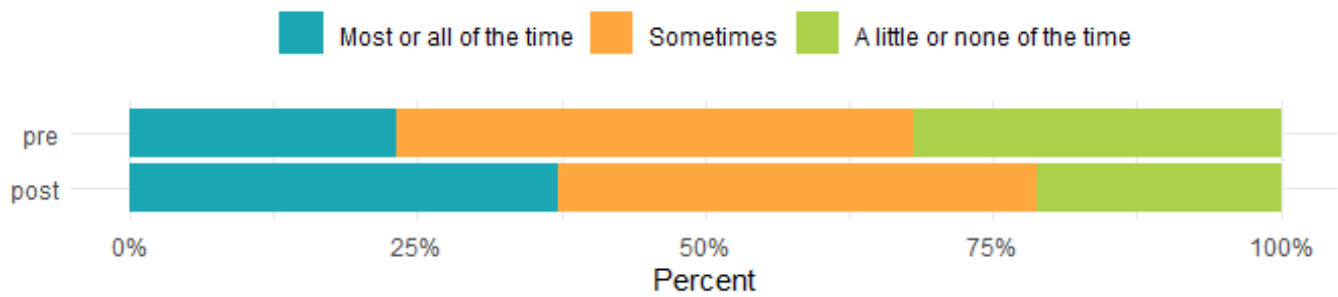
Finding: *There was a statistically significant increase from pre- to post-testing for this item suggesting participants liked vegetables more frequently after participating in the HSHC intervention (V=175407.5, $p < 0.001$).*

Eating many different kinds of food



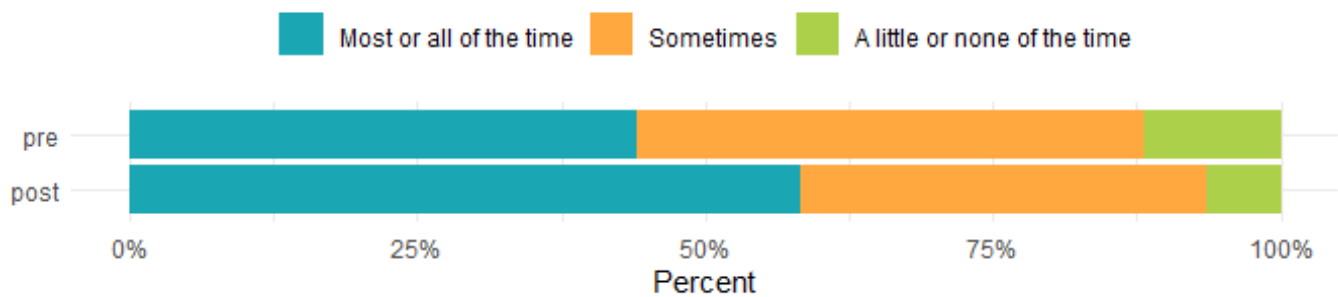
Finding: *There was a statistically significant increase from pre- to post-testing for this item suggesting participants ate many different kinds of food more frequently after participating in the HSHC intervention (V=340011.5, $p < 0.001$).*

Asking someone at home to buy healthy foods



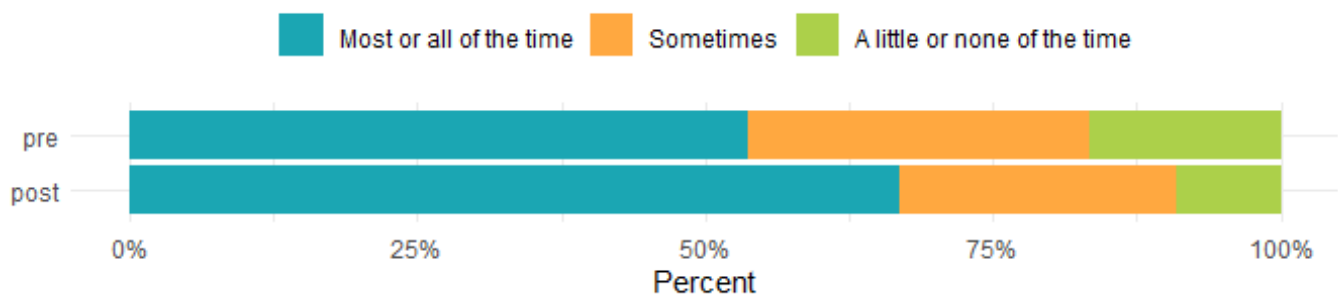
Finding: There was a statistically significant increase from pre- to post-testing for this item suggesting participants asked someone at home to buy healthy foods more frequently after participating in HSHC ($V=201467.5$, $p < 0.001$).

Choosing water and other healthy drinks



Finding: There was a statistically significant increase from pre- to post-testing for this item suggesting participants chose water and other healthy drinks more frequently after participating in HSHC ($V=221029$, $p < 0.001$).

Washing hands before eating



Finding: There was a statistically significant increase from pre- to post-testing for this item suggesting participants washed hands before eating more frequently after participating in the HSHC intervention ($V=145928.5$, $p < 0.001$).

Conclusions

Implications: Data analysis on surveys completed by children in grades 3-5 that participated in the Healthy Schools, Healthy Communities intervention indicated that statistically significant changes occurred for all behaviors assessed. Survey items related to washing hands, trying new foods, eating vegetables and fruits, healthy foods, and a variety of foods, and asking someone at home to buy healthy foods. These results provide an evidence base for positive change in all behaviors when this intervention is used with fidelity. Findings from process evaluation were

also positive and indicated youth enjoyed lessons, food tastings, and physical activity; understood the information, and thought lessons were interesting.

Considerations: Although evaluation provides strong evidence of behavior change and student enjoyment, it would be interesting to dive into analyzing results with more detail to understand: how outcomes varied across grades and lesson frequency (weekly vs. monthly).

Next Steps: Evaluation (analysis) of FY25 data will continue to monitor evidence base and explore whether outcomes varied across grades or, related to frequency of lesson delivery.