

**Summer Meals Evaluation: Text2LiveHealthy Report**

**Summer- 2019**



The Integrated Nutrition Education Program (INEP) and the Culture of Wellness in Preschools (COWP) used their texting program, Text2LiveHealthy (T2LH), in partnership with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to support CDE’s summer meal site outreach efforts. Texts promoting the summer meal site website were sent out two times during the summer to alert/remind caregivers of this resource. First text was sent first week of June and second the week of July 8th.

Text Message Sent:

“*T2LH: Kids and teens eat free all summer long! Text FOOD to 877-877 or click the link to find a Summer Food Service Program site near you! Link:* [*http://lil.sm/39ba*](http://lil.sm/39ba)*.”*

Approximately 2,470 participants received the texts, both English and Spanish speakers from across the state in the following regions: Denver-Metro, Mesa/Montrose, San Luis Valley, Weld and El Paso.

INEP/COWP also sent the following text message to gather information on who used the sites and if they didn’t use them, why? The following message was sent out on August 15th, soon after the summer meal programming was over for the year.

*“T2LH: Parents we have a question for you! Did your kiddos eat free this summer at their local school or other locations? Reply Yes or No”*

***Table 1: Responses by language to first evaluation text message***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Language | Yes (n, %) | No (n, %)  |
| English*9% response rate* | 45 (31%) | 98 (67%) |
| Spanish*15% response rate* | 35 (30%) | 85 (70%) |
| Total | 80 (30%) | 183 (70%) |

As we can see in Table 1, of those who responded, most (70%) did not participate in the summer meals program at their local school or other locations. We received a higher than average response rate for both languages when compared to other text messaging programs and when compared to other text messages sent in T2LH. In an effort to determine trends by region of state, in Figure 1 (below), we see most responses from Denver Metro. This is expected as most of the families enrolled in T2LH are from the Denver metro region.

**Figure 1: Responses by Region of State to Text Message**

 **(Did your kids eat free this summer at their local school or other locations?)**

For those who responded “no”, another follow-up text message was sent to determine why participants may not have participated in the summer meals program.

**Follow-Up Text:**

If yes*, “T2LH: That's great! The Summer Food Service Program, funded by USDA, offers free meals for kids and teens every summer. Visit us again next summer!”*

If no, “*T2LH: Why not? Reply:
A) There was no summer meal site near me
B) We were unable to get to a site
C) It was not necessary for our family
D) Other- tell us more”*

As shown in Table 2 (below), of those who responded, most across both languages (58%), did not participate in the summer meals program as they felt it was not necessary for their family. The second most common reason chosen was they were unable to get to a summer meals location (9%). Some (16%) participants texted in “other” responses and these are summarized in Figure 3. Similarly, we were interested in trends by region of state (Figure 2) and again we see most responses in the Denver Metro area.

***Table 2: Responses by language to second evaluation text message***

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Language | No Summer Meal Site Near Me | Unable to Get to a Site | Not Necessary for Our Family | Other\* |
| English*63% response rate* | 3 (3%) | 8 (9%) | 47 (55%) | 27 (31%) |
| Spanish*50% response rate* | 3 (5%) | 11 (18%) | 32 (53%) | 6 (10%) |
| Total | 6 (3%) | 19 (9%) | 79 (58%) | 33 (16%) |

 **Figure 2: Responses to follow-up text by area of state**

Figure 3 (below) summarizes the qualitative responses from participants (n=33, 16%) who had other reasons for not using the summer meals program. We can see that the majority of participants either did not know about this program or it was not convenient for them. In future summer meals evaluation text messages we recommend following up with participants who did not know about the program as well as those that found it inconvenient to continue to gather more information.

 **Figure 3: Other (n=33, 16%) parents texted back with responses to follow-up text**

**Conclusion**

We look forward to continuing to partner with CDE to promote the use of summer meal sites through the T2LH program. As our T2LH participation increases we will be able to reach more families in these areas and continue to gather information from our participants on how the promotion of summer meal sites is going. We also welcome any suggestions from CDE on how to craft our texts to gather helpful information.

