BEST PRACTICES IN SNAP OUTREACH STRATEGIES
SNAP outreach is important because many students don’t know what SNAP is or how to access the program.

Getting the word out across campus about SNAP can increase the likelihood that eligible students will apply.

The more we talk about SNAP the more we break down the stigma that may prevent someone from applying.
SNAP OUTREACH

- SNAP outreach can be as simple as hanging posters in your office and can easily be combined with other outreach efforts you do already.

- A good strategy for SNAP outreach is to have both short-term and long-term outreach plans.
  - For example, plan to do SNAP class raps and tabling as well as having SNAP sign-up events and training faculty on the basics of SNAP.

- The following slides provide several examples of SNAP outreach ideas happening on campuses around the country.
SNAP OUTREACH
SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES
SNAP OUTREACH STRATEGY IDEAS: REFERRAL PROCESS

- Establish spaces on campus where students know they can go to find out more about SNAP. These can be resource or identity centers, financial aid, a food pantry or whatever makes sense for your school.
- Make sure faculty, advisors and other people on campus know where students can go to find out more about SNAP.
- An example of this could be hanging a poster in the window of each space where students can get SNAP questions answered and get more information.
SNAP OUTREACH STRATEGY IDEAS: TABLING

- Adding SNAP to your existing tabling events is an easy way to get the word out about SNAP.
- Display one of the “Hey Students” posters and be prepared to answer questions about SNAP.
- Refer students to places on campus where they can learn more.
- Or, you can do SNAP specific tabling at events at the beginning of each term or outside of your resource center or office each week.
SNAP OUTREACH STRATEGY IDEAS: CLASS RAPS

- Class raps are another way to reach a lot of students and share about the SNAP resources available on campus.
- We suggest writing a script—keep it short at 5 minutes or less.
  - You might briefly explain what SNAP is and list the student eligibility criteria—don’t forget to mention the income guidelines!
  - Let the students know where they can find more information about SNAP on campus and receive application assistance if they might be eligible.
- Share materials such as the bookmark with interested students.
SNAP OUTREACH STRATEGY IDEAS:
MESSAGING AT THE FOOD PANTRY

• Share information about SNAP at the food pantry by hanging posters, having bookmarks displayed and having applications available for students to take.

• Make sure pantry staff and volunteers are trained in the basics of SNAP eligibility for students to answer questions.

• Pantries might also be a great place to offer application assistance.
SNAP OUTREACH STRATEGY IDEAS: CREATE OR PROMOTE A BASIC NEEDS SYLLABUS STATEMENT

- Many schools have created a basic needs statement that faculty can include in their syllabus, including OSU and PCC.
  - Please visit their websites for examples:
    - OSU Basic Needs Statements
    - PCC Food and Housing Insecurity Statement
- The syllabus statements often include information about what it means to be food insecure and who a student can contact on campus for more information and resources.
- If your school already has a basic needs statement, contact professors around campus and encourage them to use it!
SNAP OUTREACH
LONG-TERM STRATEGIES
EVENTS
Your office could hold SNAP teaching events or workshops that provide information about SNAP and other food justice and basic needs information.

SNAP outreach events could be paired with other events already happening on campus, like welcome week or earth week.
The University of Oregon and Oregon State University have organized events each term where students can go to receive assistance with filling out the SNAP application.

At many of these events, Oregon Department of Human Services Benefit and Eligibility Workers can attend each event to answer specific questions.
SNAP OUTREACH STRATEGY IDEAS: SEND EMAILS & LETTERS ABOUT SNAP

- Have key contacts or departments send letters or emails about SNAP to student listservs and targeted groups of students that may likely be eligible.

- In the outreach materials and tools section of this toolkit, we have provided a letter/email template.
Students who are eligible for work study, have Pell grants or are TRIO students may likely be eligible for SNAP.

Reaching out to these departments, and departments where work-study students are employed, and letting them know about SNAP will help get the word out to potentially eligible students.
SNAP OUTREACH STRATEGY IDEAS: BASIC NEEDS SURVEYS

- Screen for student needs by using surveys or other check-in opportunities. Incorporate basic need questions in an orientation survey, when students sign up for other programs or assistance, or in other regular check-in points.

- For example, at Oregon State University each student that applies for meal assistance (called Meal Bucks at OSU) answers a basic needs survey. This survey screens students for housing and food insecurity.

- Then have a plan for following up with students. Staff at the Human Services Resource Center (HSRC) on the OSU campus review the data and connect with students who indicate they are not receiving SNAP.
TRAINING FOR KEY ROLES
FACULTY, ADVISORS, FINANCIAL ADVISORS
SNAP OUTREACH STRATEGY IDEAS: SNAP TRAINING FOR FACULTY

- We hear from students that faculty are one of the key points of contact and are often someone a student will go to if facing basic needs insecurity.

- Training faculty on the basics of SNAP and what basic needs resources are available on campus can help students find the resources they need.
SNAP OUTREACH STRATEGY IDEAS: ALL ADVISORS SHARING SNAP INFO

- Student advising appointments are a trusted and safe space where SNAP information could be shared.
- Have posters about SNAP displayed in the advising offices.
- Advisors could be trained in the basics of SNAP and/or application assistance.
SNAP OUTREACH STRATEGY IDEAS: FINANCIAL ADVISORS

- Financial aid advisors are a natural fit for providing SNAP information and guidance to students. At Portland Community College, financial aid advisors incorporate SNAP information into their work.

- SNAP is talked about during in one-on-one coaching with students
  - If student expresses financial distress in the Financial Coaching pre-meeting survey, bring up SNAP

- Financial aid & advising tabling and presentations include SNAP information and talk specifically about paying for food as part of financial planning.

- SNAP application assistance often is a good fit for financial aid advisors to provide and could be a service added to advising webpage if so.
APPLICATION ASSISTANCE AND NAVIGATION
SNAP OUTREACH STRATEGY IDEAS: APPLICATION ASSISTANCE

- Have key people and spaces that offer SNAP application assistance.
- Having someone there to guide a student through the process can be helpful and lead to a greater possibility that they will complete and submit the application.
- Identify students, staff or faculty who have the time and ability to offer assistance.
- Set up a calendar, similar to this example on the left from PSU, where students can see when and where application assistance is available on campus.
- Make sure it’s known campus wide where students can go for application assistance – the key people, spaces, and hours its available.
SNAP OUTREACH STRATEGY IDEAS
DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS WITH DHS

- Connecting with your local DHS office or offices is helpful for supporting students in navigating the application process.

- Develop key contacts who you can call with questions or to follow-up if a student encounters issues. They can also potentially help participate in SNAP events at your school.

- Offer to provide a presentation to DHS eligibility workers in your area, so they better understand your work, the student experience, and how you’re getting the word out about SNAP.
SNAP OUTREACH STRATEGY IDEAS: BASIC NEEDS NAVIGATOR

- Oregon State University has created a Basic Need Navigator position within their Human Resources Service Center.

- The Basic Needs Navigator provides application assistance and helps trouble shoot issues that might come up during the application process.
  - This position is paid for in-part by SNAP outreach contract dollars through OSU Extension & DHS.
  - They get money to talk about SNAP and connect students to SNAP!
Linn-Benton community college and a few other community colleges around Oregon have instituted the SingleStop system.

SingleStop is an online resource where students can go to find out what services they might be eligible for and what resources are available in their community.

A SingleStop Navigator is a staff position that provides assistance with the SingleStop program and helps students find the resources for which they are eligible.

While this is a very helpful service, it’s important to pair it with other resources, such as outreach to help breakdown stigma and application assistance to help students follow through and sign-up for SNAP.
SOCIAL MEDIA & MULTI-USE MATERIALS
At the University of Oregon, the Student Sustainability Center and the DuckNest (a student wellness center) partnered with students in the school of journalism to create a food security and SNAP social media campaign. There are examples of what they created.

Collaborating with other departments can be a great way to get the word out to more students, and reduce the amount of work one space has to take on.
MULTI-USE MATERIALS

- This is a SNAP material we created to message about SNAP to college students and work to break down stigma.
- Multi-use materials are great for ensuring key messages are shared in multiple in-person and online spaces.
- It’s sized as a square card that can be a handout when tabling (and fit in someone’s back pocket), or it could be an Instagram post.
This example is a paper with a plate and silverware printed on it—students could write in their own story about SNAP or food or basic needs insecurity. It could be anonymous. This example was taped on the wall and also posted on social media.

Storytelling in physical and online spaces helps to normalize the experience of SNAP and build community. It lets people tell their own story and share what they feel they need or want people to know.

Messages like this help to share about how SNAP is sometimes a part of the journey to get where we are today – that can be a powerful message to hear.
Create short videos about where SNAP resources on campus are located.

Videos could also be conversations centered around breaking down stigma or how to videos about the application process.

Videos could be shared on social media, webpages or platforms like Canvas.
SNAP OUTREACH!

- We hope this overview of SNAP outreach best practices helped spark ideas for strategies that will work well on your campus.

- Having a strong SNAP outreach plan and getting the word out about SNAP will improve access to SNAP for students on your campus.