



MICHAEL & SUSAN DELL
CENTER *for* HEALTHY LIVING



Healthy children in a healthy world.

We advance health and healthy living for children and families through cutting-edge research, innovative community-based programs, and dissemination of evidence-based practices.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS



Funding for this webinar series provided by:



Michael & Susan Dell
FOUNDATION

Center Resources



WEBSITE

msdcenter.org



WEBINARS

go.uth.edu/webinars



NEWSLETTER

bit.ly/MSDCenterNewsletter



EXPERT BLOGS

go.uth.edu/CenterBlogs



SOCIAL MEDIA

[@msdcenter](https://twitter.com/msdcenter)



RESEARCH AND RESOURCE STATION

go.uth.edu/CenterResources



TX CHILD HEALTH STATUS REPORTS AND TOOLKITS

go.uth.edu/TexasChildHealth



**VISIT OUR
WEBSITE**

Food *is the* best medicine

A Collaborative
Commitment to Impact
Perinatal Food Insecurity

Elizabeth Polivka, PhD, RN
Ascension Texas



Ascension Seton
Foundation

UTHealth Houston
School of Public Health



IMPACTING FOOD INSECURITY IN PERINATAL CARE

1 in 8 Texans
Experience Food
Insecurity



Background and Relevance: The Why



**Food Insecurity =
Poor Maternal
Outcomes**

**Severe Maternal
Morbidity and
Mortality**

**50% of Birthing
Patients are
Un/Under Insured**

IMPACTING FOOD INSECURITY IN PERINATAL CARE

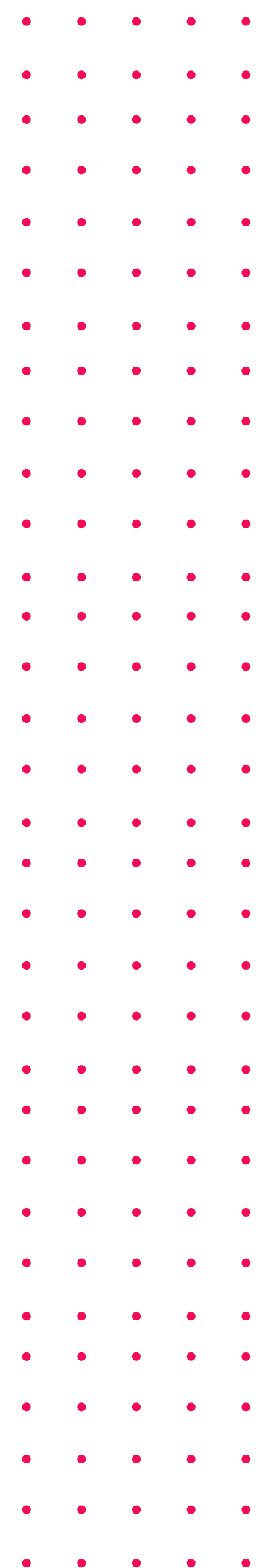
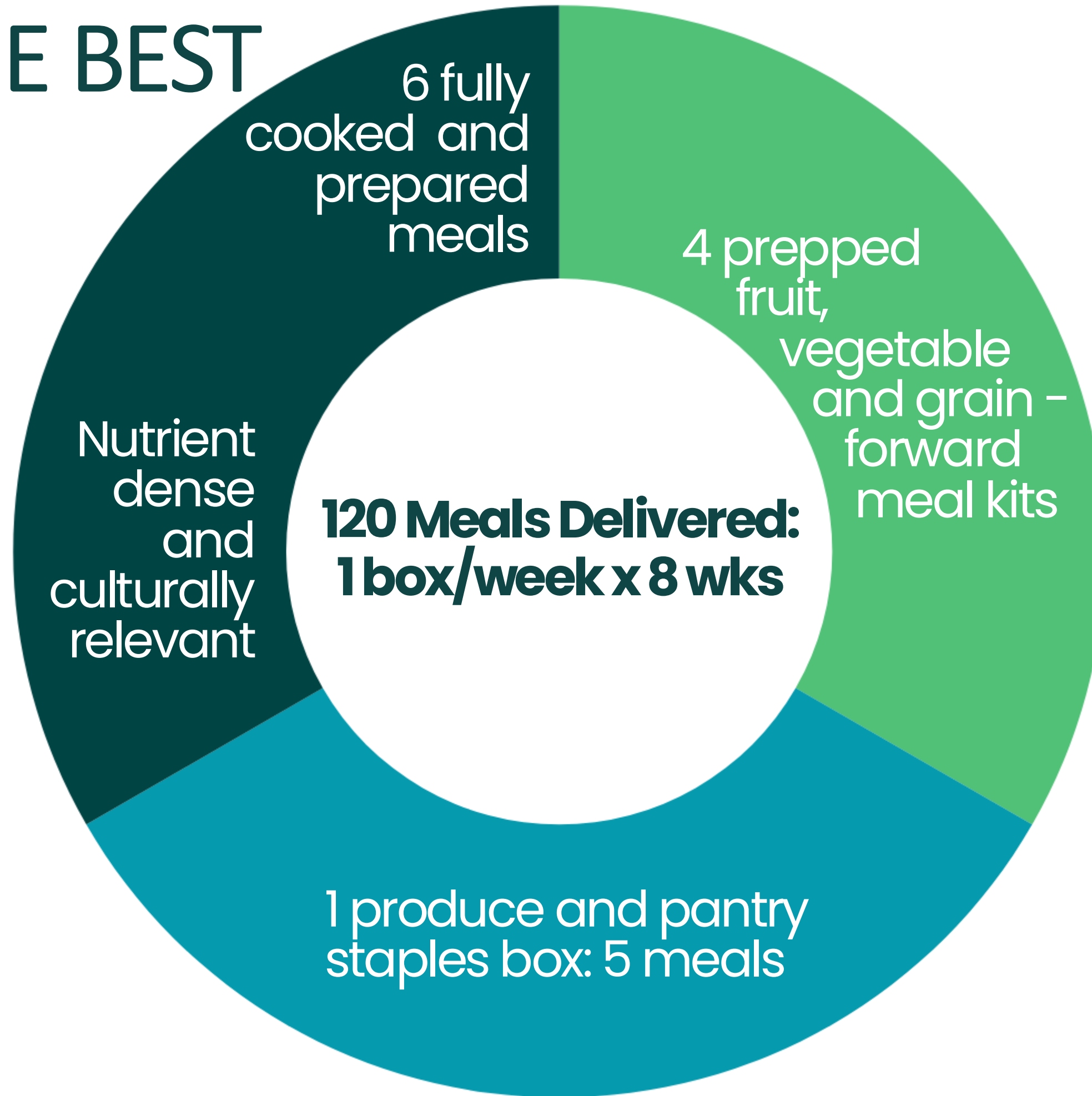
Perinatal Food Insecurity Screening
Question

\$100 Grocery Store Giftcard

Academic and Community Partnerships:
Food Is the Best Medicine

The
Ascension
TX Council
on Racial
and Health

FOOD IS THE BEST MEDICINE: PROGRAM OVERVIEW



FOOD IS THE BEST
MEDICINE
WHAT'S IN THE
BOX?



THE PROCESS

FOOD IS THE BEST MEDICINE



01

Labor and Delivery Admission History – Intake Food Insecurity Screening Question:

In the last 12 months, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money for food?

03

Eligibility Confirmed/Registration

02

Social Work Followup and Referral to FBM Program Coordinator

04

Food Delivery x 8 Weeks

THE PLAYERS

FOOD IS THE BEST MEDICINE



ATCOHRE/ASCEN
SION

FOUNDATION

Ascension Seton Medical
Center Austin maternity
patients

Elizabeth Polinard
Victoria Threadgould



UTHEALTH
HOUSTON AT
AUSTIN

Program management,
implementation, and
evaluation

Sandra van den Berg
Christopher Reyes



THE COOK'S
NOOK

Nutrient dense, culturally
relevant prepared meals
and meal kits

Joi Chevalier
Amy Bell, Raaj Pyada



FARMSHARE

Organic produce from the
farm and shelf-stable
pantry items

Andrea Abel
Alicia Fischweicher

OVERARCHING INTENT

FOOD IS THE BEST MEDICINE AND GOALS

INTENT: Positively
Impact Perinatal and
Newborn Health
Outcomes

Alleviate food
insecurity

Promote
equitable access
to nutrient rich
foods

Increase
quality of diet

Reduce the
physiological, mental,
and emotional effects
of stress caused by
food insecurity



FOOD IS THE BEST MEDICINE

EVALUATION

Alexandra van den Berg, PhD, MPH
UTHealth, Michael and Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living

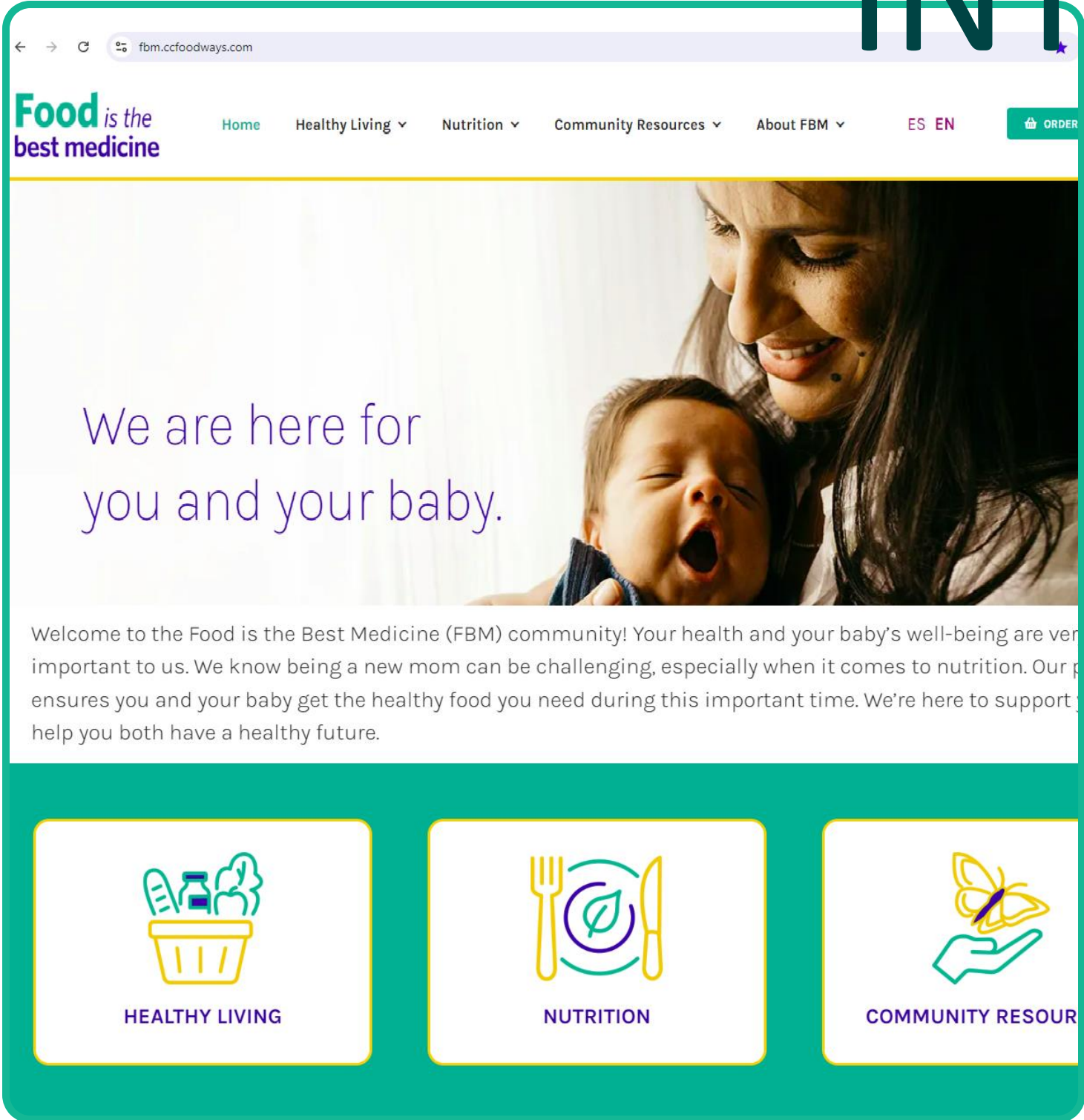


Ascension Seton
Foundation

 **UTHealth Houston**
School of Public Health



EXPANSION OF ORIGINAL FBM INTERVENTION



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Food is the Best Medicine (FBM) website. The URL is fbm.cfoodways.com. The header includes the logo "Food is the best medicine" and navigation links for Home, Healthy Living, Nutrition, Community Resources, and About FBM. There are also language options for ES and EN, and an ORDER button. The main content area features a large image of a woman holding a baby, with the text "We are here for you and your baby." Below this is a welcome message: "Welcome to the Food is the Best Medicine (FBM) community! Your health and your baby's well-being are very important to us. We know being a new mom can be challenging, especially when it comes to nutrition. Our program ensures you and your baby get the healthy food you need during this important time. We're here to support you and help you both have a healthy future." At the bottom, there are three icons representing Healthy Living, Nutrition, and Community Resources.



- 8 weekly home deliveries starting within 30 days postpartum
- Facebook Page
- Community Health Worker (CHW) Component
- FOODWAYS Platform



A QR code is displayed on the left, and to its right is the text "Project Landing Page:" followed by the URL <https://supportseton.org/womenfirst/fbm/>.

3 GROUPS



1

FBM Standard (Control):

Participants receive the standard FBM program i.e. 8-week food delivery (n=50)

2

FBM In-Person:

In addition to FBM and access to a private supportive Facebook group, participants receive Community Health Worker support through in-home visits and introductory calls (n=50)

2

FBM Virtual:

In addition to FBM and access to a private supportive Facebook group, participants receive support through a virtual platform called FoodWays (n=50)

Research Questions

- Compared to mothers in the FBM only group, do mothers in the FBM in-person group have greater food and nutrition security, greater diet quality, higher rates of breastfeeding, and lower rates of postnatal depression?
- Compared to mothers in the FBM only group, do mothers in the FBM virtual group have greater food and nutrition security, greater diet quality, higher rates of breastfeeding, and lower rates of postnatal depression?



FBM STUDY OUTCOME MEASURES: IMPACT VARIABLES

Diet Quality

With a focus on F&V consumption, measured using selected items from the 26-item NCI DSQ screener.

Mental Health Status

Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale

Food Security

Measured with the 6-item validated USDA screener.

Home Cooking

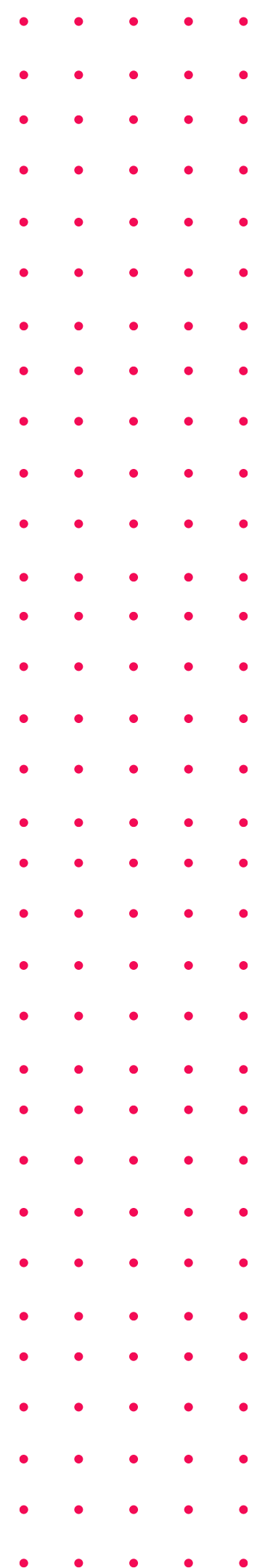
Assessed using a 3-item validated scale.

Breastfeeding Rates

Measured using items from the CDCs Infant Feeding Practices Study

Rationing Coping Strategies

Measured using a 5-item validated scale.





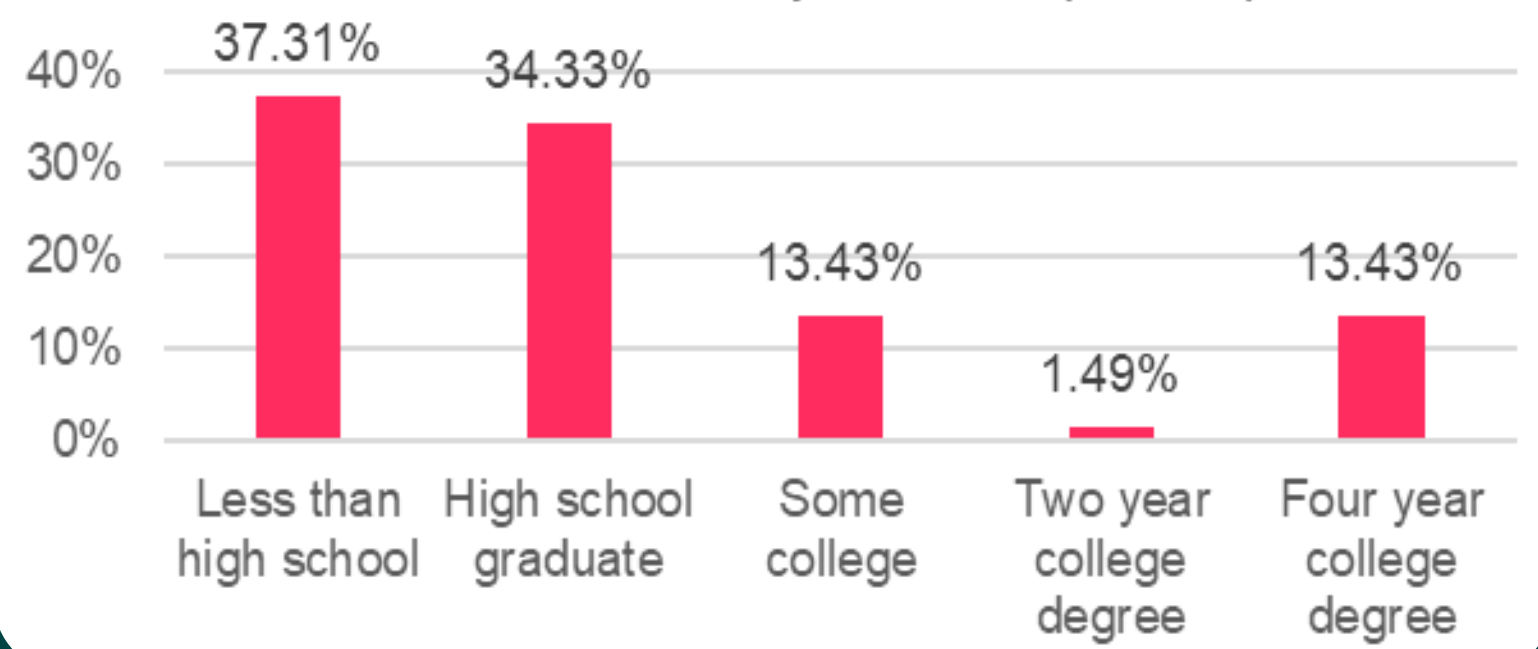
As of August 20th

When running analyses last week, we looked at only those participants who did pre and post tests (n=70) – Results are preliminary!

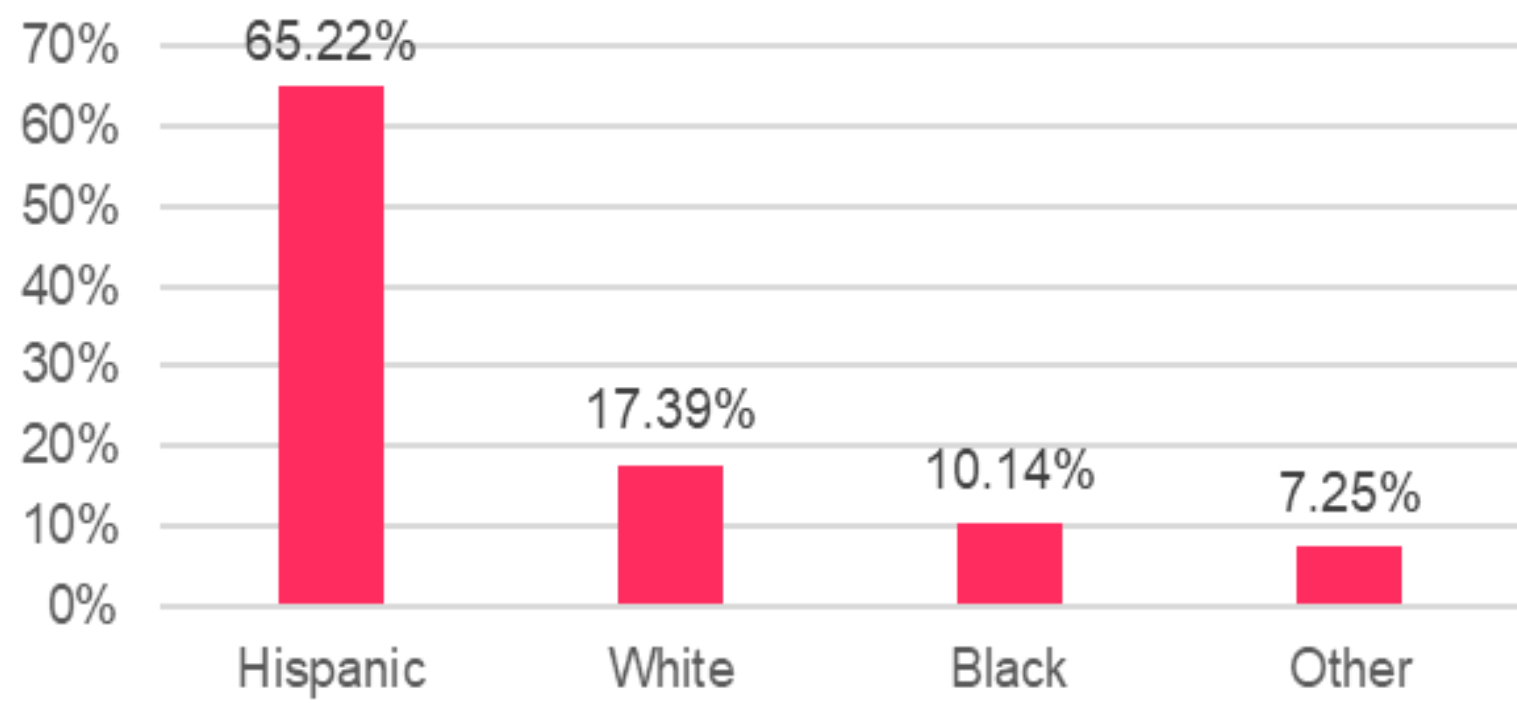
Baseline demographic data,

n = 70

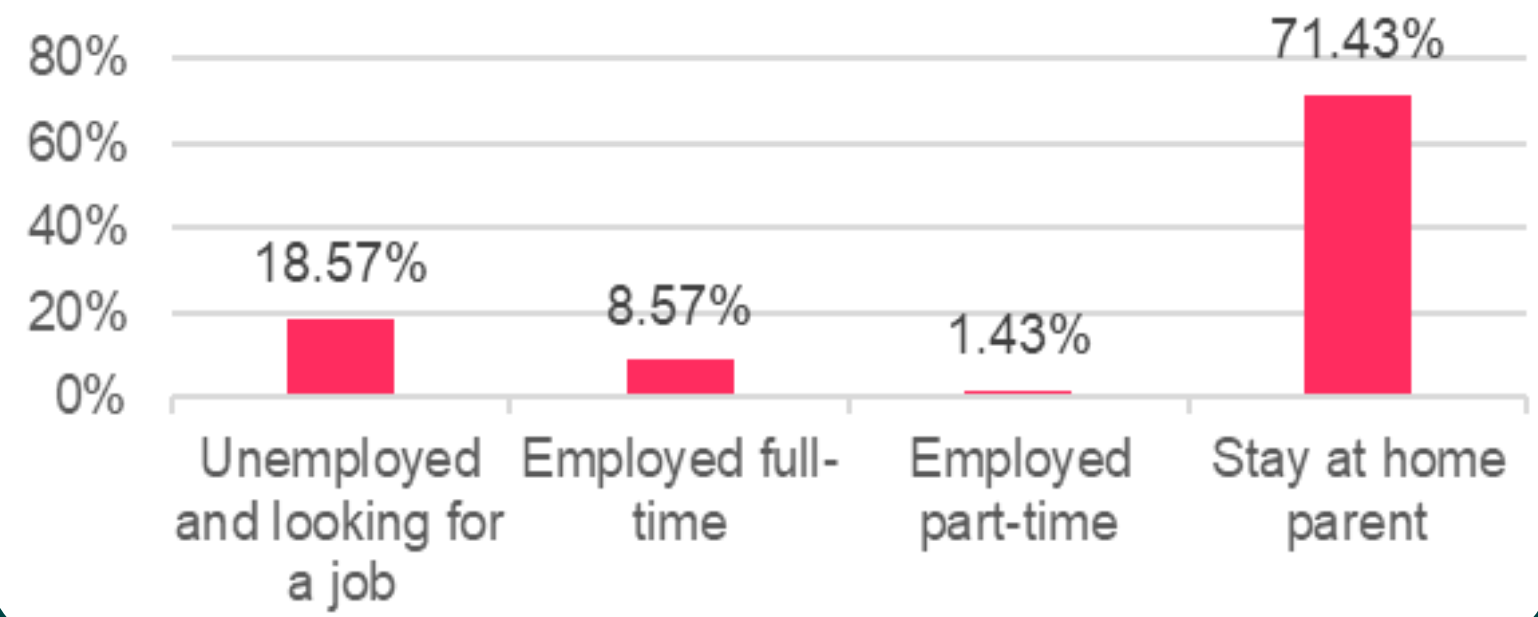
What is your highest level of education completed? (n=67)



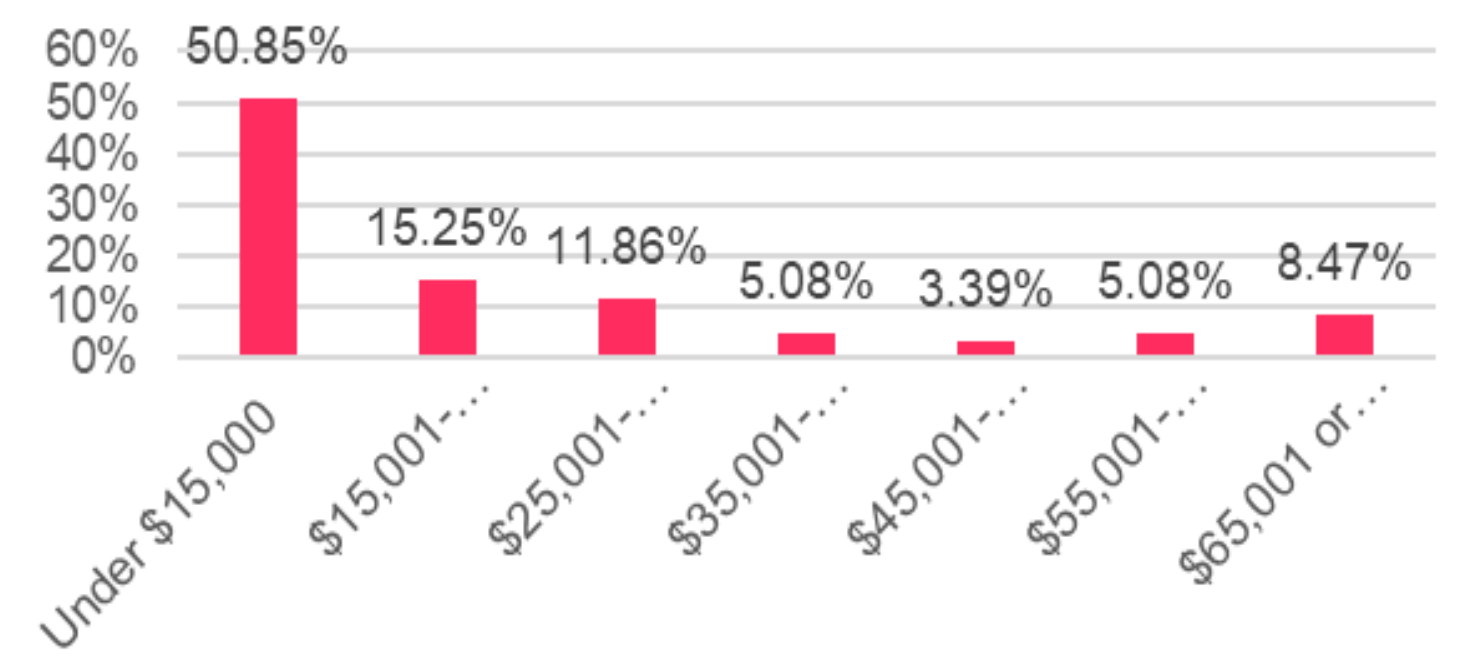
What is your race? (n=69)



What is your employment status? (n=70)



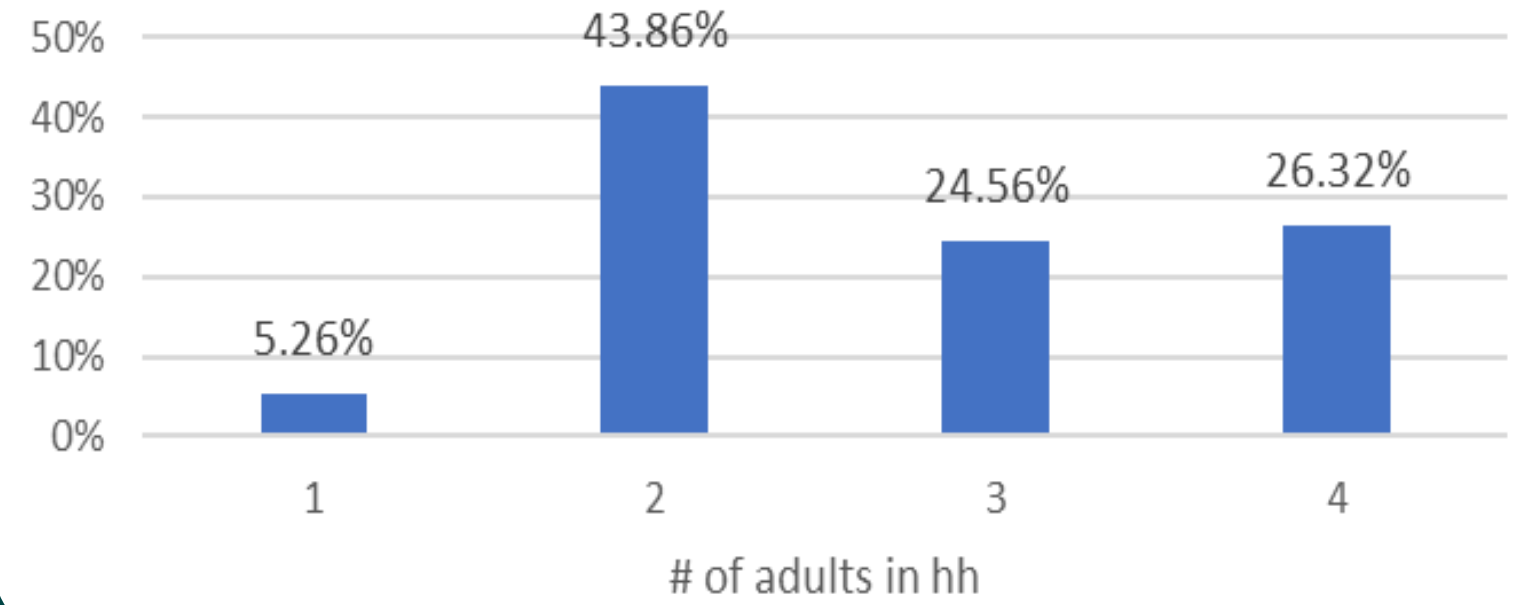
What was your household income in 2023? (n=59)



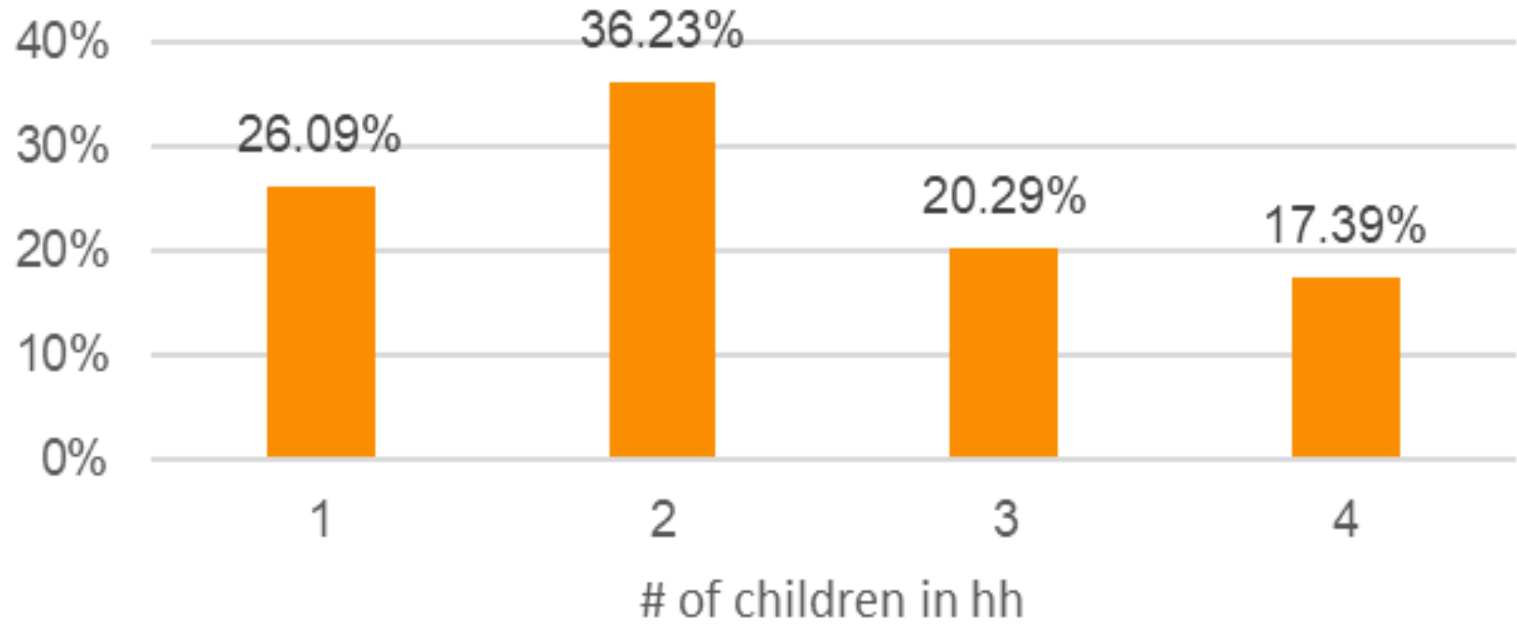
Baseline demographic data,

n = 70

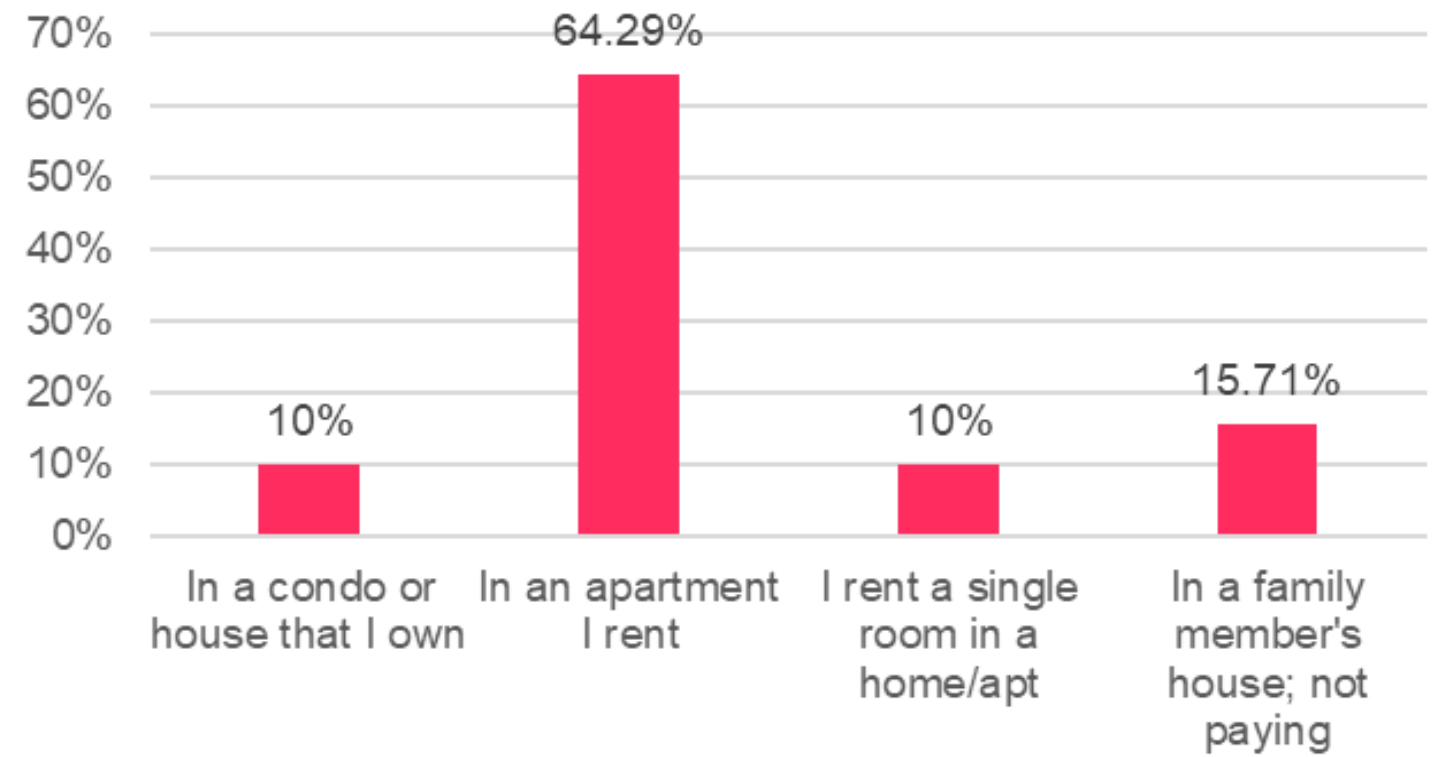
How many adults live in your household? (n=57)



How many children live in your household? (n=69)



Where do you currently live? (n=70)



Are you receiving....

%

Currently on WIC (n=63) 69.84%

Currently on SNAP (n=53) 20.75%

Currently going to food bank (n=56) 3.57%

Pretest/Immediate posttest, n=70

PRE: Are you breastfeeding? (n=69)		POST: Are you breastfeeding? (n=69)	
Yes, exclusively breastfeeding (31.88%)	22	Yes, exclusively breastfeeding (30.43%)	21
Breastfeeding and formula (59.42)	41	Breastfeeding and formula (14.49%)	10
No 6 (8.7%)		No (55.07%)	38

PRE: In the past week, how often did you or your family prepare breakfast from scratch? (n=70)		POST: In the past week, how often did you or your family prepare breakfast from scratch? (n=70)	
Never or 1 time 24 (34.29%)		Never or 1 time 20 (28.57%)	
2-4 times 29 (41.43%)		2-4 times 25 (35.71%)	
5-7 times 17 (24.29%)		5-7 times 25 (35.71%)	

PRE: In the past week, how often did you or your family prepare lunch from scratch? (n=70)		POST: In the past week, how often did you or your family prepare lunch from scratch? (n=70)	
Never or 1 time 21 (30.0%)		Never or 1 time 19 (27.14%)	
2-4 times 30 (42.86%)		2-4 times 26 (37.14%)	
5-7 times 19 (27.14%)		5-7 times 25 (35.71%)	

Pretest/Immediate posttest, n=70

When you participated in FBM, did you eat more F&V? (n=70)

Ate more F&V	52 (74.29%)
Ate fewer F&V	1 (1.43%)
Ate the same amount of F&V	17 (24.29%)
How would you rate your experience with the FBM program? (n=70)	
Negative	1 (1.43%)
Positive	11 (15.71%)
Very positive	58 (82.86%)

Did FBM help save you money on your weekly grocery bill? (n=70)

Yes	62 (88.57%)
No, FBM did not save me money.	3 (4.29%)
I don't know	5 (7.14%)

Has being in this program changed your opinion of Seton? (n=70)

Yes, my opinion of Seton is better	50 (71.43%)
Yes, my opinion of Seton is worse	1 (1.43%)
No, my opinion has not changed	19 (27.14%)

PRE: How often do you eat...per week? (n=70)

VEGGIES
Mean: 0.398
Min/max: 0/2

WHOLE GRAIN
Mean: 0.137
Min/max: 0/2

FRUIT
Mean: 0.627
Min/max: 0/2

POST: How often do you eat ...per week? (n=70)

VEGGIES
Mean: 0.524
Min/max: 0/2

WHOLE GRAIN
Mean: 0.371
Min/max: 0/2

FRUIT
Mean: 0.722
Min/max: 0/2

Finding

At post, participants were consuming 0.12 more veggies / day than they were at baseline.

At post, participants were consuming .23 more grain than at baseline ($p<0.00$)

At post, participants were consuming .09 more fruit than at baseline.

Pretest/Immediate posttest, n=70

PRE: Food Security, n=41; (note, first 31 survey takers only took 2 fi questions)

High food security 7 (17.07%)
 Low food security 18 (43.9%)
 16

Very low food security (39.02%)

POST: Food Security, n=70

High food security 33 (47.14%)
 Low food security 25 (35.71%)

Very low food security 12 (17.14%)

Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale, n=70

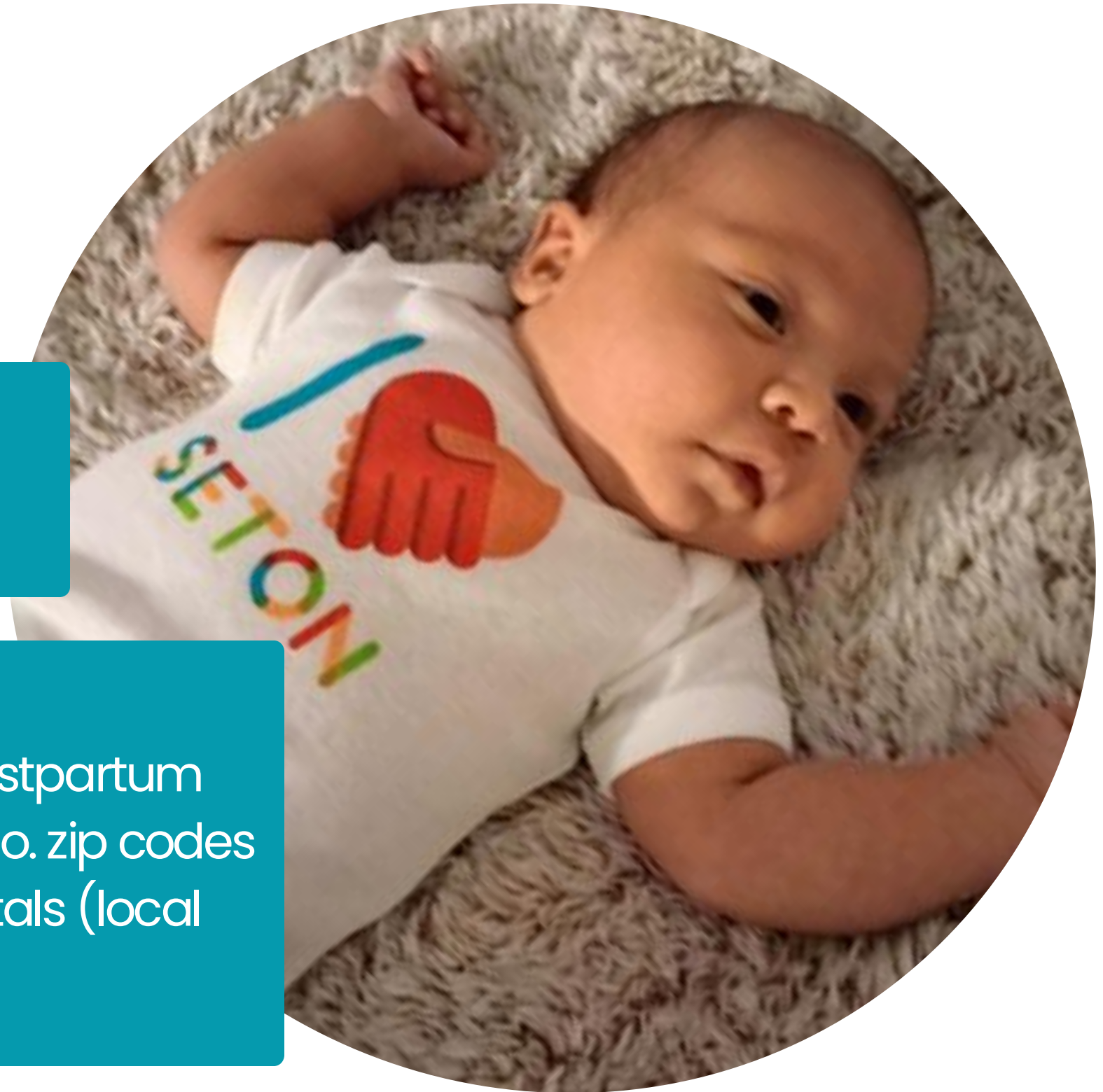
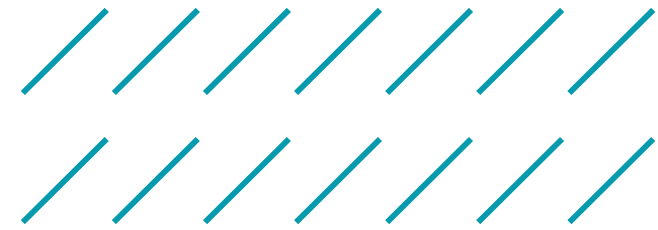
Pre scores	n (%)
12	4 (5.71%)
13	3 (4.29%)
17	1 (1.43%)
18	2 (2.86%)

Post scores	n (%)
13	1 (1.43%)
16	1 (1.43%)
18	1 (1.43%)
19	2 (2.86%)

In our sample 10 (14.29%) of moms are likely suffering from depression at baseline, but in the posttest, 5 mothers (7.14% of sample).

*note, mothers scoring above 12 or 13 are likely to be suffering from depression

GOALS BEYOND INITIAL PILOT



Increase the project beyond the initial 18-month pilot project



Expand Food is the Best Medicine

- Include prenatal through 4 months postpartum
- Broaden delivery to additional Travis Co. zip codes
- Add additional Ascension Seton hospitals (local and nationwide)



Affect system change within Ascension Seton for long-term impact



THANK YOU!
Questions?

Food is the best medicine



Thank you!

View our Center's webinars

