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Sugar Bites Evaluation Report



BETTER WORLD ADVERTISING

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INTRODUCTION

First 5 Contra Costa and Healthy + Active Before 5, in partnership with Better World Advertising (BWA), launched the *Sugar Bites* social marketing campaign in May 2013. The goal of the campaign was to prevent childhood obesity in Contra Costa County by decreasing the consumption of sugary drinks. The target audience was low-income African American and Latino parents, primarily moms, of children ages 0-5 in Richmond, Concord (specifically the Monument Corridor), Pittsburg and Bay Point. The campaign ran in both English and Spanish. The first phase of *Sugar Bites* concluded in September 2013.

THE CAMPAIGN

Media Strategy

The overall media strategy for the *Sugar Bites* campaign was designed to target specific geographic areas of Contra Costa County with the greatest number of low-income African American and Latino residents. It aimed to reach the target audience through a variety of outlets on a frequently recurring basis in order to achieve the reach and repetition necessary to make an impact. The final plan included transit shelters, BART ads, convenience store posters, check cashing envelopes and posters. Additionally, BWA produced 40,000 brochures and 1,000 posters that First 5 Contra Costa and Healthy + Active Before 5 distributed through community based organizations to target audience members. The Spanish ads were strategically placed in the locations where Latino populations are the greatest.

The media campaign launched on May 20, 2013. The majority of the units were scheduled to run through the middle of July to the beginning of August, for a total duration of 2-3 months. However, most of the units remained live through the end of August, with some running into September and even October 2013, which gave the campaign a significant amount of added exposure at no additional cost.

Each target geographic area included the following media outlets and impressions:

Richmond/San Pablo

MEDIA OUTLET	IMPRESSIONS*
32 Transit Shelters	29,975,832
4 Check Cashing Locations (envelopes and posters)	54,600
21 Convenience Store Posters	315,000
Total	30,345,432

Concord (Monument Corridor)

MEDIA OUTLET	IMPRESSIONS*
7 Transit Shelters	6,474,965
BART Ads (12 two-sheets and 1 station spectacular)	14,827,008
2 Check Cashing Locations (envelopes and posters)	27,600
Total	21,464,573

Pittsburg/Bay Point

MEDIA OUTLET	IMPRESSION*
BART Ads (12 two-sheets, 2 backlit shelter displays, 2 station kings)	19,248,499
2 Check Cashing Locations** (envelopes and posters)	37,800
9 Convenience Store Posters	255,000
Total	19,541,299

*The total impression numbers are inclusive of all added bonus time and space.

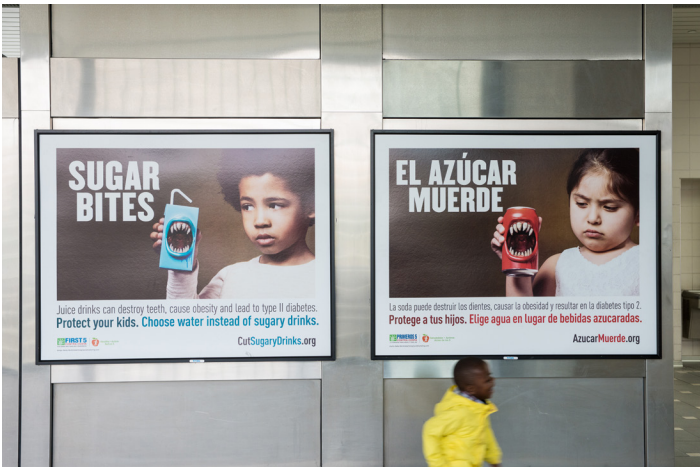
**1 of the check cashing locations was in Antioch.

Example Media Placements

Transit Shelters



BART Ads



Convenience Store Posters



Check Cashing Locations (envelopes and posters)



Brochures



Posters



Website

All of the campaign materials pointed to English and Spanish versions of the campaign website, www.CutSugaryDrinks.org and www.AzucarMuerde.org, which launched in conjunction with the media campaign in May 2013. The site includes information about what sugary drinks are and why they are unhealthy; alarming statistics that highlight the negative impact they can have on health; tips for parents to help make healthy drink choices for their kids; resources for additional information; downloadable campaign materials and web graphics; and a contact form that viewers can use to request further information.

From May through September 2013, the five months that the media campaign was live, the site received a total of 3,588 visits, 2,658 unique visitors and 9,169 pageviews. On average, a visitor to the site viewed 2.56 pages and remained on the site for over three minutes—a significant amount of time, considering that the average time spent on a website in 2013 was less than a minute, according to the Nielson Norman Group.



Earned and Social Media Coverage

Sugar Bites received substantial earned media coverage in the press and through social media networks. *San Jose Mercury News* and *Contra Costa Times* covered the campaign launch on May 29, 2013. The popular Fooducate blog featured the campaign in a post on June 2, 2013. *Parents Magazine* also covered the campaign in a blog post on June 3, 2013.

In addition, the campaign was shared through Twitter and Facebook posts by noteworthy organizations, individuals and media outlets including SaludToday, The National Research Center for Women & Families, Food Revolution (Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution page), Berkeley Media Studies Group, Center for Science in the Public Interest, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, *Parents Magazine*, Nancy Huehnergath (popular nutrition and physical activity advocate), *Latino Times*, the Yale Rudd Center and more.

EVALUATION

Methodology

First 5 Contra Costa and BWA utilized an intercept survey to measure the reach and impact of the *Sugar Bites* social marketing campaign. The survey, conducted October 10 through October 27, 2013, aimed to capture data from African American and Hispanic/Latino parents, primarily mothers, of children under five years old who live in Contra Costa County and who had seen the *Sugar Bites* campaign. Survey respondents were compensated with a \$10 Target gift card for their time.

The survey instrument included a range of key demographic questions (e.g. place of residence, ethnicity, primary language, gender, household income, etc.), as well as questions about the visibility of the campaign and its impact on knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of the respondents. Interviews were fielded in high traffic intersections and transit stops (e.g. BART) and other locations near commercial businesses (e.g. Target, Costco, Wal-Mart, malls, and convenience stores) in Contra Costa County.

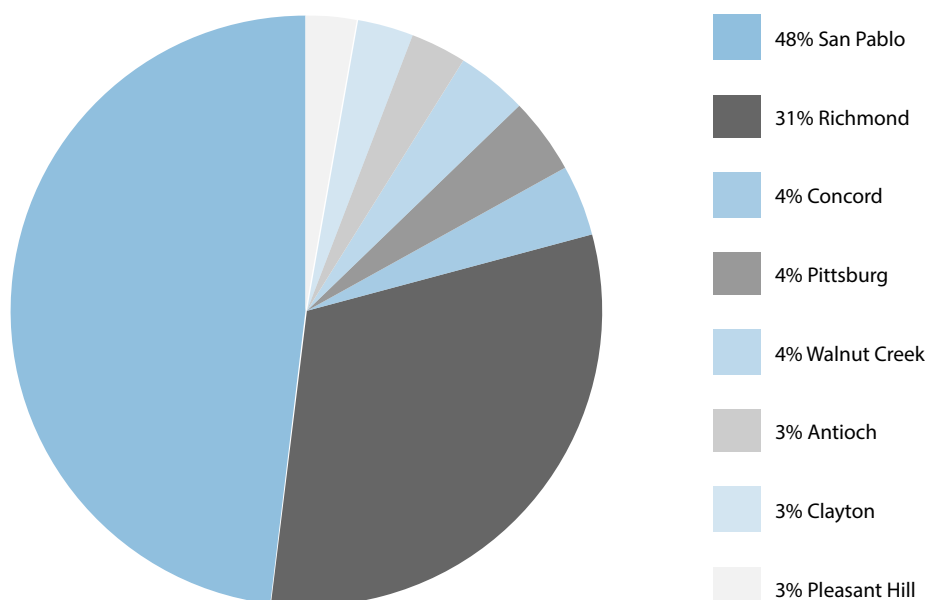
Time limits and interview quotas were employed at each location to reduce bias in the recruitment sample and ensure that an appropriate mix of African American, Hispanic/Latino and English/Spanish speaking respondents was achieved. African American parents were specifically targeted in Richmond with surveys conducted only in English. A bilingual Spanish-speaking interviewer was assigned to San Pablo and Concord. Although approximately 10% of all participants were recruited from locations in Concord (BART and Costco), meeting specific residence quotas for Concord proved difficult, as most individuals approached in Concord were residents of surrounding cities in Contra Costa County. Overall, our interviewer was able to meet the goal of conducting 20% of the surveys in Spanish.

Participant Demographics

A total of 99 surveys were completed. Ninety-eight of the 99 respondents were women. All respondents were parents of children under the age of five. All respondents were from Contra Costa County and had seen the *Sugar Bites* campaign.

Residence

Eight cities in Contra Costa County were represented. The breakdown of participants from each city was as follows.

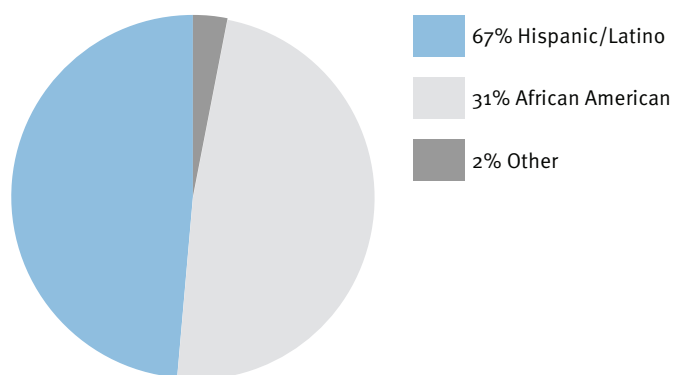


Ethnicity

67% of the participants identified as Hispanic/Latino, 31% as African American and 2% as other.

Approximately 64% of respondents who identified as Hispanic/Latino resided in San Pablo; 12% in Richmond; 4.5% each in Clayton, Concord, Pittsburg and Walnut Creek; and 3% each in Antioch and Pleasant Hill.

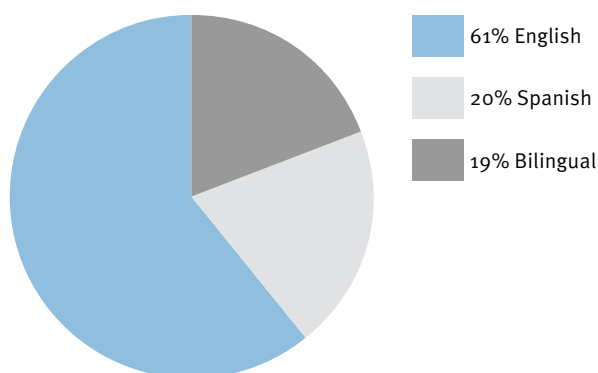
Approximately 74% of respondents who identified as Black/African American resided in Richmond; 16% in San Pablo; and 3% each in Antioch, Concord and Pittsburg.



Language

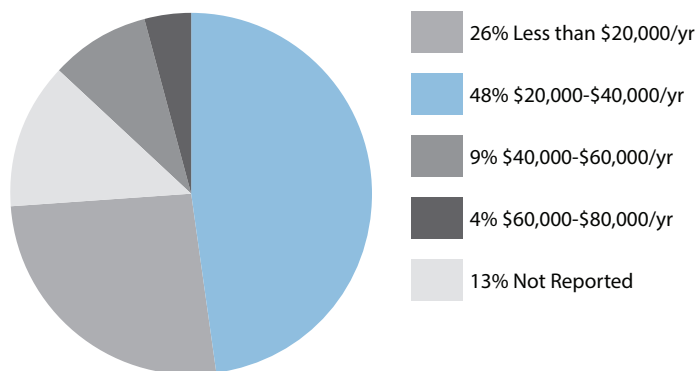
The survey targeted English, Spanish and bilingual speaking respondents. Overall, 61% of respondents identified English as their primary language, 20% identified Spanish as their primary language and 19% were bilingual. Bilingual respondents completed the survey in English.

60% of Spanish-only interviews were conducted in San Pablo and the remaining 40% in Concord.



Income

The majority of respondents (approximately 74%) reported an annual household income of \$40,000 or less. The full breakdown of the income ranges of the respondents was as follows:



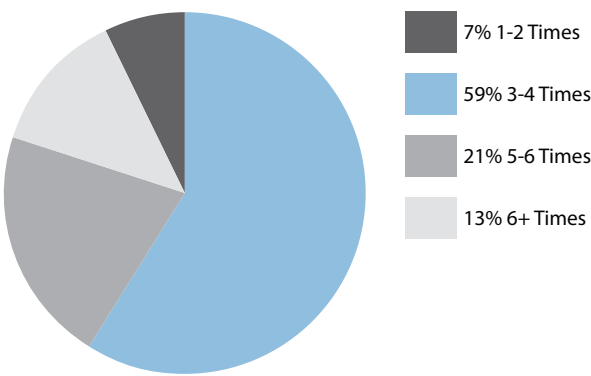
EVALUATION RESULTS

Reach

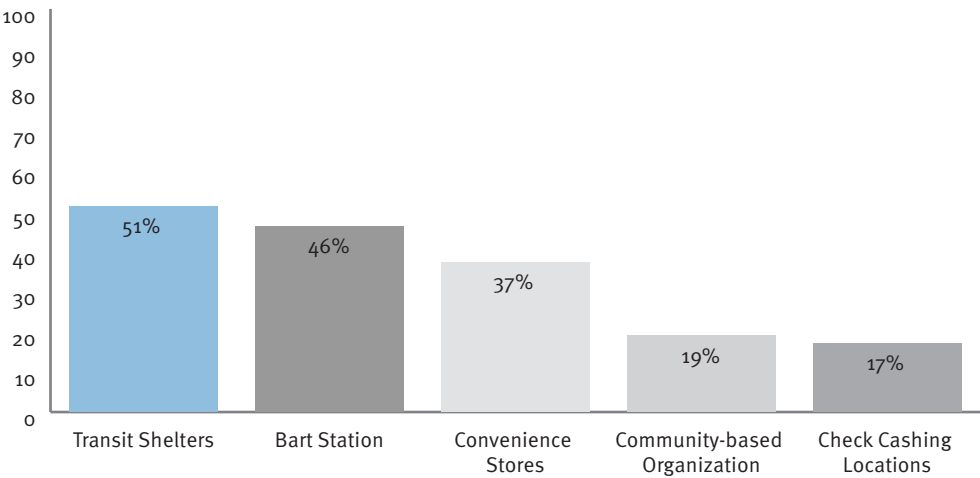
This intercept survey sought to assess the reach and impact of the *Sugar Bites* campaign among Hispanic/Latino and African American parents living in Contra Costa County. All respondents had seen at least one ad for *Sugar Bites*.

When asked how many times they had seen a *Sugar Bites* ad, most participants reported seeing an ad at least 3-4 times.

When participants were asked where they had seen *Sugar Bites* ads, they reported seeing the campaign in a variety of locations.



Where have you seen advertising for the *Sugar Bites* campaign?



IMPACT

Attitudes

Affirming attitudes are known to increase the probability of intention and actual behavior change. When asked a series of questions concerning their attitudes toward the campaign, participants responded as follows:

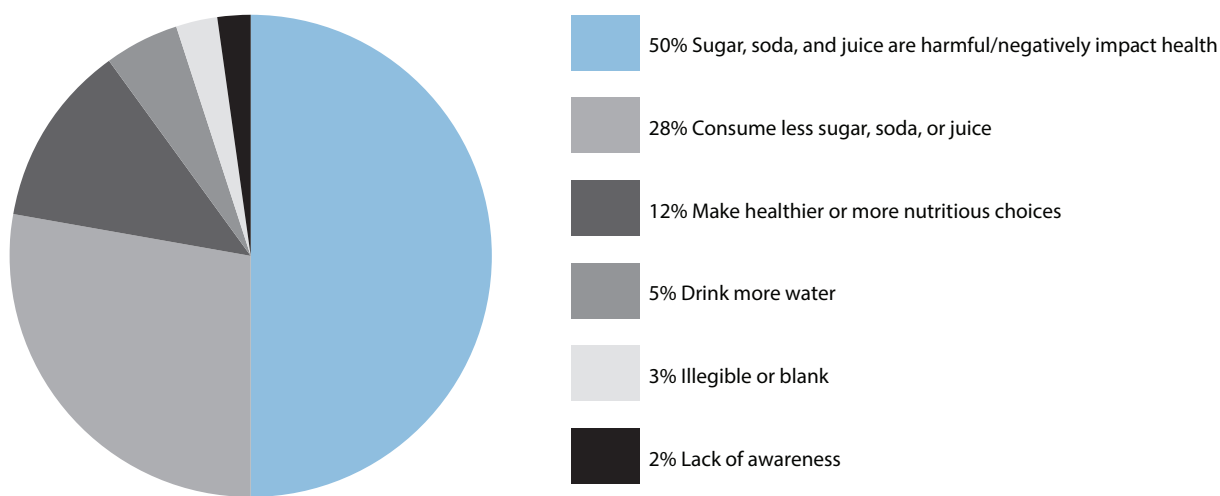
95% felt the campaign was memorable.

90% felt the campaign was convincing.

83% reported being affected/ highly affected by the campaign.

83% said they agreed/ strongly agreed with the message they identified in the ads.*

***Identified Messages (% of participants)**



Intentions

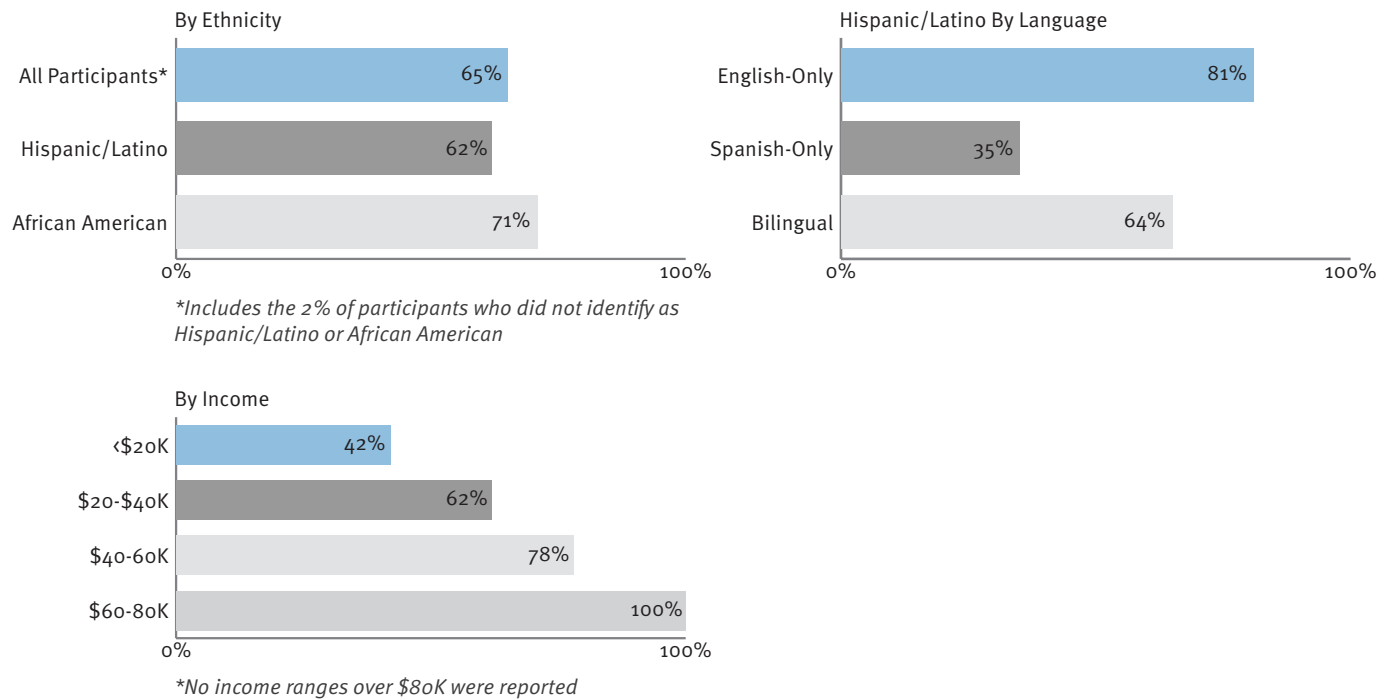
Although the measurement of behavioral outcomes lies outside the scope of this study, BWA assessed the degree of intention formation concerning several healthy drink choices and behaviors (e.g. more likely to talk to child about sugary drinks, less likely to serve soda, more likely to serve more water or milk). A majority of participants reported increased intent to engage in these behaviors.

Significant differences in degree of intention existed among ethnicity and primary language groups. Hispanics/Latinos whose primary language was English were more likely to endorse future healthy drink choices and behaviors than African Americans, or Spanish-only and bilingual speaking Hispanics/Latinos. Spanish-only speaking Hispanics/Latinos were least likely to endorse increased intent for these positive behaviors. Differences in expressed intent were also found among reported household income ranges with less than half of participants earning less than \$20,000 endorsing healthy drink choices and behaviors.

Healthy Alternatives

A majority (approximately 65%) of all participants reported they were more likely to serve their children more water or milk as a result of the campaign.

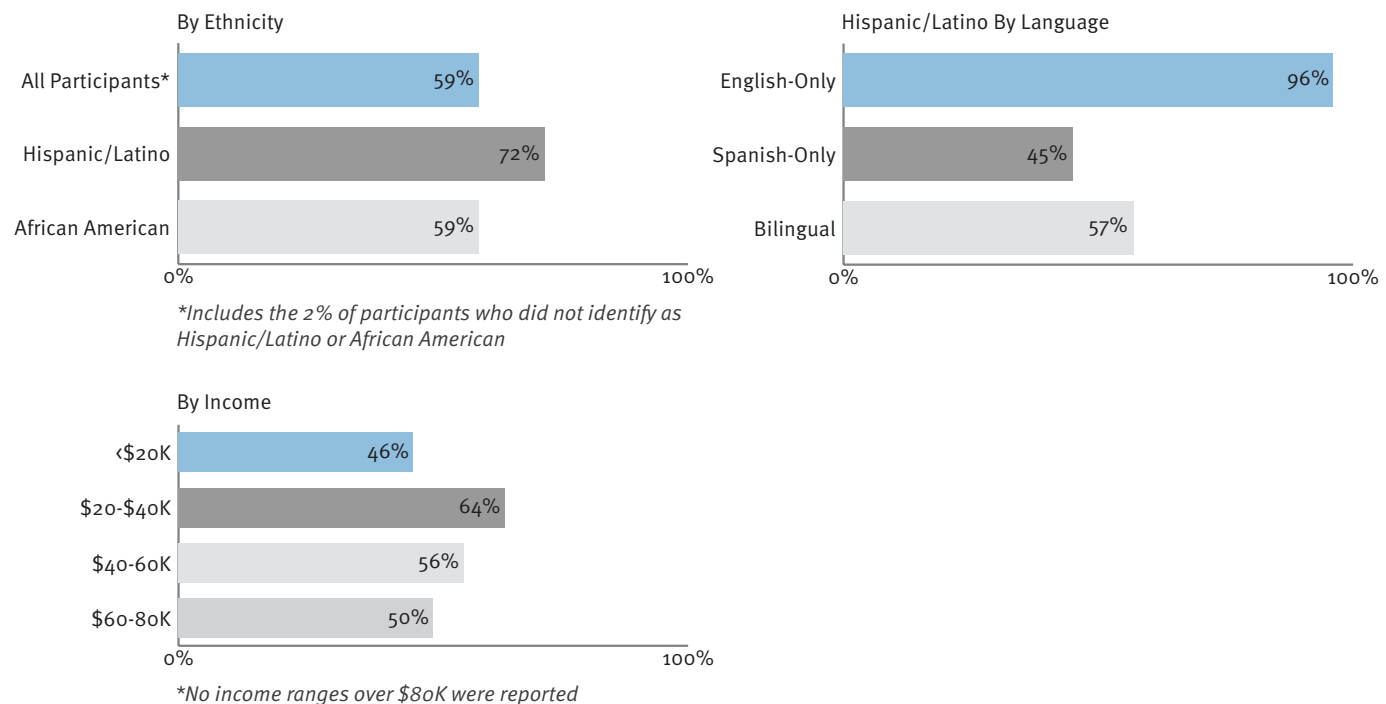
More likely to serve kids more water or milk.



Communication About Nutrition

A majority (59%) of all participants reported they were more likely to talk to their children about sugary drinks as a result of the campaign. In fact, 45% of participants had already discussed the campaign with their children (almost a third of those individuals reporting that their children had raised the subject after seeing an ad).

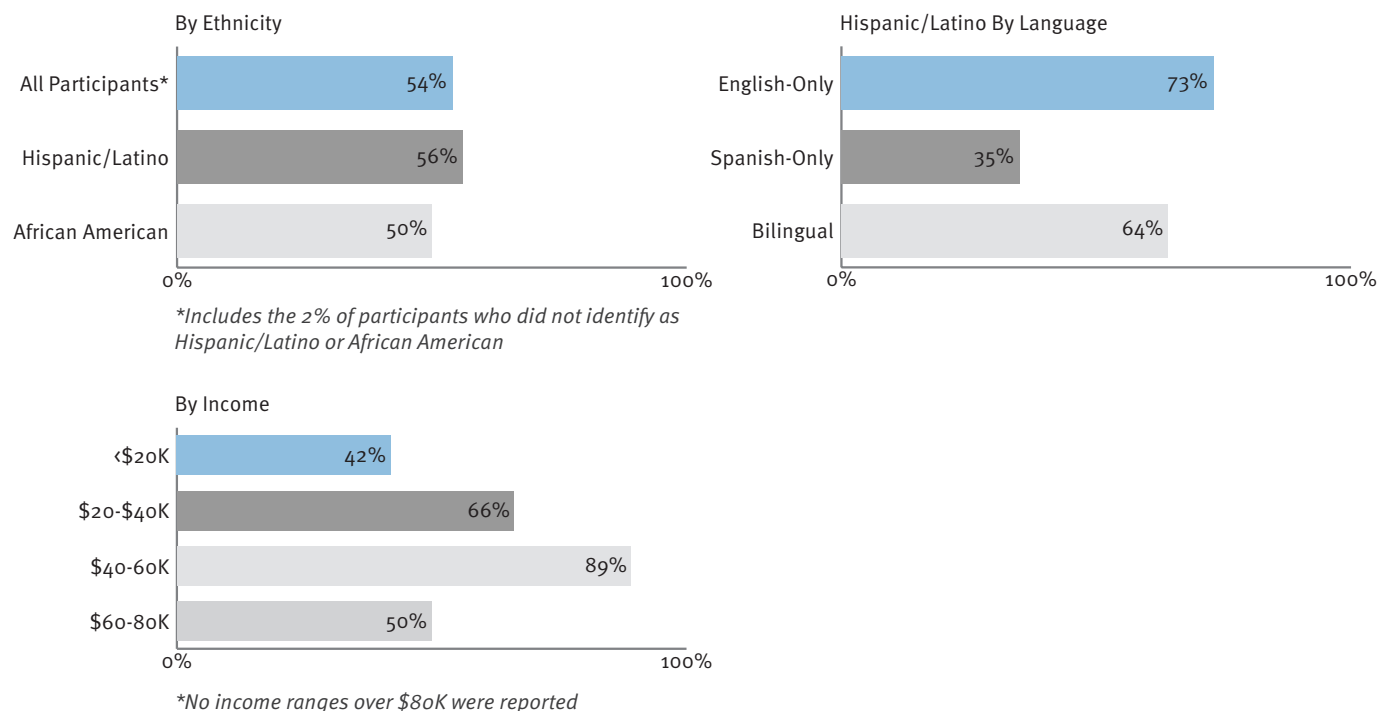
More likely to talk to my kids about sugary drinks.



Sugary Drink Consumption

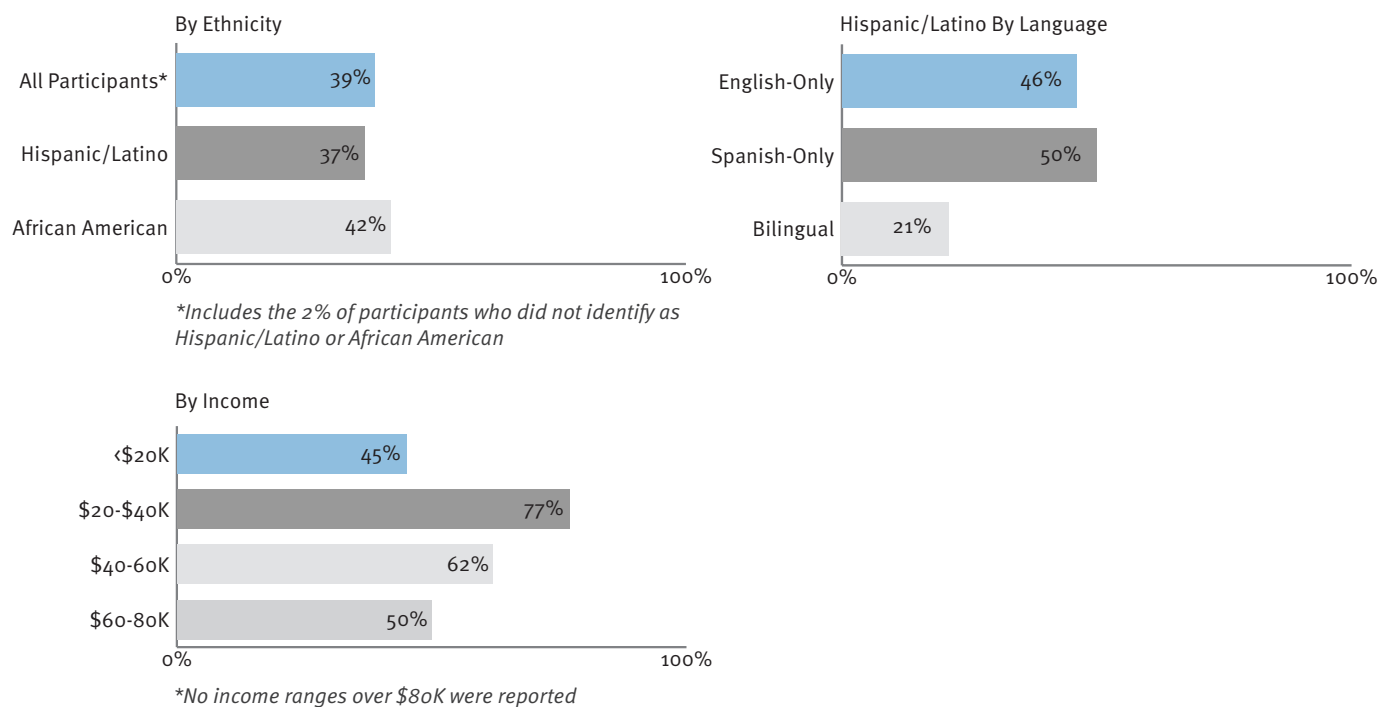
In addition to the nearly half of all participants (approximately 45%) who reported they were less likely to have sugary drinks at home and consume sugary drinks themselves, a majority (approximately 54%) of all participants also said they were less likely to serve their children (non-diet) soda as a result of the campaign.

Less likely to serve my kids (non-diet) soda.



Nearly two fifths (approximately 39%) of all participants reported they were less likely to serve their children juice as a result of the campaign.

Less likely to serve my kids juice.



DISCUSSION

Analysis of intercept surveys revealed that the campaign was effective both in emotionally engaging the target audience and altering intentions for healthy drink choices and behaviors. A majority of those interviewed saw campaign ads three or more times, usually in more than one location. Attitudes about the campaign were encouraging; with 83% of participants reporting they both agreed with the campaign and were highly affected by it. Most participants also reported they were more likely to talk to their kids about sugary drinks and serve their kids more water or milk, and were less likely to serve (non-diet) sodas as a result of the campaign.

Further analysis revealed several important differences in responses from participants based on primary language. Hispanics/Latinos whose primary language was English were more likely to endorse other healthy drink choices and behaviors than either African Americans, or Spanish-only and bilingual speaking Hispanics/Latinos. Spanish-only speaking Hispanics/Latinos were least likely to endorse increased intent for these positive behaviors.

The behavior reported as least likely to change was the likelihood of participants to serve juice to their kids. Thirty-nine percent of all respondents were less likely to serve their kids juice in the future. Participants in the Hispanic/Latino and African American groups were approximately equally less likely to serve juice, with the results for English-only and Spanish-only groups nearly identical as well. This suggests that many participants still do not understand or appreciate the unhealthiness of juice. Future campaign efforts should place additional emphasis on this drink choice.

The percentage of participants affirming healthy intentions also differed by income group. Participants with an annual household income of less than \$20,000 were the least likely of any income group to express a change in intentions regarding healthy drink choices. Although there were differences between ethnicity groups (African American and Hispanic/Latinos), the nature of these differences was inconsistent across questions and income levels. However, responses by primary language remain consistent with the above description (i.e. within each income category, Spanish-only speaking Hispanics/Latinos were consistently less likely to affirm healthy drink choices than any other group). These findings suggest that Spanish-only speaking and lower income residents would benefit from additional educational tools and opportunities for making healthy drink choices.

When asked for recommendations to improve the campaign, most participants stated that no improvement was needed (e.g. “nothing, it’s great,” “no, it’s perfect”). The next two most common recommendations were “inspire more people to drink water” and expand the campaign to include “fast food.”

CONCLUSION

The goal of the *Sugar Bites* social marketing campaign was to prevent childhood obesity in Contra Costa County by decreasing consumption of sugary drinks and encouraging parents to establish healthy habits (like drinking water and milk in lieu of sugary beverages) in their children starting from a young age. To change eating and drinking habits is a particularly difficult challenge, as they are deeply ingrained behaviors that often carry cultural and social significance. In addition, the target audience for this campaign was busy and distracted parents—primarily moms of young children—who are likely contending with issues that they may consider far more pressing and important than their child’s drinking habits. First 5 Contra Costa, Healthy + Active Before 5 and BWA, however, were committed to reaching this audience and making an impact in order to address the very real problem of childhood obesity in Contra Costa County. They aimed to do this through a powerful message and a carefully placed media buy that allowed them to make significant strides towards reaching their goals.

The *Sugar Bites* ads were designed to be simple and attention getting. They carried dramatic appeal and contained minimal copy in order to reach a distracted and low-literacy audience. The images of aggressive teeth on sugary drink containers were used to elicit visceral reactions from parents to protect their kids from these dangerous and harmful products.

The media campaign was strategically placed in specific geographic areas of Contra Costa County, including Richmond/San Pablo, Bay Point/Pittsburg and the Monument Corridor of Concord, with the greatest number of low-income African American and Latino residents as research has shown that sugary drink consumption in these populations is disproportionately high. The media buy was designed to reach the target audience on a repeated basis through a variety of outlets and locations including the streets of their neighborhoods, on their commutes, in their local convenience stores where they purchase sugary beverages and at the check cashing locations where they frequently obtain the cash to purchase their groceries. In addition, First 5 Contra Costa and Healthy + Active Before 5 distributed brochures and displayed posters at community based organizations that directly serve the target population. The media campaign was scheduled to run for a 2-3 month time period but achieved nearly double the exposure with the additional bonus time and space granted by media vendors.

The website was visited by thousands of individuals seeking more information about sugary drinks. Once on the site, most visitors remained there for several minutes and viewed multiple pages indicating their interest in the subject matter. The most popular page on the site was the homepage, which featured an infographic that illustrated basic information about sugary drinks and the harmful health consequences of their consumption.

The campaign garnered quite a bit of media attention both through the press and social media coverage by well-known and reputable public health professionals, organizations and media outlets. In addition, BWA and First 5 Contra Costa have received numerous inquiries through the campaign website from health professionals and organizations interested in reproducing the *Sugar Bites* brochures to share with their clientele across California.

The *Sugar Bites* intercept surveys indicated that the campaign successfully got the attention of the target audience, was well-received and elicited the kinds of reactions and intentions to change behavior that First 5 Contra Costa, Healthy + Active Before 5 and BWA sought to achieve. The majority of respondents indicated that they had seen the campaign ads several times, that they agreed with the message and that they were more likely to both communicate with their kids and serve them fewer sugary drinks. The surveys indicated that intentions to change behavior were greater in relationship to soda consumption than juice, indicating that the next phase of the campaign will benefit from focusing on juice.