



**BOLD
THINKERS
DRIVING
REAL-WORLD
IMPACT**

U.S. Food & Nutrition

Access to nutritious food is important for reducing health risk and improving lifelong health outcomes. However, like many of the other social determinants of health, nutritious food isn't available for many communities and families. Nutrition is particularly important for children not only to improve their ability to grow and learn, but also to promote lifelong healthy eating. Abt Associates supports work in child nutrition to improve the availability of, access to, and consumption of nutritious food in children worldwide.

Abt uses a variety of approaches to evaluate U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) food and nutrition programs from many perspectives. Abt's researchers are skilled in community and stakeholder engagement, learning from those on the ground. We use process and implementation evaluation to compile and condense data into best practices, learning and sharing invaluable knowledge to promote child nutrition. Data analysis and spatial analysis give a quantitative viewpoint of the impact these programs have in participants' lives.

Featured Projects

EVALUATING SUMMER NUTRITION ASSISTANCE FOR CHILDREN

USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)

The Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) pilots have operated since 2011 to provide grocery assistance to households with eligible children during summer months when millions of U.S. children lose access to free or reduced-price school lunches. Abt has evaluated the implementation and use of the Summer EBT Programs in [years 2011–2014 and 2015–2018](#) and is now evaluating the [2019 through 2022 program years](#) to document program challenges and successes. The evaluation will also improve understanding of differences in benefit use by participants to inform how Summer EBT can better meet families' needs.



EVALUATION OF THE TEAM NUTRITION E-STAR TRAINING

USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)

The [Team Nutrition Training Grant E-STAR Evaluation](#) is a 4.5-year study that will address FNS's need to understand the implementation of Enhanced Strategies, Training, Action Plans, and Resources (E-STAR) Training Grant program. Abt is conducting a process evaluation of the E-STAR training as implemented and experienced by school nutrition managers (SNMs) and their mentors. Abt is providing evaluation technical assistance to support a grantee in developing research questions and a study design and evaluating school-based interventions carried out by the trained SNMs. The study's findings will inform program improvement and facilitate scaling the E-STAR program to other states.

EVALUATION OF TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION FOR SNAP BENEFIT REDEMPTION THROUGH ONLINE TRANSACTIONS

USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)

Abt Associates is conducting an evaluation for FNS to examine online purchasing for SNAP in six pilot states. FNS launched the [Electronic Benefits Transfer \(EBT\) Online Purchasing Pilot](#) in 2019 to allow SNAP benefits to be used online for eligible purchases at participating retailers.

CALCULATING UTILIZATION RATES FOR WASHINGTON D.C. SAFETY NET PROGRAMS TO BOOST USAGE

Capital Area Food Bank (CAFB)

In the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, the Capital Area Food Bank (CAFB) identified dramatic increases in food insecurity and inequity among its clients during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite expansion of social safety net programs, CAFB documented lower use of these programs among newly food-insecure households. To reduce barriers to use of the safety net, CAFB seeks to understand local utilization trends for five programs: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children; Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; Medicaid; and the Earned Income Tax Credit. Under a contract with CAFB, Abt will review methods for calculating utilization rates, collect data from local jurisdictions, and develop an interactive, updatable data dashboard in Tableau to show program utilization rates across jurisdictions and over time. The study will provide CAFB a better understanding of gaps in service delivery that can inform development of pilot interventions to increase utilization.

For More Information:

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Pursuing Equity. Looking for the Intersections. Driving Real-World Impact.

Abt Associates is a global consulting and research firm that combines data and bold thinking to improve the quality of people's lives. We partner with clients and communities to advance equity and innovation—from creating scalable digital solutions and combating infectious disease, to mitigating climate change and advancing economic growth.

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