

January 2021

Power Packs During COVID-19

HOW POWER PACKS SUPPORTED FAMILIES

QUESTIONS? CONTACT POWERPACKS@GEORGETOWN.EDU



The Power Packs Study is led by PIs Dr. Rebecca Ryan and Dr. Anna Johnson at Georgetown University and Dr. Anna Gassman-Pines at Duke University



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Power Packs[®]
PROJECT
Empower. Educate. Feed.

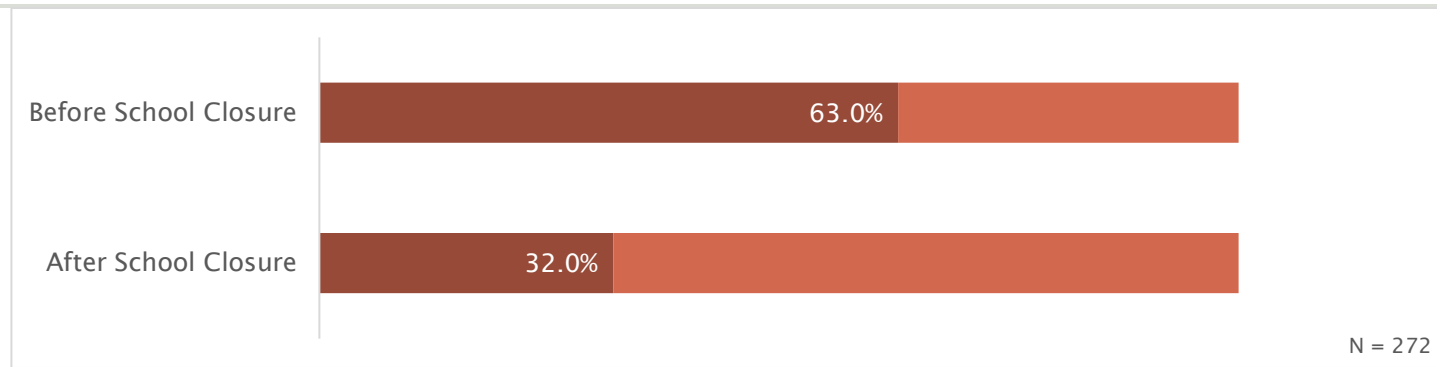


How COVID-19 Impacted Families' Food Assistance

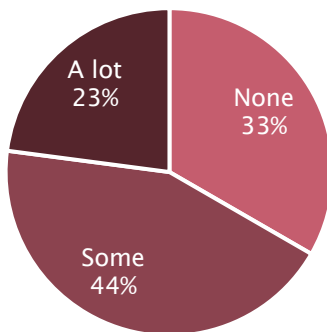
The COVID-19 pandemic changed many aspects of day-to-day life. For many food insecure families, it impacted their access to food. The Child Development and Social Policy (CDSP) Lab has been tracking the food insecurity of approximately 200 families enrolled in the Power Packs Project, a school-based food assistance program. We found that statewide school closure and stay-at-home orders limited families' access to many sources of food and food assistance, including Power Packs (see below). But families who picked up their Power Packs experienced much lower levels of food insecurity during the pandemic than families who did not (see pages 3-4).



Percent of families who picked up their Power Pack before and after school closure



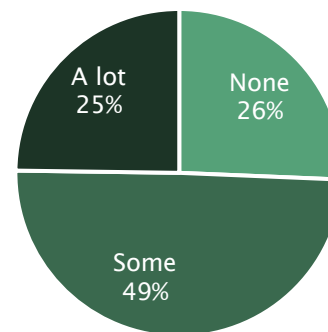
Parents also had trouble utilizing federal food assistance. Of the 65% of our families who receive SNAP benefits, the vast majority reported having some or a lot of trouble using those benefits because of the pandemic. Over a quarter of our families also receive WIC, and the vast majority of those families had some or a lot of trouble using their WIC benefits.



N=188



How much trouble has family had using WIC benefits?



N=188

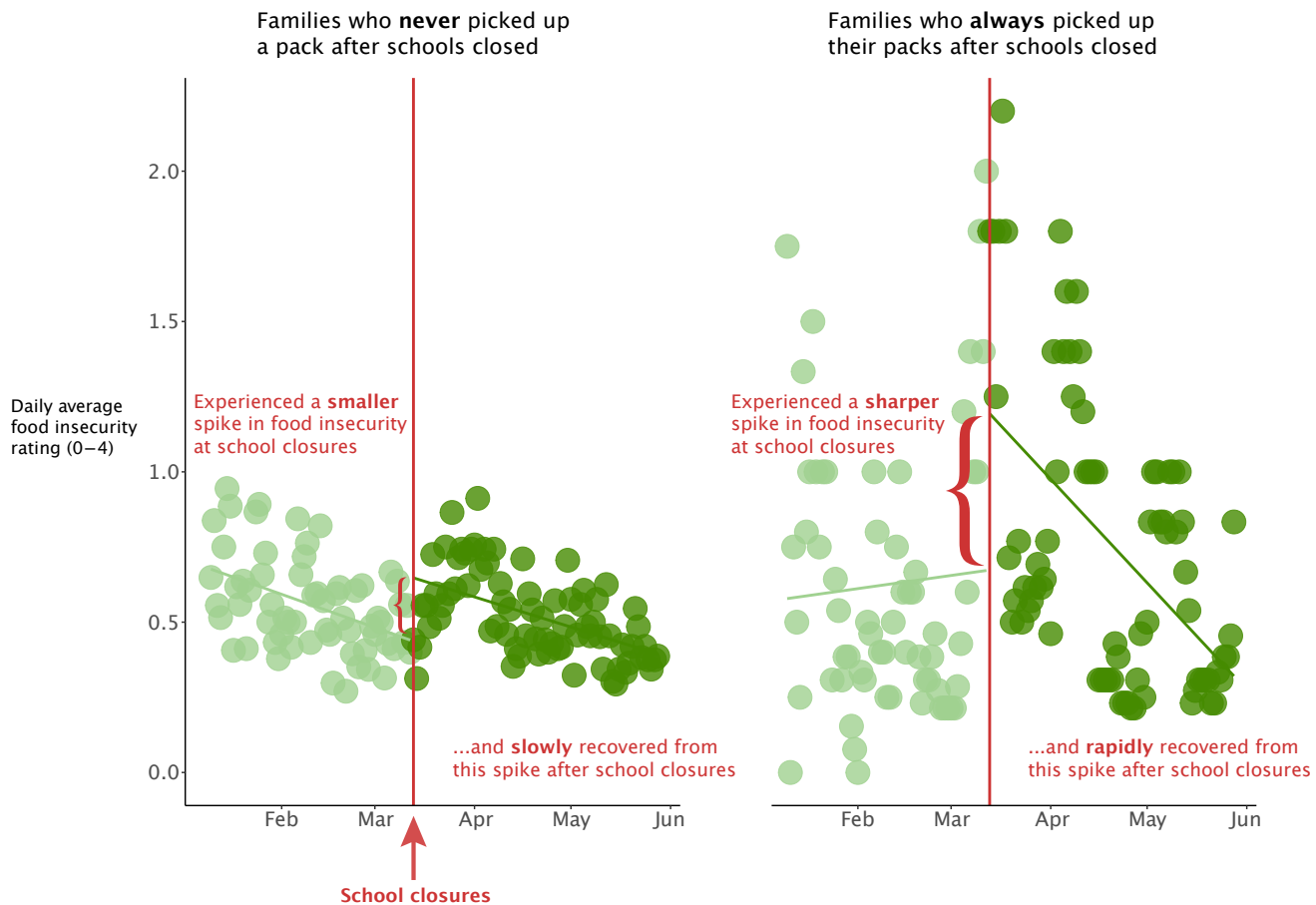


How much trouble has family had using SNAP benefits?



How Power Packs Supported Families During COVID-19

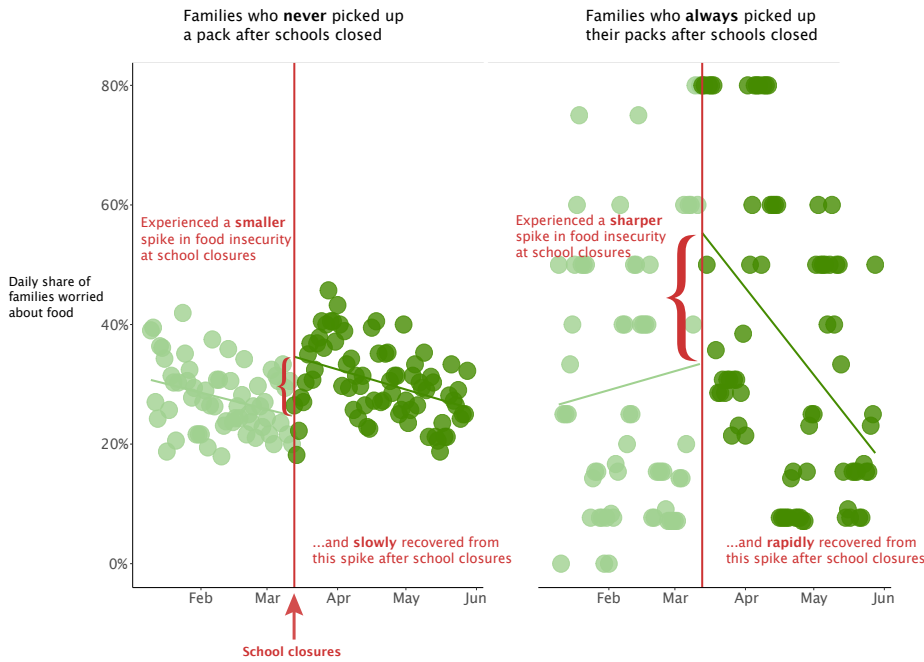
Food Insecurity and the Use of Power Packs after the Onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic



This figure displays trends in food insecurity, using a sum 4 questions, for families who never picked up their Power Packs *after schools closed in March 2020* compared to those who always picked up their packs. Families who always picked up their packs had higher levels of food insecurity before the pandemic and experienced a larger spike in food insecurity when schools closed than those who never picked up. But, as the pandemic wore on in April and May, families who always picked up their packs became increasingly less food insecure at a faster rate compared to those who never picked up their packs. **These patterns suggest that Power Packs successfully reduced food insecurity for those able to access it and, most importantly, did so for the program’s most at-risk families.**



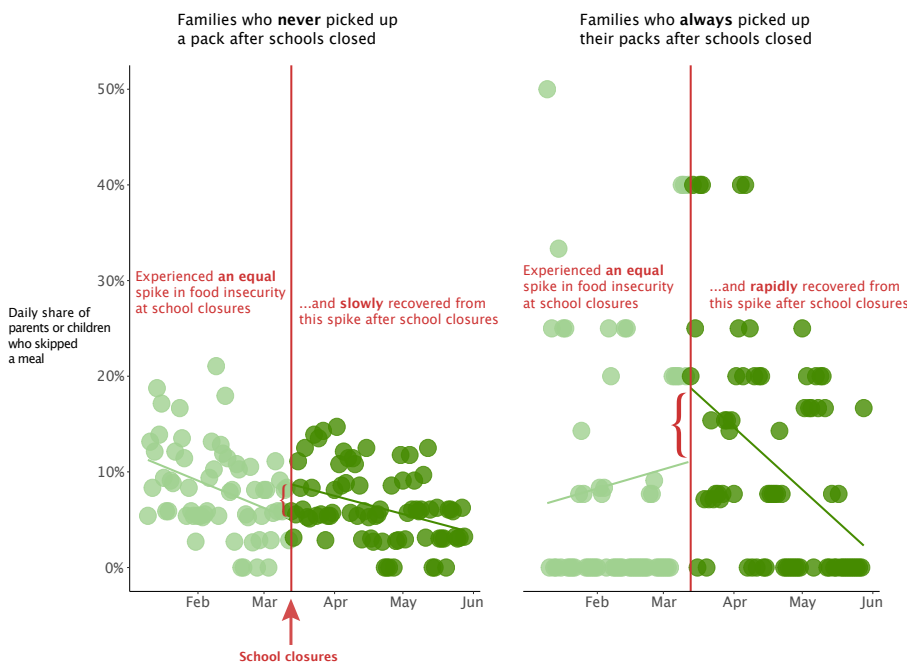
Worry About Food and the Use of Power Packs after the Onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic



When schools closed, families who always picked up their packs experienced a larger spike in ‘worry food would run out before got money to buy more,’ but became increasingly less likely to worry during April and May, and became less worried than those who never picked up their packs.

Power Packs successfully reduced worry about food for those able to access it.

Skipping a Meal and the Use of Power Packs after the Onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic



When schools closed, all families experienced large spikes in daily reports of ‘skipping meals,’ but those who picked up their Power Packs after schools closed became increasingly less likely to skip meals during April and May, and eventually less likely than those who never picked up their packs.

Power Packs successfully reduced meal skipping – a severe indicator of food insecurity – for those able to access it.