



SNAP-Ed Study Finds Differences in Nutrition & Physical Activity Behaviors of English versus Spanish Speakers Before Education

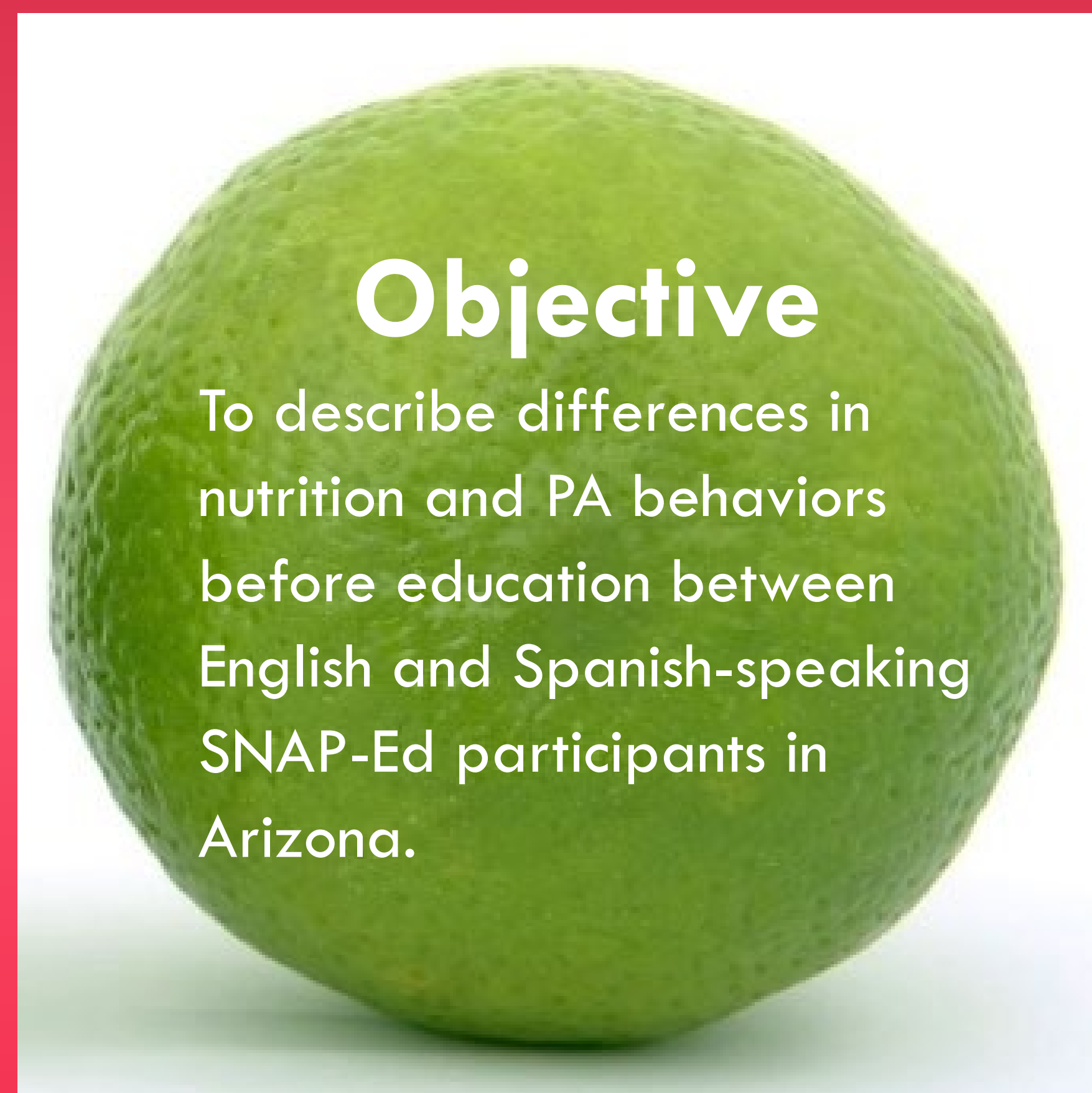
Kathryn M. Orzech PhD,¹ Laurel Jacobs DrPH MPH,¹ Theresa LeGros MA,¹ Gregory Goodman MS,¹ Cristina Guterman BS²



¹The University of Arizona, Department of Nutritional Sciences ²Arizona Department of Health Services, Bureau of Nutrition and Physical Activity

Background

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) encourages healthy nutrition and physical activity (PA) behaviors for SNAP eligible adults. In Arizona, one way the AZ Health Zone SNAP-Ed program promotes behavior change is through evidence-based direct education classes. While it might be presumed that SNAP-Ed participants enter classes with similar behaviors, we found that baseline behaviors differed between English and Spanish speaking cohorts.



Methods

PARTICIPANTS

60 English Speakers
124 Spanish Speakers

AZ Health Zone staff measured nutrition and PA behaviors for 184 adults in eight Arizona counties between October 1, 2017—September 30, 2018. Adults were surveyed before direct education classes at sites such as schools, libraries, family shelters, and senior centers.



MEASURES

AZ Health Zone used *two validated surveys* developed by the University of California Cooperative Extension:

- The Food Behavior Checklist (Lista de Hábitos Alimenticios)
- On the Go! (¡De Prisa!)

Surveys included 16 nutrition question and 20 PA questions.

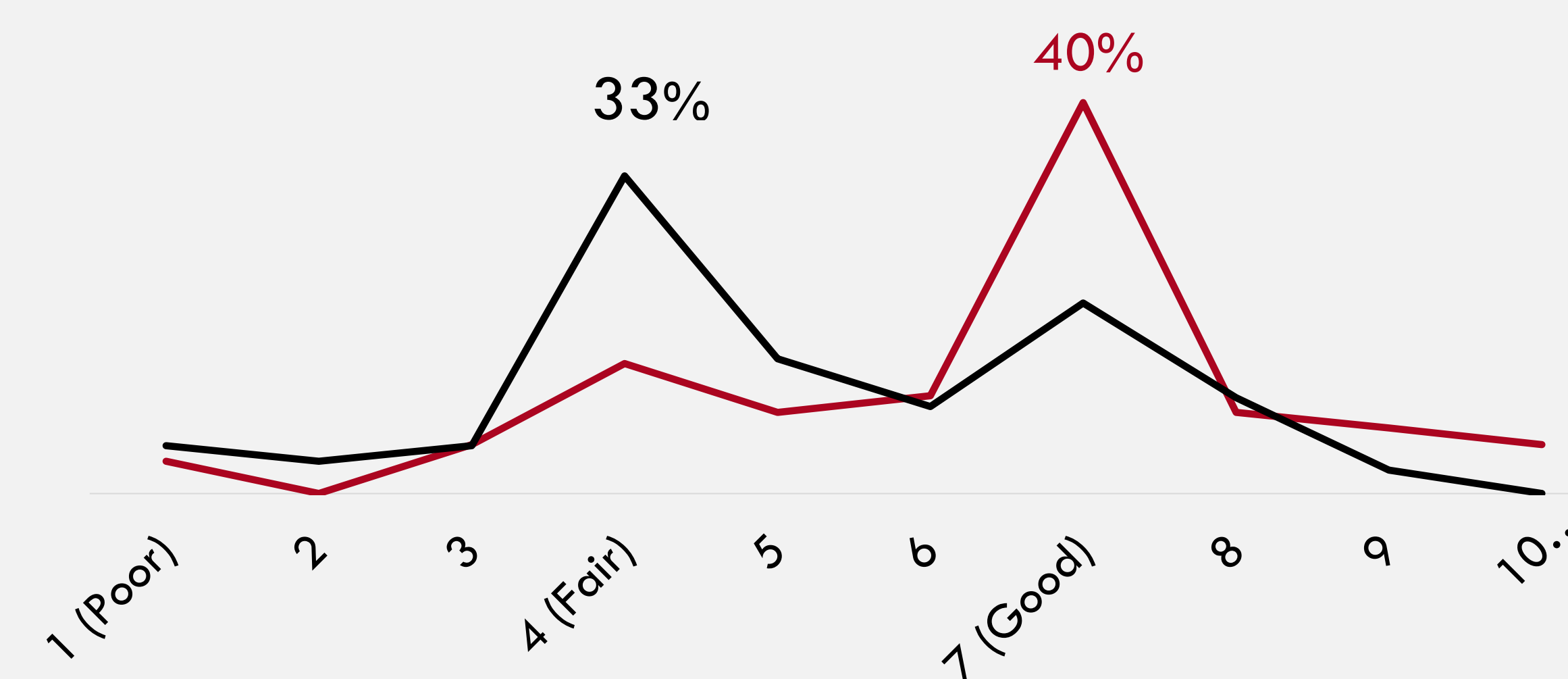
DATA ANALYSIS

Depending upon data type, we used t-tests (PA data), Mann-Whitney U tests (nutrition - Likert data) and Chi-square tests (nutrition - binary data) to compare responses between language groups.

Results

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

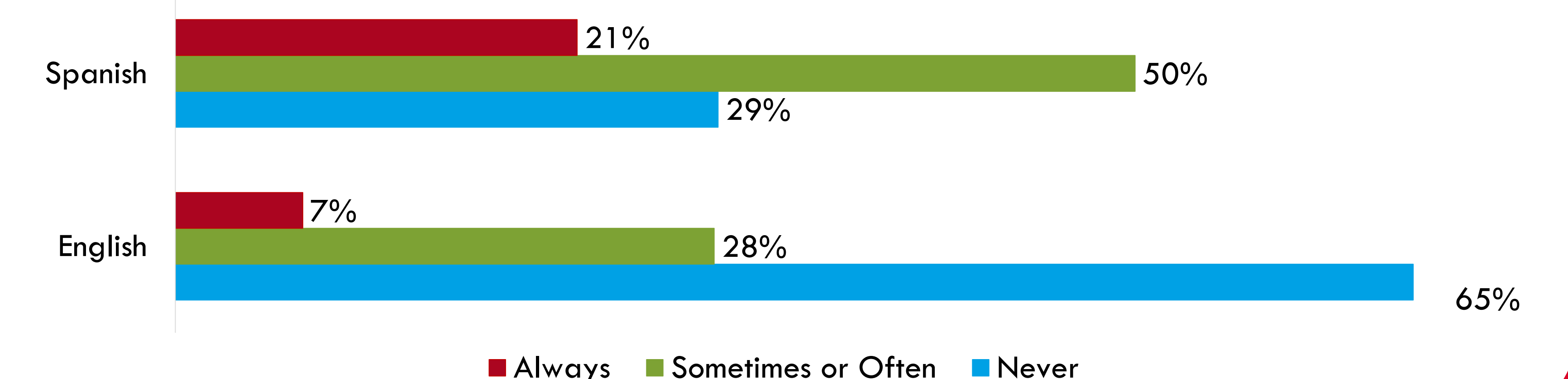
ENGLISH SPEAKERS reported *more positive*** self-perceptions of eating habits.*



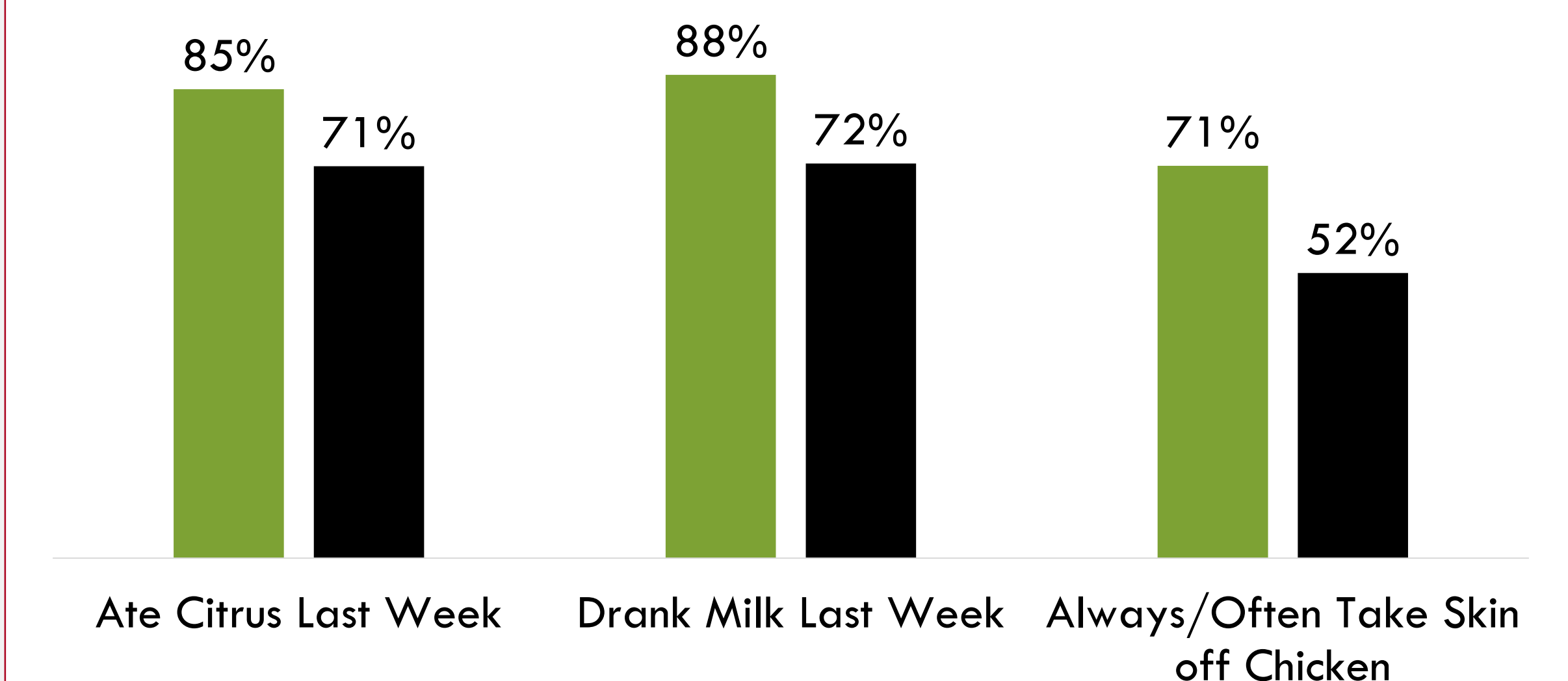
ENGLISH SPEAKERS reported *more*** hours sitting.*



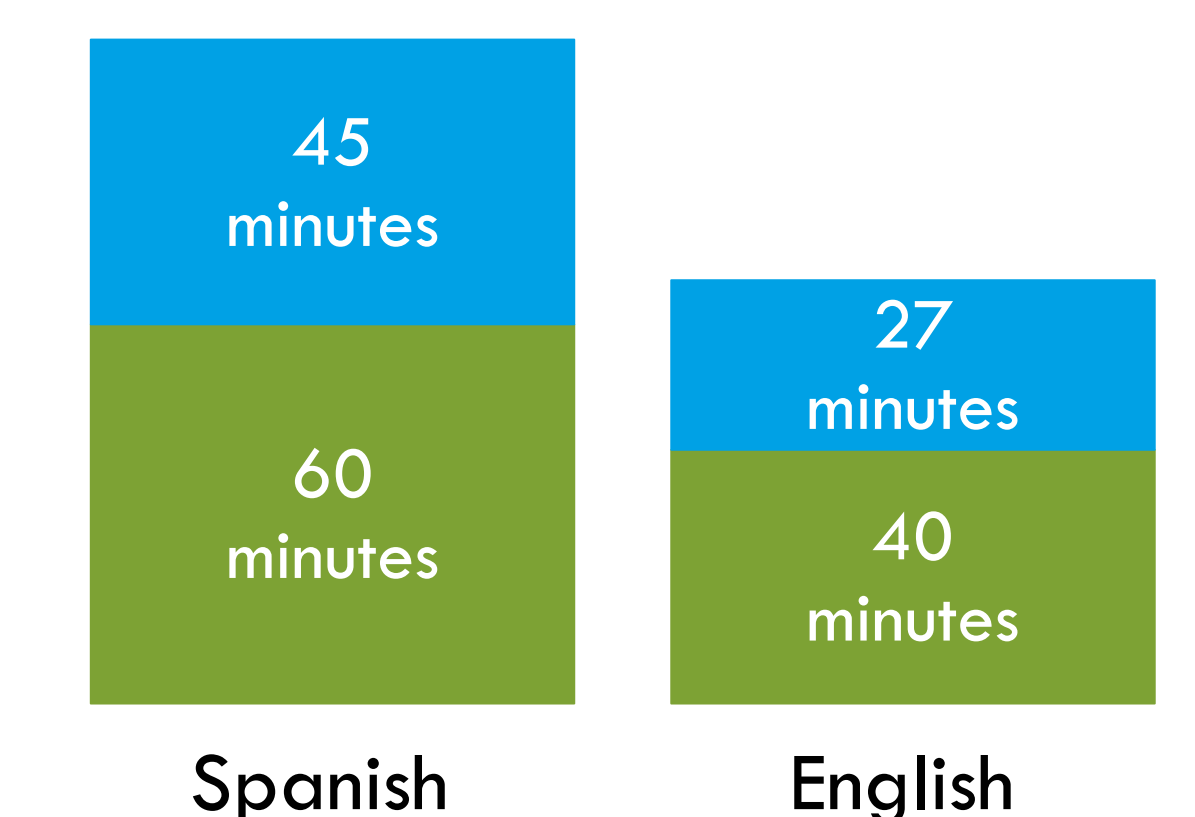
SPANISH SPEAKERS were *more likely to report food insecurity**** than English Speakers when asked how often they run out of food by the end of the month.



SPANISH SPEAKERS reported *healthier citrus,* dairy** & protein** behaviors.*



SPANISH SPEAKERS reported *more moderate* & vigorous** PA minutes on a representative day in the past week.*



Conclusion

Significant differences were found between SNAP eligible English and Spanish speakers in Arizona *before* participating in direct education. **Spanish speakers showed healthier behaviors but greater food insecurity.** More evaluation is warranted to see if this finding is replicable, and to explore the underlying reasons for the observed differences.