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United Against Poverty: Social Return on Investment STEP and MSGP: Executive Summary

Amy Donley
amy.donley@ucf.edu



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**United Against Poverty:
Social Return on Investment
STEP and MSGP**

Executive Summary

January 31, 2017

Executive Summary

The Social Return on Investment (SROI) focused on two programs: STEP and the Member Share Grocery Program. For analysis of the STEP program, interviews were conducted with current and former participants. In addition, UAP staff collected information from former program participants. For analysis of the MSGP we conducted interviews with over 600 members at three locations.

Key findings:

STEP

- Based on the most conservative SROI calculation, STEP results in a \$2.53 return for every \$1.00 invested.
- This calculation is almost certainly an underestimate of the impact of STEP, because the program is relatively new, data were only collected for 47 participants while the cost used in the calculation is for the entire cost of the program for 2016. In 2016 STEP enrolled 142 people and graduated 82 at the time of data collection.

MSGP

- The majority of respondents get most of the food for themselves and their families through the MSGP.
- The majority of respondents report acquiring most of their produce at MSGP (82.8% in Indian River County, 76.1% in St. Lucie County, 63.7% in Orlando).
- Over two-thirds of respondents state that the products at The UP Center are affordable, that the products are of a high quality, and that the UP Center is a good source for produce.
- Approximately 9 in 10 respondents agree that “My money goes further here than at other stores.”
- Over half state that their diet has gotten healthier since shopping at the UP Center.
- Among those reporting a healthier diet, over half state that this is because they are able to afford produce at the UP Center that they cannot afford at other grocery stores, they are purchasing and eating more organic foods, and are purchasing and eating more lean proteins.
- Without the UP Center, over half stated they would have to purchase less food for themselves and their family, their diet would be less healthy than it is currently is, and that they would have trouble paying other bills because they would be spending more money on food.
- Around half of the respondents stated that they wouldn’t be able to afford enough food to feed themselves or their family if the UP center was not available.