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ABSTRACT

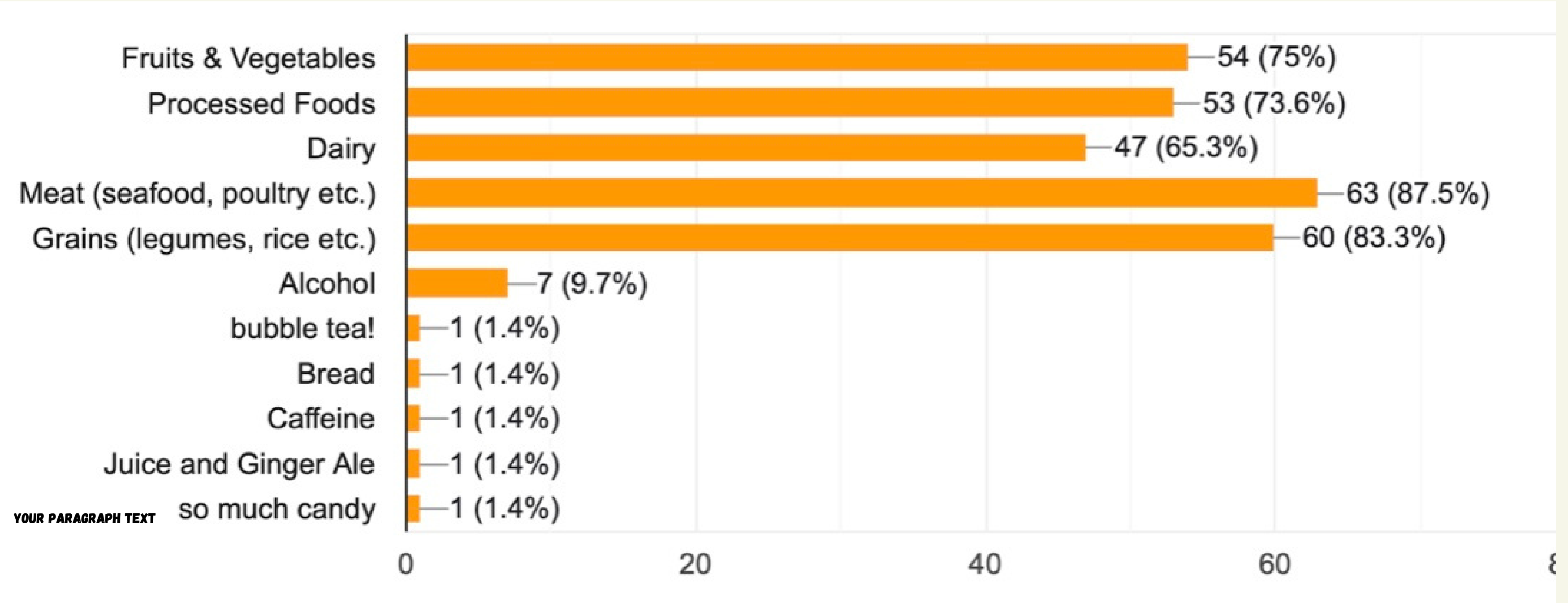
OUR RESEARCH ENCOMPASSES HOW ATTENDING COLLEGE IMPACTS ONE'S NUTRITIONAL HABITS AND OVERALL WELL-BEING. OUR GROUP RESEARCHED THE SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BEING IN COLLEGE AND THE ACCESSIBILITY TO FOOD ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS. THE HUNTER COLLEGE STUDENT POPULATION IS IMMENSELY DIVERSE, WHICH FURTHERS OUR CURIOSITY. BASED ON THIS INQUIRY, WE ARGUED THAT ATTENDING COLLEGE LEADS TO POOR AND UNHEALTHY EATING HABITS THAT INVOLVE EATING FOODS IN DISPROPORTIONATE AMOUNTS. WE SURVEYED WITHIN THE HUNTER COMMUNITY TO GATHER DATA. AFTER ANALYZING THE DATA, WE LEARNED THAT WHILE THE VALUE OF NUTRITION REMAINS IMPORTANT TO MOST STUDENTS, COLLEGE'S STRESS AND FAST-PACED ATMOSPHERE EASILY TAKE TIME AWAY FROM CONSISTENTLY EATING HEALTHY. WE ALSO TOOK INTO ACCOUNT THAT HUNTER COLLEGE ALONG WITH ITS DORMITORIES OFFERS A MINIMAL HEALTHY FOOD SUPPLY THAT ENSURES STUDENTS MAINTAIN PROPER EATING HABITS THROUGHOUT THEIR TIME ON AND OFF CAMPUS. THE ACCESSIBILITY OF HEALTHY FOOD RESOURCES WOULD SUPPORT THE STRESS AND LACK OF NUTRITION STUDENTS ENDURE WHILE INVESTING THEIR TIME AND ENERGY INTO A PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION AND CAREER.

INTRODUCTION

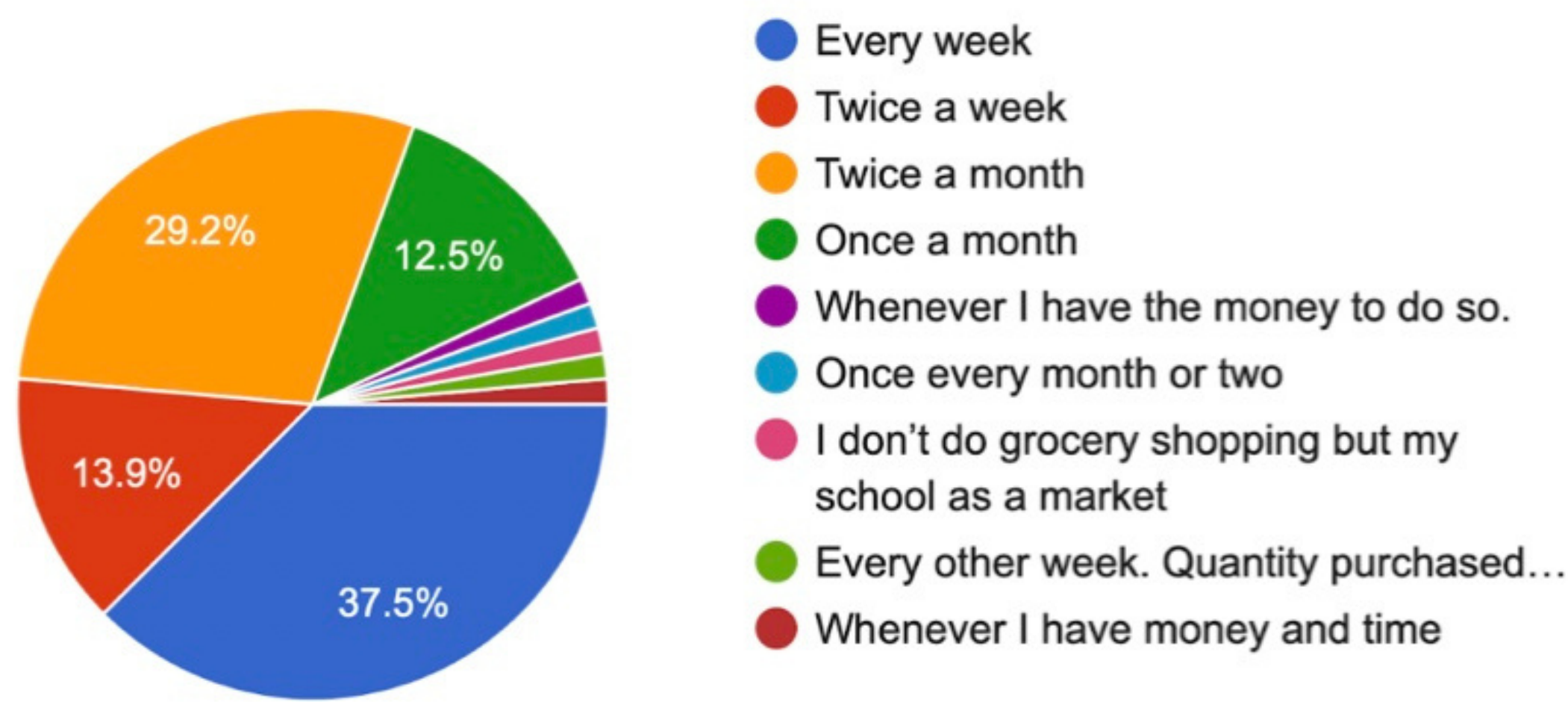
COLLEGE IS A HUGE TRANSITION INTO YOUNG ADULTHOOD. MOVING OUT OF YOUR HOME CAN HELP ONE REALIZE THE DAY-TO-DAY RESPONSIBILITIES THAT COME WITH BEING INDEPENDENT. EVEN FOR STUDENTS WHO STAY HOME AND ATTEND A COMMUTER SCHOOL, THERE IS STILL A LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY THAT COMES WITH THIS. ATTENDING COLLEGE MEANS CREATING YOUR SCHEDULE AND MAKING TIME FOR YOURSELF AND YOUR HEALTH OUTSIDE OF ACADEMIA, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO WHAT YOU EAT! COLLEGE CAN BE OVERWHELMING, IT'S EASY TO FORGET TO EAT OR EAT FAST FOOD. NUTRITION IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE FOR YOUNG ADULTS, ESPECIALLY COLLEGE STUDENTS. FOOD IS TRULY MEDICINE, AND WHEN CONSUMING THE WRONG THINGS YOUR BODY, MOOD, AND BRAIN WILL REFLECT THAT IN THINGS LIKE BRAIN FOG AND FATIGUE WHICH CAN DECREASE STUDENTS' ABILITY TO PERFORM WELL IN SCHOOL. IN CONTRAST, PROPER NUTRITION AND EATING HABITS CAN IMPROVE YOUR ABILITY TO CONCENTRATE, ENERGY LEVELS, AND THE STRENGTH OF YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM. HOW OFTEN DO STUDENTS GROCERY SHOP? HOW OFTEN DO STUDENTS BUY FOOD OUTSIDE/FAST FOOD? HOW MANY TIMES A DAY ARE STUDENTS EATING? THESE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE QUESTIONS WE POSED IN OUR JOURNEY OF GATHERING INFORMATION ON STUDENTS' RELATIONSHIPS WITH FOOD THROUGHOUT COLLEGE

HYPOTHESIS

COLLEGE STUDENTS OFTEN DEVELOP A NEGATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH FOOD, CHARACTERIZED BY IRREGULAR EATING PATTERNS, RELIANCE ON PROCESSED OR UNHEALTHY FOOD CHOICES, AND DISORDERED EATING BEHAVIORS, CORRELATES WITH INCREASED STRESS LEVELS, DIMINISHED ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, AND HEIGHTENED SUSCEPTIBILITY TO PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES. MOST COLLEGE STUDENTS FACE NEW ASPECTS OF LIVING SUCH AS WORKING PART-TIME, MIDTERMS, AND FINALS WHICH CAUSES THEM TO DEVIATE FROM NORMAL EATING HABITS.



How often do you go grocery shopping?
72 responses



LIMITATIONS

LIKE MOST SURVEYS, IT WAS HARD TO OBTAIN AN ACCURATE ASSESSMENT OF COLLEGE STUDENTS IN AND OUTSIDE OF HUNTER WITH JUST A FRACTION OF NEW YORK CITY COLLEGE STUDENT RESPONSES. EVEN WITH THE STUDENTS SURVEYED, THERE IS NO GUARANTEE FOR ONE HUNDRED PERCENT TRUTHFUL ANSWERS AS THERE IS NO WAY TO ENSURE RESPONDENTS ARE HONEST. ON TOP OF THIS, BECAUSE OF SURVEY SUBJECTIVITY THEY DON'T REALLY HOLD UP TO THE STANDARDS OF THE SCIENCE WORLD.

METHODS & PROCEDURE

OUR GROUP TOOK THE APPROACH OF SURVEYING TO EFFECTIVELY GATHER THE PATTERNS OF EATING HABITS AND NUTRITION AMONGST NEW YORK CITY COLLEGE STUDENTS. WE MADE SURE TO KEEP THE SURVEY ANONYMOUS TO ENSURE THE PRIVACY AND COMFORT OF THE PARTICIPANTS. WHEN FIRST DEVELOPING THE SURVEY, USED WITH GOOGLE FORMS, WE SET A GOAL OF 50 RESPONSES. SEQUENTIALLY, WITHIN 3 DAYS BEFORE THE SURVEY WENT LIVE, WE WERE ABLE TO SURPASS OUR GOAL AND COLLECTED 72 RESPONSES WITH THE PROMOTIONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE SUPPORT OF HUNTER COLLEGE PEERS AND FACULTY. WE ASKED QUESTIONS CENTERING ON THE TYPES OF FOOD CONSUMED ON AN AVERAGE BASIS AND THE WAYS THAT ACCESSIBILITY TO SUCH FOODS COINCIDES WITH AND MAY IMPACT THEIR COLLEGE EXPERIENCES BOTH PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY. WE AIMED TO BE AS DIRECT AND EFFECTIVE AS POSSIBLE BECAUSE WE UNDERSTOOD THAT EXPRESSING ONE'S EXPERIENCE OF FOOD ISN'T ALWAYS EASY TO DISCUSS. AFTER COLLECTING A REASONABLE AMOUNT OF DATA, WE USED REFERENCES TO COMPARE THE FOOD RESOURCES AND VALUES OF NUTRITION FOUND AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS ACROSS THE U.S. THE SURVEY WAS ALSO DIVIDED AMONG A VARIETY OF DEMOGRAPHICS SUCH AS RACE, AGE, AND GENDER. ALTHOUGH NOT COLLECTED IN THE SURVEY, THE RESPONSES WERE ASSUMED TO BE A SPREAD OF HUNTER'S ACADEMIC MAJORS, GIVEN THAT THE SURVEY WAS DISTRIBUTED TO STUDENTS WITHIN THE HUNTER COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE. WE CONVERTED OUR DATA INTO PIE CHARTS.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

PROVIDING COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH A HEALTHY DIET IS A CRITICAL COMPONENT OF THEIR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE. A NUTRITIOUS DIET IS IMPORTANT FOR MUCH MORE THAN JUST PROVIDING ENERGY; IT IS THE CORNERSTONE OF OPTIMAL PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH, WHICH IS NECESSARY FOR THE DEMANDS OF A UNIVERSITY EDUCATION. CREATING BENEFICIAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN STUDENTS AND FOOD IS IMPERATIVE AND ITS UP TO THE UNIVERSITY ITSELF TO CREATE A SPACE WHERE NUTRITION AND HEALTH ARE HIGHLIGHTED AS A NECESSITY RATHER THAN A LUXURY, HERE ARE SOME OF OUR RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ADVERTISING NUTRITION PROGRAMS WITHIN CUNY'S. HUNTER COLLEGE DOES NOT HAVE AN AFFORDABLE MEAL PLAN FOR THEIR STUDENTS. WE ARE FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO HAVE ALTERNATIVES SUCH AS THE PURPLE APRON PANTRY WITHIN BOTH OUR MAIN CAMPUS AND BROOKDALE DORMITORIES. HOWEVER, THIS IS UNCOMMON KNOWLEDGE TO ALL HUNTER STUDENTS. THE PANTRY IS LOCATED IN A SMALL HALLWAY WITHIN THE SUBWAY ENTRANCE WHICH OFTEN GETS OVERLOOKED.
- AS MACAULAY HONORS STUDENTS, WE CAN DORM AT BROOKDALE CAMPUS. EACH FLOOR HAS A KITCHEN WHERE IF PERMITTED, RA'S WHO ARE WILLING WOULD COORDINATE WITH THE PURPLE APRON AND HAVE WEEKLY OR EVEN MONTHLY COOKING WORKSHOPS/ COOKING CLASSES
- MEAL PLANS ARE TYPICALLY LOCATED WITHIN EVERY UNIVERSITY. IMPLEMENTING A CUNY-WIDE MEAL PLAN ACROSS ALL CAMPUSES CAN HELP BUILD BETTER STABLE FOOD RELATIONSHIPS FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS

THE FINDINGS FROM OUR RESEARCH SUPPORT THE HYPOTHESIS THAT THE TRANSITION INTO COLLEGE CAN LEAD TO POOR AND UNHEALTHY EATING HABITS AMONG STUDENTS. THE STRESS AND TIME CONSTRAINTS ASSOCIATED WITH ACADEMIC AND INDEPENDENT RESPONSIBILITIES CONTRIBUTE TO CHALLENGES IN MAINTAINING A NUTRITIOUS DIET. ADDITIONALLY, THE LIMITED AVAILABILITY OF HEALTHY FOOD OPTIONS ON AND OFF CAMPUS EXACERBATES THE SITUATION. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS RESEARCH LIES IN HIGHLIGHTING THE NEED FOR COLLEGES, INCLUDING HUNTER COLLEGE, TO ADDRESS THE NUTRITIONAL NEEDS OF THEIR DIVERSE STUDENT POPULATIONS. IMPROVING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF HEALTHY FOOD RESOURCES ON CAMPUS AND IMPLEMENTING SUPPORT SYSTEMS TO HELP STUDENTS PRIORITIZE NUTRITION AMIDST THEIR BUSY SCHEDULES COULD CONTRIBUTE TO OVERALL WELL-BEING. BY UNDERSTANDING THE FACTORS INFLUENCING STUDENTS' DIETARY HABITS, COLLEGES CAN DEVELOP TARGETED INTERVENTIONS AND POLICIES TO PROMOTE A HEALTHIER LIFESTYLE AMONG THEIR STUDENTS. THIS RESEARCH SERVES AS A CALL TO ACTION FOR EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS TO PRIORITIZE THE HOLISTIC WELL-BEING OF THEIR STUDENTS AND CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT SUPPORTS HEALTHY LIVING DURING THE COLLEGE YEARS.

MEAL PLANS??? YEAH. NO." CAMPUSREEL, WWW.CAMPUSREEL.ORG/COLLEGES/CUNY-HUNTER-COLLEGE/VIDEOS/MEAL-PLANS-YEAH-NO. ACCESSED 6 DEC. 2023.

AUTHOR LINKS OPEN OVERLAY PANELINKKAMOL PRAPKREE, ET AL. "SNACKING BEHAVIOR IS ASSOCIATED WITH SNACK QUALITY, OVERALL DIET QUALITY, AND BODY WEIGHT AMONG US COLLEGE STUDENTS." NUTRITION RESEARCH, ELSEVIER, 20 APR. 2023, WWW.SCIENCEDIRECT.COM/SCIENCE/ARTICLE/PII/S0271531723000325?VIA=3DIHUB.