HEALTHY MEALS ON A FOOD STAMP BUDGET
Congressman Quigley joins Cooking Matters in Support of SNAP and Nutrition Education

CHICAGO – With the right skills, eating healthy can be possible, even on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) budget. That’s the lesson Congressman Quigley and Illinois families learned today during an interactive Cooking Matters grocery store tour and cooking demonstration hosted by EverThrive Illinois.

With the November 1st reductions in SNAP and future threats to the food stamp program and its associated nutrition education program, SNAP-Ed, EverThrive brought together legislators to see first-hand how nutrition education helps families stretch their federal nutrition benefits and cook healthy, delicious meals. They completed a $10 Challenge, using smart shopping skills to buy the ingredients for a healthy meal for a family of four for less than $10.

“With SNAP cuts forcing those in need to do more with less, EverThrive and Cooking Matters are empowering families with the skills they need to stretch their budgets and provide healthy meals for their loved ones. In Congress, I will continue fighting for these families and oppose further SNAP cuts because when 47 million people struggle to put food on the table, we should be strengthening the safety net, not cutting larger holes in it,” said Congressman Quigley following the grocery store tour.

Congressman Quigley is a key voice in the House of Representatives to protect funding for SNAP and SNAP-Ed during the Farm Bill debate, and continues to advocate for the importance of these critical nutrition programs for Illinois families and children.

“Each and every Cooking Matters class that we hold has a tangible impact, not only for the participants, but for their families and communities as well. Together with our volunteers, we hope to see a brighter, healthier future for Chicago families who are often faced with hunger,” explained Lilah Handler, EverThrive Illinois’ Cooking Matters Coordinator.

EverThrive Illinois partners with Share Our Strength’s No Kid Hungry campaign to offer Cooking Matters cooking courses and grocery store tours to low-income families in Illinois. The program is taught by volunteer chefs and nutrition educators.

ILLINOIS SNAP BENEFITS AT A GLANCE:

- 22 percent of children live with the threat of hunger
- 46 percent of SNAP recipients are children
- 821,000 children in the state rely on SNAP benefits for their basic nutrition

NUTRITION EDUCATION AT A GLANCE:
• 85% of low-income families rate healthy eating as important, 8 in 10 cook 5+ nights of the week.
• Families who use smart shopping and healthy cooking skills can save around $46,000 in lifetime healthcare costs and wages lost to sick days.
• Nearly 40% of SNAP-Ed participants say the program helped them reduce the number of days their families faced food insecurity during the month.
• An outside study published in the Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior found that Cooking Matters improves participants' food choices, eating habits, cooking skills and food budgeting and shopping practices in the short- and longer terms.

###

_EverThrive Illinois works to improve the health of women, children, and families over the lifespan through community engagement, partnerships, policy analysis, education, and advocacy._

_As part of the national No Kid Hungry campaign working to end childhood hunger in America, Share Our Strength's Cooking Matters program empowers low-income families to stretch their food budgets so their children get healthy meals at home. In hands-on cooking courses and interactive grocery store tours, participants learn to shop smarter, use nutrition information to make healthier choices, and cook delicious, affordable meals._