



# Voices for Food

Using Food Councils to Bridge the Gap Between  
Food Security and Healthy Food Choices



# Project Partners

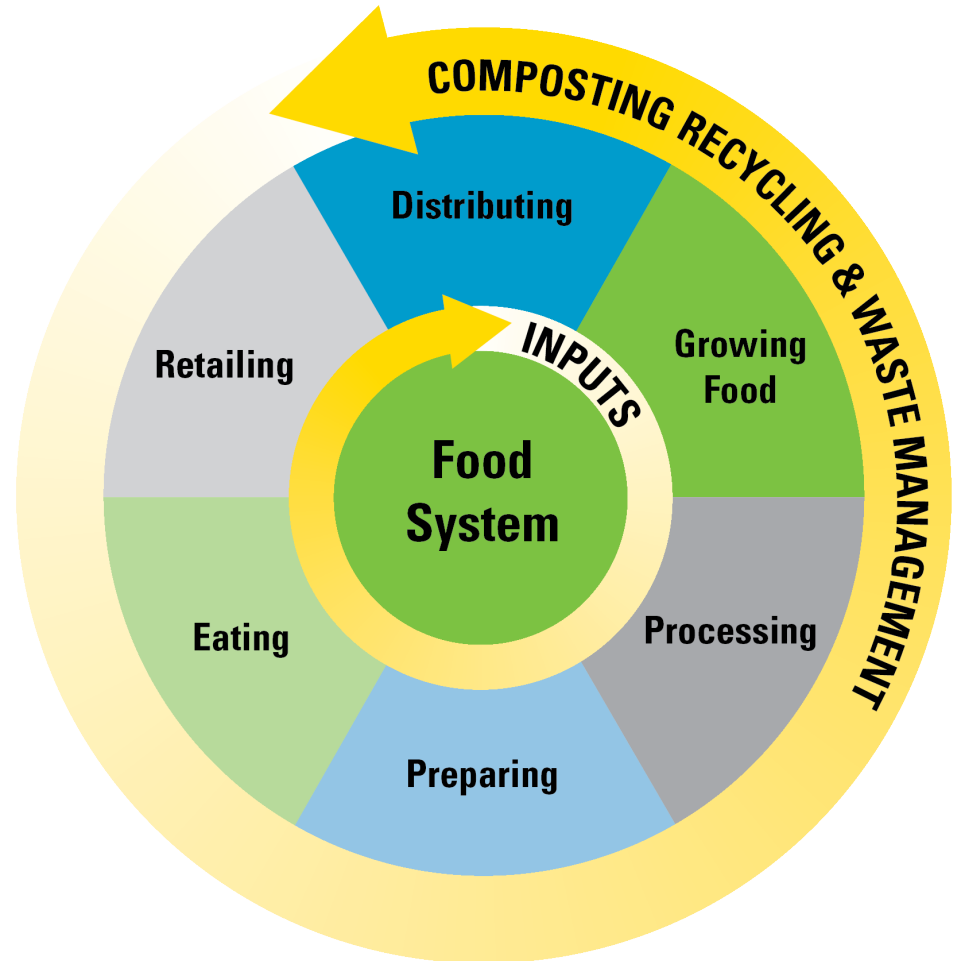


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# What is a food system?

- The food system is comprised of several sectors with each having an important part in the food we eat.
- This model shows how all of the food system sectors are involved with moving food from the farm to its ultimate destination.





# Why focus on food systems?

Food systems may contribute to an improvement in local food security by possibly changing access to healthy foods in a community, giving people the ability and opportunity to make better food choices.







# What is food security?

**Food insecurity** exists whenever the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or the ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways is limited or uncertain (S.A. Anderson, 1990).



**Food security** is...access by all people at all times to get enough food for an active, healthy life (USDA, 2014).





# Food insecurity levels

In 2006, the USDA introduced new language to describe food security and insecurity.

## Food Security

- **High food security:** No reported indications of problems with food access or sufficiency.
- **Marginal food security:** One or two reported indications of limited access to food or worry regarding the household food supply, but little or no change in variety, amount, or quality of dietary intake.

## Food Insecurity

- **Low food security:** Three or more reported indications of food-access problems that resulted in diet quality reduction, but did not substantially affect the quantity of food or their normal eating patterns.
- **Very low food security:** Multiple reported indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake.

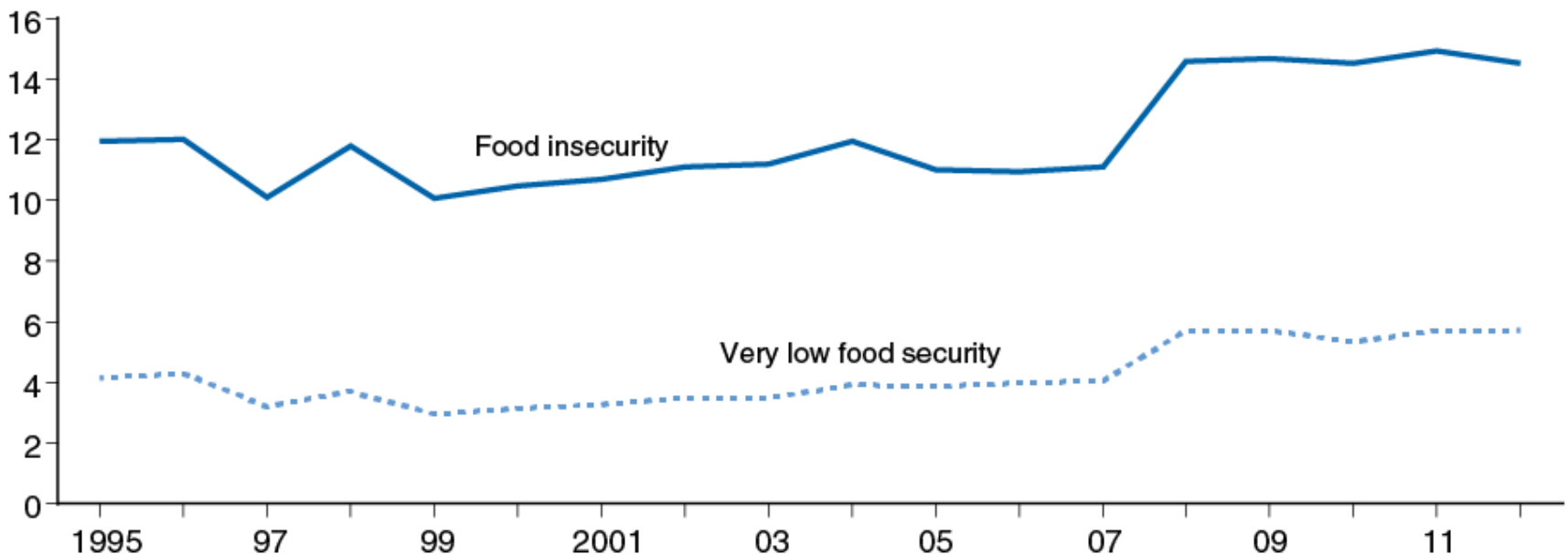


# Why focus on food insecurity?

Figure 3

**Trends in the prevalence of food insecurity and very low food security in U.S. households, 1995-2012<sup>1</sup>**

Percent of households



<sup>1</sup>Prevalence rates for 1996 and 1997 were adjusted for the estimated effects of differences in data collection screening protocols used in those years.

Source: Calculated by USDA, Economic Research Service based on Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement data.

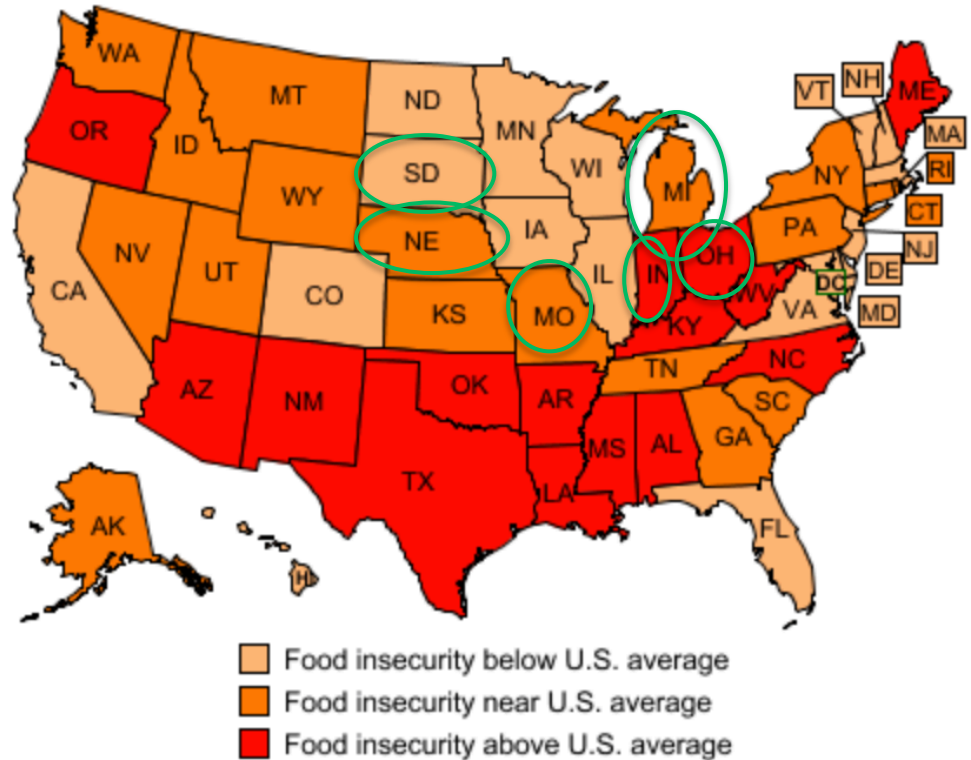


# Food insecurity by state

Indiana = 15.2%  
Nebraska = 14.7%  
Michigan = 14.3%  
Missouri = 14.2%  
Ohio = 14.8%  
South Dakota = 10.6%

**United States = 13%**

Prevalence of food insecurity, average 2014-16



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service, using data from the December 2014, 2015, and 2016 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplements.



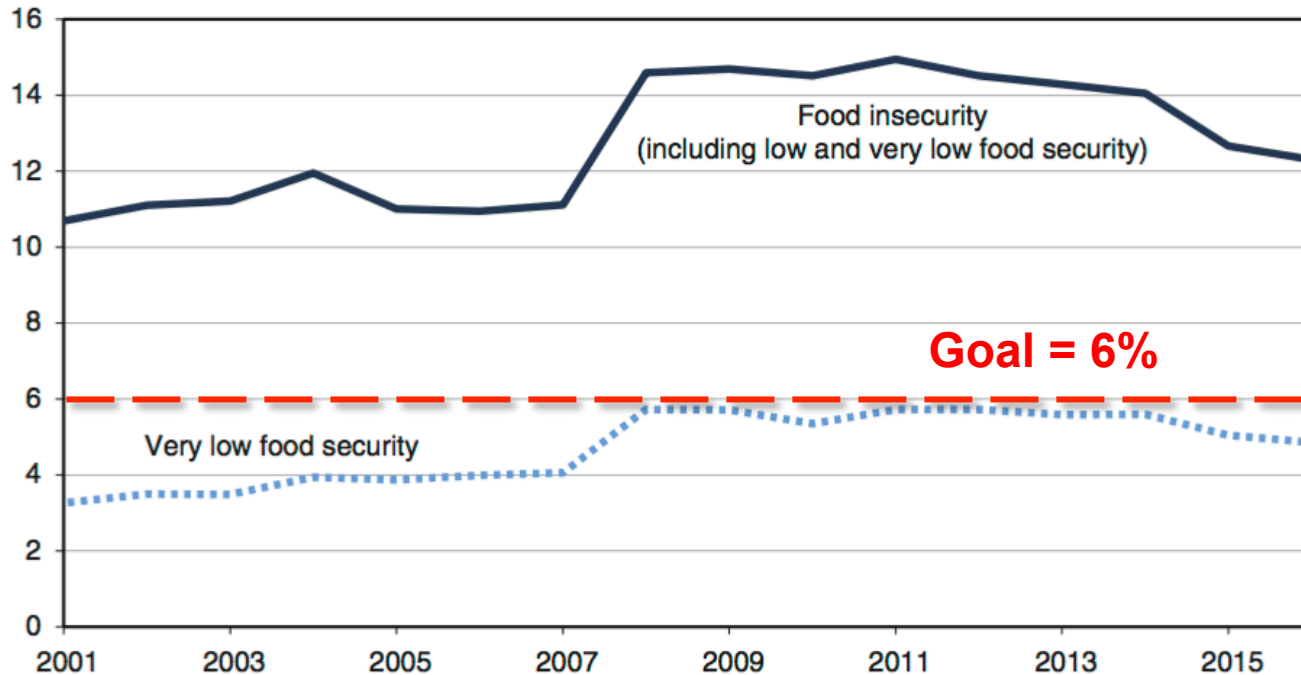
# Healthy People 2020

[www.healthypeople.gov](http://www.healthypeople.gov)

Figure 3

**Trends in the prevalence of food insecurity and very low food security in U.S. households, 2001-2016**

Percent of households



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.





## Voices for Food Project

Facilitating engaged dialogue and dynamic linkages or “voices for food” in the community food system

### Food Council: Establishing Food Councils – Bringing Food System Partner Together to Address Community Food Insecurity

Voices  
for Food

Voices  
for Food

Discussing & assessing  
community food issues

Planning & coordinating  
between food system  
sectors

Creating & implementing  
programs & services that  
address local needs

Influencing & evaluating  
food policy at local, state  
and federal levels

### Food Pantry: Establishing MyChoice: The Guided Client-Choice Model

Guiding client's food choices with nutrition  
in mind

Engaging with food policy council & clients

Promoting nutrition and food safety to low  
income audiences & volunteers

Increasing client's awareness of the food  
system

Providing ancillary services

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for Food

### Food pantry clients & families - improving health and food security

Choosing healthier food options with guidance

Assessing resources and services to improve food insecurity

Participating in food system dialogue and activities

Engaging in nutrition education opportunities

Voices  
for Food



# Collective Impact Framework

Stanford Social Innovation Review\*

- A **multi-sector** commitment to a **common agenda** that addresses a specific social problem.
- Five criteria
  - Common agenda across organizations
  - Shared measurement systems
  - Mutually reinforcing activities that build synergy
  - Continuous communication
  - Backbone support organizations

\*[https://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective\\_impact](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective_impact)



# Community Coaching

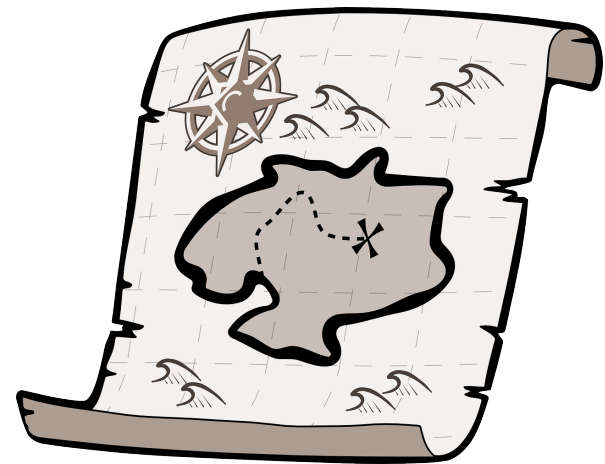
*A strategy that helps community leaders plan for and overcome challenges to community development.*

- Who were our coaches?
  - Extension professionals
  - Snap Educators
- Varying Experience & Degrees
- What did they do?
  - Supported the selected communities in building FPCs and transitioning to MyChoice through coaching.
  - Focused on community led efforts
  - Capacity building, fostering collaboration, problem solving, reframing operating systems, transitioning to new leadership.



# Voices for Food Toolkit: What you need to succeed.....

- *Voices for Food*: Food Council Creation Guide
- *Voices for Food*: Food Pantry Toolkit





# Food Policy Councils

*Diverse network of food systems stakeholders from multiple sectors of the food system coming together to work on food issues.*

- Potential to improve the access to and availability of fresh, nutritious foods.
- Potential to impact federal, state and local level policy, systems and environmental efforts.
- Cultivate meaningful relationships and partnerships between food systems actors and partners
- Foster coordination and cooperation between sectors
- Bring communities together to work on COMMUNITY DRIVEN action items.
- Forum for food issues
- Implementing programs





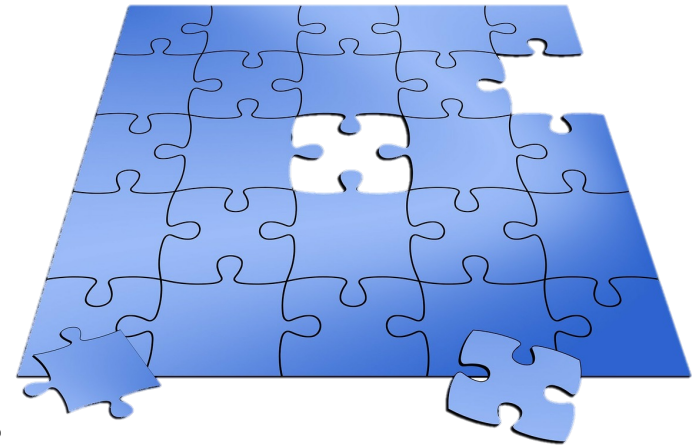
# Food Council Creation Guide

- Purpose:
  - To provide communities with a comprehensive guide on how to develop a food council
  - Focus on practical methods to connect food system work to community food security



# Food Council Creation Guide

- Getting Started
- Taking Action
- Suggested Strategies
- Finances
- Community Food Assessments
- Sample by-laws and job descriptions
- Online resources





# Food Pantry Toolkit

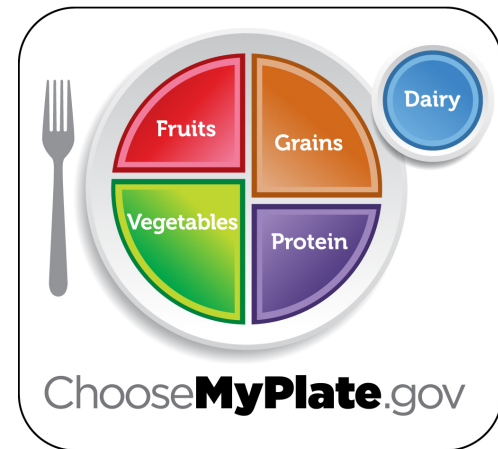
**Purpose:** to provide communities with a guide on how to set-up a MyChoice food pantry with training on nutrition, food safety, and cultural competency included.

- **Part 1. Guided Client-Choice: MyChoice**
  - Allows clients to choose foods based on food group
  - Increase interaction between clients and volunteers and staff
  - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
  - Recommended practices



# Food Pantry Toolkit

- **Part 2. Voices for Food Ambassador Training**
  - Nutrition
  - Food safety
  - Cultural competency
  - Change talk
- **Training intended for not only staff and volunteers, but also clients, food council members and other community members.**





# Food Pantry Toolkit

## MyChoice: Guided Client-Choice

- Food is organized according to MyPlate food groups and labeled correctly (use Rainbow Posters)
- Volunteers encourage clients to remove their own items from shelf and place in cart (if physically able).
- Clients can use shopping cards to select foods from USDA MyPlate food groups
- Shopping cards can be clipped onto shopping carts. Volunteers should encourage clients to look at card when choosing food.





# Food Pantry Toolkit

Encourages pantries to.....

- Have sufficient staff or volunteers to provide intake and shopping assistant services
- Show respect for clients (engage clients in conversation, introduce themselves when appropriate, are generally friendly towards clients)
- Play nutrition education video on regular bases in waiting area and to all new clients
- Allow space and time for nutrition workshops and food demonstrations
- Display nutrition education posters and handouts
- Attend trainings on Nutrition Education, Cultural Competency, Food Safety, Change Talk
- Have a system of training new staff and volunteers



## Summary: These tools are meant to.....

- ...ensure strong relationships and “voices for food” are in place to build positive and sustainably healthy communities.
- ...improve individual and household food security through community engagement and the use of MyChoice practices in local food pantries.





# What did we find?

## Baseline Food Security Status

### Household (n=609)

- Food Secure 47 (7.7%)
- Marginally Food Secure 79 (13%)
- Low Food Secure 197 (32.4%)
- Very Low Food Secure 286 (47%)

### Adult (n=609)

- Food Secure 49 (8.1%)
- Marginally Food Secure 89 (14.6%)
- Low Food Secure 180 (30%)
- Very Low Food Secure 291 (47.8%)



# What did we find?

## Baseline Food Council Implementation Scores (mean $\pm$ SD)

### Baseline Food Council Implementation Scores

- Org structure  $1.1 \pm 1.6$  (0-5)
- Org purpose  $.2 \pm .6$  (0-2)
- Key activities  $.9 \pm 1.6$  (0-4)
- Total score  $2.3 \pm 2.9$  (0-8)

### Follow-up Food Council Implementation Scores

- Org structure  $1.9 \pm 1.6$  (0-5)
- Org purpose  $1.9 \pm 1.5$  (0-4)
- Key activities  $5.3 \pm 3.7$  (0-12)
- Total score  $9.7 \pm 6.3$  (0-18)



# Food Council Implementation

## Intervention Only

- Baseline
  - Organizational structure  $1.3 \pm 1.7$  (0-5)
  - Organizational purpose  $.2 \pm .7$  (0-2)
  - Key activities  $1.1 \pm 1.7$  (0-4)
  - Total score  $2.8 \pm 2.9$  (0-8)
- Follow-up
  - Organizational structure  $2 \pm 1.6$  (0-5)
  - Organizational purpose  $2 \pm 1.5$  (0-4)
  - Key activities  $5.6 \pm 3.6$  (0-12)
  - Total score  $10.2 \pm 6.0$  (0-18)





# What did we find?

## MyChoice Observation

- MyChoice Observation scores (mean  $\pm$  SD)
  - Baseline  $8.8 \pm 5.1$  (3-21)
  - Follow-up  $16.8 \pm 6.7$  (2-28)
- Intervention only:
  - Baseline  $8.5 \pm 5.1$  (3-21)
  - Follow-up  $21.8 \pm 3.4$  (16-28)



# Voices for Food Ambassadors' Training

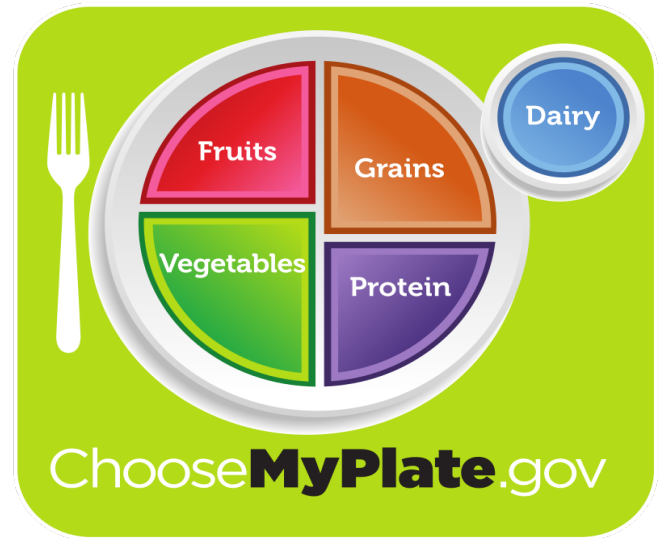
## What is a Food Ambassador?

- Promote nutrition and address food needs in their community
- Received training in nutrition, food safety and cultural competency



# Small Steps to Health Curriculum

- 10 modules
- Understanding MyPlate
- How we view what  
“healthy” is for ourselves  
and others



# Food Safety Training for Pantries

- Handling at risk audiences
- Food storage, packaging and dating
- Pest management
- Managing temperature danger zones



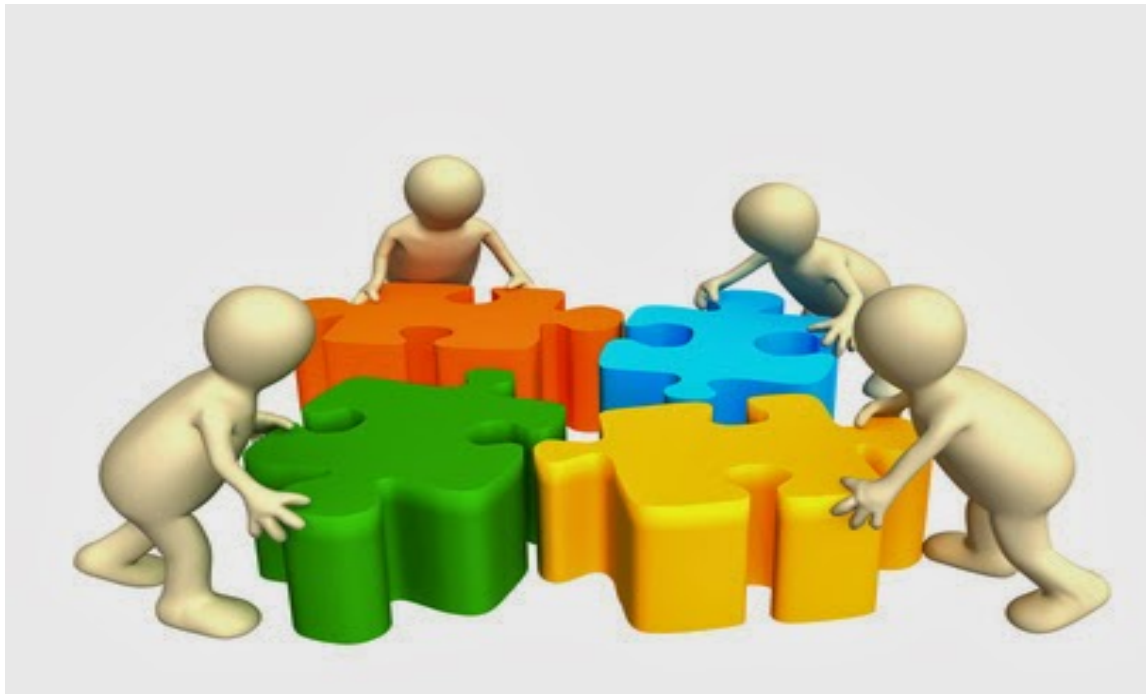


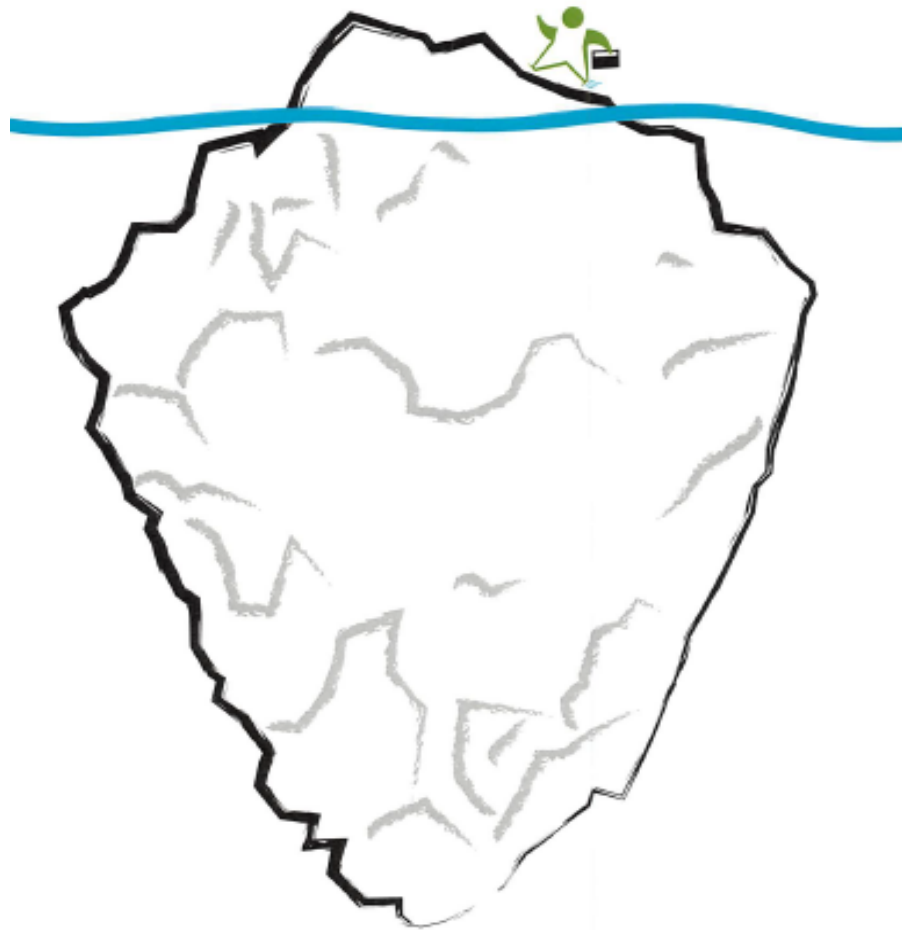
## Cultural Competency

- How does culture impact the work we do?
- Constantly changes as people interact
- Influencing factors:  
age, religion, ethnicity,  
sex, socioeconomic  
background



# Beyond the Tip of the Iceberg





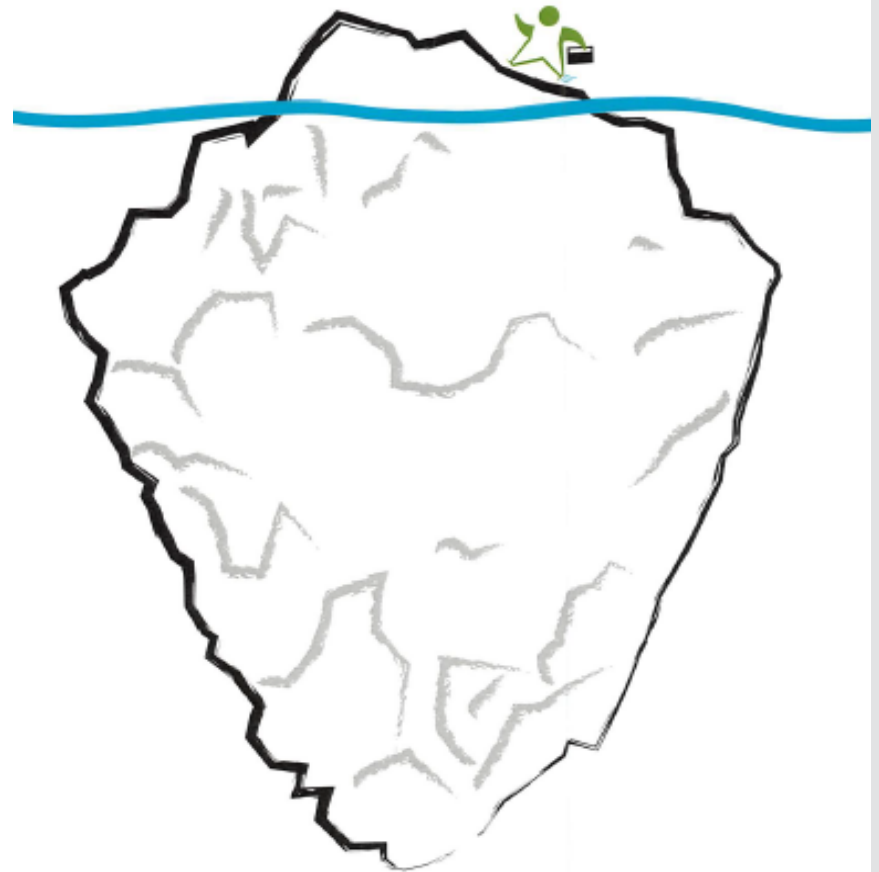


**Scenario name**

**Write down “above water”  
actions that are visible to  
everyone.**

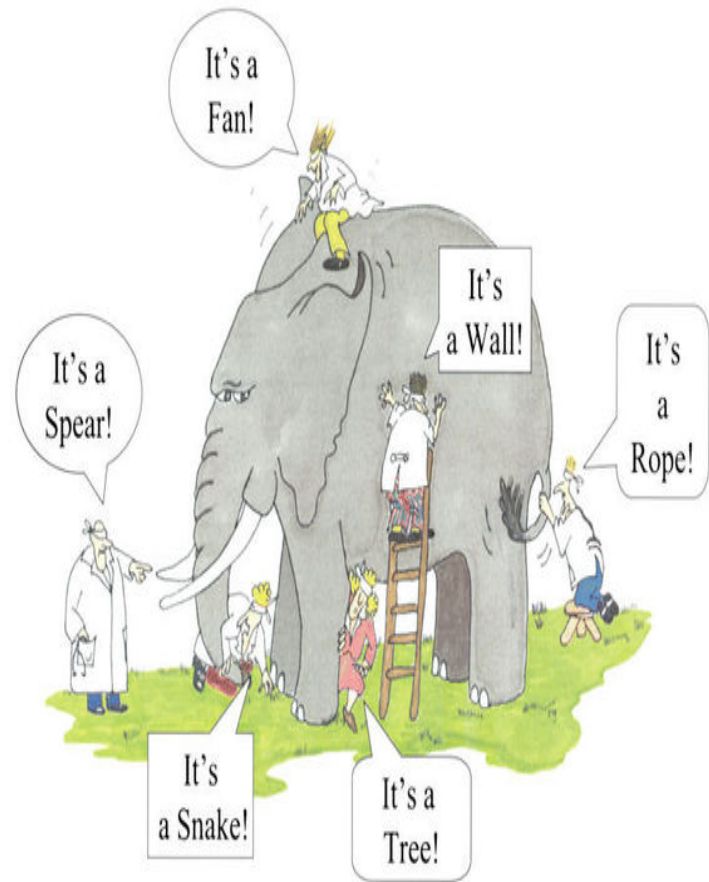
**Above the water, write down  
assumptions that others might  
be making about the person.**

**4. Below the water, write  
down what might be going on  
underneath the surface.**



# Perspective Changes Everything!

- People are like icebergs
- Projection of feelings
- We can make up someone's story but it can lead to assumptions



# The Golden Ticket



## Partner Processing

- What privileges do you have in common?
- Where are there differences?
- How do you feel about the number of tickets that you have?
- Did any of the statements create a strong feeling or memory for you?



## Understanding Privilege

- Increases sensitivity to why community members might not participate
- Increases awareness of the feelings and emotions that may surround coming to the table





# We are Different, We are Alike!





“Coming together is the beginning.  
Keeping together is progress.  
Working together is success.”

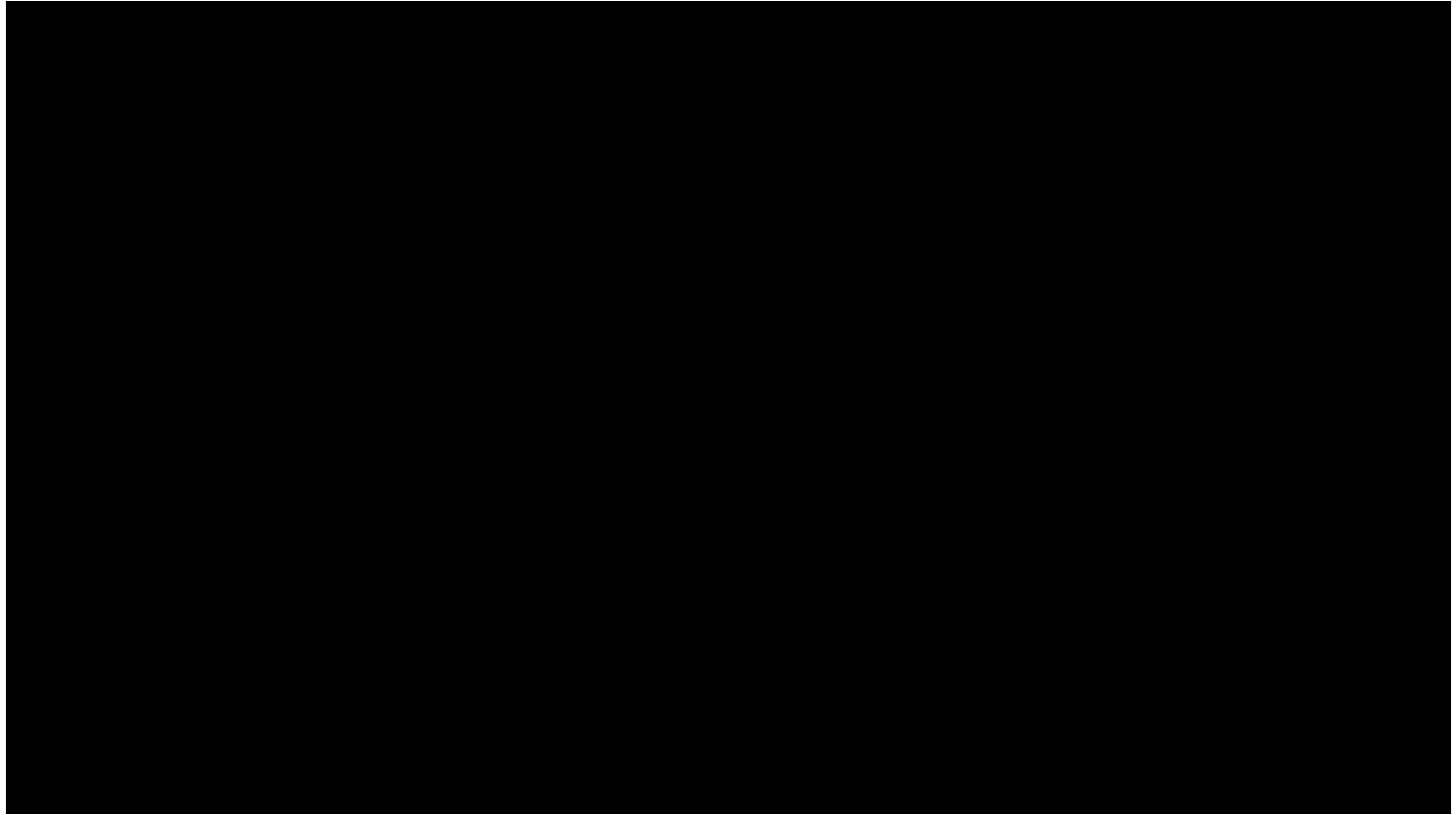
– Henry Ford





# Application & Evaluation







# Getting Started

## Assessing Food Councils

- Food Council Implementation Scorecard
  - Assesses the degree of implementation of the components of the Food Council Guide
  - Provides a starting place for champions, councils and coaches.
  - Identifies opportunities for improvement
  - Can be completed repeatedly to assess progress



# Food Council Implementation Scorecard

Food Council Implementation Scorecard	Yes (2 <u>pt</u> )	In progress (1 <u>pt</u> )	No (0pts)
<b>Organizational Structure</b>			
Presence of a formal executive committee (i.e. chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer) (p. 28)			
Presence of food council champion or coordinator (paid or unpaid) (p. 29)			
Presence of committees, working groups or task forces (p.11)			
At least three members representing three organizations (p 6-7)			
Pantry volunteers/ staff, client(s) invited to participate (p 7, 12-13)			
Youth invited to participate (p. 8)			
<b>Organizational Purpose</b>			
Documentation that purpose or agenda was agreed upon by members (p.10)			
Purpose or agenda shared with partners that were not present when it was agreed upon (p.11)			
Development of a written goals (p. 10-11)			
Development of a written mission or vision statement (p.10)			
Development of a food charter (p.9)			



# Getting Started

## Assessing Pantries

- MyChoice Scorecard
  - Assesses the degree of implementation of the components of the Food Pantry Toolkit
  - Provides a starting point for pantry directors, staff, volunteers, and coaches.
  - Identifies opportunities for improvement in pantry operations.
  - Can be repeated to assess progress.



# MyChoice Scorecard

MyChoice Scorecard		2 <u>pt</u>	1 <u>pt</u>	0 <u>pt</u>	Notes
1	Is the food on the pantry shelves organized and labeled by the <u>MyPlate</u> food groups? (p.4 p.11)	Yes	With variations	No	
2	Are each of the food shelves (includes all shelves) color-coded by food groups? (vegetables=green, fruit=red, dairy=blue, grains=orange, protein foods = purple, combination = brown, miscellaneous = yellow) (p.4, p11)	Yes	With variations	No	
3	Did pantry users have the opportunity to choose all, some, or none of the foods they take home from the pantry? ( <u>this</u> could be in the form of a shopping list) (p.5)	All foods	Some foods or variation of choice (list)	No foods	
4	Did pantry users appear to have enough time to choose their food selections? (p.7)	Yes	Sometimes	No	
5	Did pantry users have an easy way to bag and carry their food selections, such as with shopping carts and bags? (p.7)	Yes, all pantry user did	Some pantry users did	No pantry user did	



# SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework

Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity  
Prevention Indicators





# Individual

Short (ST) & Medium (MT) Term

- Nutrition Education (i.e. Small Steps)
- MyChoice Food Pantry Set-Up & Cues
  - ST1, MT1: Healthy Eating
  - ST2, MT2: Food Resource Management
  - ST4, MT4: Food Safety





# Environmental Settings

Short (ST), Medium (MT), and Long (LT) Term

- Coach Confidence Scorecard
- MyChoice Scorecard
  - ST5: Need & Readiness
  - MT5: Nutrition Supports
- Food Council Toolkit & Food Pantry Toolkit
  - ST6: Champions
  - ST7: Organizational Partnerships
  - MT5 & LT5: Nutrition Supports
  - LT9: Leveraged Resources
  - LT11: Unexpected Benefits







# Sectors of Influence

Short (ST), Medium (MT), and Long (LT) Term

- Food Council Toolkit & Food Pantry Toolkit
  - ST8: Multi-Sector Partnerships & Planning
  - MT7: Governmental Policies
  - LT12: Food Systems





# Trends & Reduction in Disparities

- ASA 24 Hour Recalls
  - R1: Overall Diet Quality
- Food Security Questions
  - R6: Food Security

**Note: Long-term can be accomplished, but be cognizant of the amount of time, effort, and funding to collect.**



# Getting Started

## Community Conversations

- Involves citizens and organizations in a structured conversation about local needs, interests and ideas related to food.
- Helps organizers to set realistic and **community driven** goals.
- Offers insight into effective strategies and tactics for reaching goals.
- Assess both strengths and opportunities in the community.



# Mentorship of Coaches

## Facilitative Leadership Tools

- Divergence
  - Basic Brainstorming
  - Sticky Wall Brainstorming
  - Silent Sticky Wall
  - Rotating Flip Charts
- Convergence
  - Decision Matrix
  - Sticky Dot Voting
  - Pick 3 – Drop 3
  - Paired Comparison



# Mentorship of Coaches

## Strategic Future – Appreciative Inquiry

- Envisioning the Future – identifying goals
- Reviewing the History – milestones
- Assessing Reality – mission/vision
- Developing Options for Change
- Prioritizing & Selecting Options
- Planning Action – synergistic
- Action – working toward goals
- Evaluating Action – were goals met



# Mentorship of Coaches

## Training

*Peer Mentorship was key in the success and confidence of Voices for Food community coaches.*

- Cultivated in bi-monthly meetings for the first two years and then monthly.
- Key informant interviews of Project Coordinators indicated the meeting were successful in:
  - Working through barriers
  - Exchanging ideas
  - Problem Solving
  - Timeline tracking
  - Support



# Mentorship of Coaches

## Coaching Guide

- Project Team chose *A Field Guide to Community Coaching* by Dr. Mary Emery as a guide for new coaches.
  - Completed a ½ day training online with Dr. Mary Emery
  - Referred back to this guide throughout the project
  - Provided a deeper understanding of what IS and what ISN'T coaching.



# Mentorship of Coaches

## Coaching Confidence Scorecards

- Retrospective Scoring
  - Project Coordinators were asked to complete this scorecard retrospectively for pre-, mid-, -post
- Application:
  - Use at the beginning as an assessment of confidence in coaching.
  - Use periodically to assess growth in confidence and to identify areas where coaches may need support.





# “P” of PSE

## Policy

- A written statement of an organizational position, decision, or course of action.
- Ideally policies describe actions, resources, implementation, evaluation, and enforcement.
- Policies are made in the public, non-profit, and business sectors.
- Policies will help to guide behavioral changes for audiences served through SNAP-Ed programming.

A school or school district that serves a majority low-income student body writes a policy that allows the use of school facilities for recreation by children, parents, and community members during non-school hours. The local SNAP-Ed provider can be a member of a coalition of community groups that work with the school to develop this policy.



## “S” of PSE

### System

- Unwritten, ongoing, organizational decisions or changes that result in new activities reaching large proportions of people the organization serves.
- Alter how the organization or network of organizations conducts business.
- Changes may precede or follow a written policy.
- An organization may adopt a new intervention, reallocate other resources, or in significant ways modify its direction to benefit low- income consumers in qualifying sites and communities.

A local food policy council creates a farm-to-fork system that links farmers and local distributors with new retail or wholesale customers in low-income settings. The local SNAP-Ed provider could be an instrumental member of this food policy council providing insight into the needs of the low-income target audience.



# The “E” of PSE

## Environmental

- Includes the built or physical environments which are visual/observable, but may include economic, social, normative or message environments.
- Social changes may include shaping attitudes among administrators, teachers, or service providers about time allotted for school meals or physical activity breaks.
- Economic changes may include financial disincentives or incentives to encourage a desired behavior, such as purchasing more fruits and vegetables.

A food retailer serving SNAP participants or other low-income persons increases the variety of fruits and vegetables it sells and displays them in a manner to encourage consumer selection of healthier food options based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and MyPlate. A SNAP-Ed provider can provide consultation and technical assistance to the retailer on expanding its fruit and vegetable offerings and behavioral techniques to position produce displays to reach the target audience.



## Project Coordinator Interviews

- What policies did the food council(s) you coached choose to address? A policy could be any set of ideas that guide individuals, organizations or communities in decision-making.
- What environmental changes did the food council(s) you coached choose to address? And environmental change could be any changes in the environment caused by or as a result of work done by the council.



# First Hand Experience





# Questions?





# References

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