Experiences as an AmeriCorps Nutrition Educator for Harvesters – the Community Food Network

Master of Public Health Field Experience
Kansas State University

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Outline

- Overview of Food Insecurity
- Overview of Food Banks
- Overview of Harvesters
  - Nutrition Services
- Field Experience
  - AmeriCorps
  - Responsibilities as a Nutrition Educator
- Reflection
Food Security—“dependable access to enough food for active, healthy living”

Food Insecurity—limited accessibility of adequate food due to limited resources
(Nord et al., 2009; Nord et al., 2010)

Low Food Security—“reduction in the quality, variety, or desirability of diet” marked by “little or no indication of reduce food intake”
(Spark, 2007)

Very Low Food Security—a reduction in food intake and leads to disrupted feeding
(Spark, 2007)
Overview of Food Insecurity

- United States Department of Agriculture
  - 2008, 14.6% of households were identified as food insecure
  - 2009, 14.7% of households were identified as food insecure
  - 5.7%, of households experienced very low food security
- Prevalence
  - densely populated metropolitan areas
  - rural areas
- Diversity
  - Black
  - Hispanic
  - Single parent households

(Nord et al., 2009; Nord et al., 2010)
Overview of Food Banks

- Food Bank
  - Shelters
    - Individuals and Families
  - Group Homes
    - Individuals and Families
  - Food Pantries
    - Individuals and Families
  - Congregate Meal Sites
    - Individuals and Families
“Harvesters - The Community Food Network feeds hungry people today and works to end hunger tomorrow”
Overview of Harvesters

- Hunger and Feeding Initiatives
  - Childhood Hunger Initiative
  - Feeding Families Initiative
  - Healthy Eating Initiative
  - Senior Feeding Initiative
Overview of Harvesters
Overview of Harvesters

Food Donors
- Food drives
- Local food industry donors
- Other food banks
- Food rescue program
- Purchased food
- USDA
- Feeding America/national and local donors

Financial Donors
- Corporate donors
- Foundations
- Individuals
- Religious and Social Organizations
- State and Federal Grants

Food Banks, 90%
Hot Meals, 8%
Shelters, 2%
Overview of Harvesters Nutrition Services

- Overall objective - educate anyone receiving food assistance about nutrition and to facilitate behavior changes which will lead to a healthier lifestyle
  - Serve as Nutrition resource to Harvesters agencies
  - Provide cooking demonstrations at agencies
  - Train agencies on safe-food handling practices
  - Offer variety of programs to educate agencies’ clientele
Field Experience
AmeriCorps

“I will get things done for America - to make our people safer, smarter, and healthier. I will bring Americans together to strengthen our communities. Faced with apathy, I will take action. Faced with conflict, I will seek common ground. Faced with adversity, I will persevere. I will carry this commitment with me this year and beyond. I am an AmeriCorps member, and I will get things done.”
Field Experience

AmeriCorps

- AmeriCorps Nutrition Education Specialist at Harvesters
- Half-time service commitment
  - January 10 through September 30, 2011
  - Half-time service requirement is 945 hours
    - Up to 20% (189 hours) - professional development and training purposes
    - 80% (756 hours) - direct service in the community
- Actual hours completed
  - 189 training hours
  - 784 service hours
- Kansas State University’s Master of Public Health program field experience requirement – 480 hours
Field Experience
Responsibilities as a Nutrition Educator

- Cultivate new agencies and build relationships with coordinators and participants at nutrition program sites
- Conduct Site Visits
  - Learning environment
  - Cooking environment
- Collaborate with fellow nutrition educators and supervisors to ensure quality programs
  - Curriculum Development
- Teach low income children, adults, and seniors nutrition education curriculums
  - Nutrition Services Programs
  - Teaching Outcomes
Field Experience
Responsibilities as a Nutrition Educator

- Curriculum Development
- Eating Around the Clock
  - Lesson 4: Snack Attack- Activity: “Sneak My Snack”
Field Experience
Responsibilities as a Nutrition Educator

- Curriculum Development
- How to Eat a Rainbow

Lesson #3: How to Eat a Rainbow
Don't forget that White and Brown are colors too!

Activities:
- Try out the Rainbow Color
- Explore the Color Wheel
- Create a Rainbow Craft

Gifts:
- Rainbow Bracelet
- Rainbow Necklace
- Rainbow Art Project

Summary:
- The importance of eating a variety of colors in the diet
- The benefits of each color in the rainbow
- How to incorporate colors into daily meals

Recipe: Rainbow Chex Mix
Ingredients:
- Chex Mix
- M&Ms Rainbow
- Jelly Beans
- Raisins

Instructions:
1. Mix all ingredients together in a large bowl.
2. Store in an air-tight container.

Lesson #3: How to Eat a Rainbow
Don't forget that White and Brown are colors too!

Kid's in the Kitchen

Recipe Development:
- How to Eat a Rainbow
- Meal planning
- Nutrition

Field Experience:
- Field trips to local farms
- Nutrition education programs
- Community outreach

How to Eat a Rainbow:
1. Eat a variety of colors in your meals.
2. Include fruits and vegetables in your diet.
3. Choose foods that are vibrant in color.

Harvesters, Community Food Network

Food Bank Year

Field Experience:
- Field trips to local farms
- Nutrition education programs
- Community outreach

How to Eat a Rainbow:
1. Eat a variety of colors in your meals.
2. Include fruits and vegetables in your diet.
3. Choose foods that are vibrant in color.
Field Experience
Responsibilities as a Nutrition Educator

- Curriculum Development
  - How to Eat a Rainbow
    - Curriculum
      - Introduction
      - Nutrition Lesson
      - Color Group
      - Activities
      - Safety/Skill
      - Recipe Preparation
Field Experience
Responsibilities as a Nutrition Educator

- Curriculum Development
- How to Eat a Rainbow

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### Kids in the Kitchen 2011/2012 Post Test

**Name,________________________**

1. Which colors of the rainbow should we eat every day?
   - None of them
   - Green only
   - All of them

2. How much of our plate should be fruits and vegetables?
   - None
   - Half
   - All

3. We eat all parts of plants when we eat fruits and vegetables, what part of the plant is a potato?
   - Roots
   - Stem
   - Leaf

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4. What do we need to do with fruits and vegetables before we eat or cook them?
   - Smell them
   - Wash them to remove dirt and germs
   - Nothing

5. Fruits and vegetables provide vitamins and minerals; carrots are a good source of Vitamin A. Why is Vitamin A good for us?
   - Eyes/Sight
   - Nose/Smell
   - Tongue/Taste

6. Which picture shows a fruit or vegetable being seeded?

7. Can you name a new fruit or vegetable you have tried during Kids in the Kitchen?

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[Harvesters Community Food Network]
Field Experience
Responsibilities as a Nutrition Educator

- Nutrition Services Programs
  - Series Classes

  **Project STRENGTH**
  - 2-3 hour lesson
  - 1/week for 8 weeks
  - Nutrition and Cooking
  - Groceries

  **Teen Eats**
  - 2-3 hour lesson
  - 1/week for 6 weeks
  - Nutrition and Cooking
  - Groceries (optional)

  **Kids in the Kitchen**
  - 1 hour lesson
  - 1/week for 4 weeks
  - Nutrition, Activities and Cooking
  - Kid Friendly Recipes
Field Experience
Responsibilities as a Nutrition Educator

- Nutrition Services Programs
  - Project STRENGTH
    - Simple Eating Guidelines
    - Tips for a Safe Kitchen
    - Reading Food Labels and Smart Shopping
    - Eating for Prevention
    - Nutrition Messages
    - Good Nutrition Away from Home
    - Training Your Body
    - Home Cooking
Field Experience
Responsibilities as a Nutrition Educator

- Nutrition Services Programs
  - Teen Eats
    - Food Glorious Food
      - Videos:
        - “Tamale Tales”
        - “Persuade Me”
        - “Do you mind reading what you’re eating?” – Ranch dressing
        - Timon and Pumba
        - Swedish Chef
        - “SuperSize Me”
    - Feed Me
      - Songs:
        - “The Cucumber Song”
        - “The Carrot Song”
        - “The Potato Song”
        - “The Cauliflower Song”
      - Activities:
        - Portion distortion
        - Wasted food project
        - Whole grain – yay or nay?
Field Experience
Responsibilities as a Nutrition Educator

- Nutrition Services Programs

  - Teen Eats
    - Dieting and the Media
      - Videos:
        - Model Airbrushed videos
        - “Crank Dat Good Nutrition”
      - Healthy Eating Advertisement
      - Songs:
        - The Vegetable Song
    - Activities:
      - Sticky notes
      - Advertise for Health
      - Ad Buster
      - Make a workout CD
    - Snack Attack
      - Videos:
        - “Drive Thru Rap”
        - Weird Al “Eat It”
      - Activities:
        - Vending machine options
        - Poster board
        - Trail Mix Iron Chef game
        - Evaluate fast food menus
        - Grocery Store Scavenger Hunt?
        - Fast Food Game
Field Experience Responsibilities as a Nutrition Educator

- Nutrition Services Programs
  - Teen Eats
    - Cooking 101
      - Activities:
        - Knife skills
        - Crazy produce taste test
        - Plan a healthy day of meals
        - Food Math
        - Fruit + Veggie Scattergories
        - Evaluate school lunch menu
  - Let’s Get Physical
    - Activities:
      - Jeopardy or Family Feud
      - Is it worth it?
      - Restaurant IQ post test
FIELD EXPERIENCE
RESPONSIBILITIES AS A NUTRITION EDUCATOR

- Nutrition Services Programs
  - Harvesters’ Cookbook
    - User Friendly
    - Nutrition Information
    - Budget Friendly
Field Experience
Responsibilities as a Nutrition Educator

- Nutrition Services Programs
  - Kid’s in the Kitchen
    - No “Yuck”
    - “Thank you bite”
  - Curriculums
    - Around the World
    - Eating Around the Clock
    - How to Eat a Rainbow
Field Experience Responsibilities as a Nutrition Educator

- Nutrition Services Programs
  - One-time Classes

Diabetes 101
- 2-3 hours
- Nutrition and Cooking
- Diabetic Friendly Recipe

Healthy Desserts
- 2 hours
- Nutrition and Cooking
- 1 or 2 Dessert Recipes

Healthy Pregnancy
- 2 -3 hours
- Nutrition and Cooking
- Recipe with important micronutrients for a healthy pregnancy

Customized Classes
- No set time
- Nutrition and Cooking/ Cooking Demo
Field Experience
Responsibilities as a Nutrition Educator

- Teaching Outcomes

750 nutrition education sessions or 7,500 participant visits annually

750/7 educators = 107 classes per educator
107*5 = 54 class sessions

Note: Preceptor predicted classes taught would be close to 75

- 73 classes
  - 3 Project STRENGTH, 1 Teen Eats, 8 Kid’s in the Kitchen, 11 One-time Classes
  - 974 participant visits.

Nutrition Education class participants will exhibit post-test scores of greater than 70%

- 77%, adults
- 90%, teens
- 80%, kids

Over half of Nutrition Education class participants will report positive behavior change

- 95%, adults
- 92%, teens
- 80%, kids
Reflection

- **Negatives**
  - Emotional
  - Significant time commitment
  - No pre-test assessment

- **“Do over”**
  - Full time/Full year AmeriCorps commitment
  - Further explore the reason for not having a pre-test assessment
  - Learn about grant writing for Nutrition Services’ programs
  - Learn about the planning process when Nutrition Services was originally implemented

- **Positives**
  - Opportunity to teach and reach out to others
  - Produced the desired products of the field experience
  - Success stories
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