



The Impact of Food Insecurity on the North End Community

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Background

According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), 11.8% of households in the U.S. experienced food insecurity in 2017.³ By comparison, 1 in 5 Wayne County, Michigan residents experience food insecurity.⁴ The need to improve coordination among food program resources is a challenge in the North End neighborhood (48202) of Detroit. The purpose of this field study was for a team of students in a graduate level Public Health course to collaborate with Breakers Covenant Church in the North End community, and to develop a food support resource guide to be used by the community.

Objectives:

- Understand the meaning of food insecurity and malnutrition.
- Appreciate the importance of community-based participatory research.
- Compare the different levels of food insecurity experienced between the populations of Wayne County, Detroit, and the North End Community.
- Recognize the efforts and outcomes of the evidence-based project the graduate students (nursing and public health) of Wayne State University implemented.

Methods

Kreiger's Ecosocial Theory was used to guide the project. Kreiger's model emphasizes the importance of considering the multiple levels of health influence.²

Urban Health Equity Assessment Response Tool was utilized (HEART)¹:

- 1. Build a team**
 - Inclusive team built of 5 students, 1 faculty advisor, 1 community leader.
- 2. Define local indicators for equity**
 - Dr. Ralph Williams II indicated the need his community voiced for food resources and requested a food resource pamphlet from us.
- 3. Assemble Data**
 - The Detroit Food Policy Council and evidence-based literature was reviewed.
- 4. Generate Evidence**
 - Data Driven Detroit confirmed level of food insecurity experienced by the North End Community.
- 5. Assess equity gaps**
 - Field work by students identified barriers in accessing resources.
- 6. Identify a response to health equity issues**
 - Food resource pamphlet created and project to continue on with future public health student groups.

Observations

Wayne County ⁷	North End Community ⁷
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population 1,763,822 • 34% child poverty rate • 65.2% of their total students eligible for free or reduced priced lunches • 22.6% of households in food assistance programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population 16,664 • 60.1% child poverty rate • 78.6% of their total students eligible for free or reduced priced lunches • 38.1% of households in food assistance programs

- Functional health illiteracy is a silent barrier to accessing resources and making positive health care decisions.
- Food Insecurity is related to negative health outcomes.^{2,5}
- Difficulty in accessing food resources can be due to difficulty in reaching food services by phone, the posting of inaccurate hours of service and location, and most resources having limited weekly hours.
- Racial disparities were also observed.⁶

Results

Detroit's North End Community Food Resource Guide
DEVELOPED FOR BREAKERS COVENANT CHURCH INTERNATIONAL
IN COLLABORATION WITH WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE STUDENTS

1. Peoples Community Church Outreach Center
Available Resources: Food assistance at no charge
Lunch—Mondays at 12:00 PM
Hours: Monday—Thursday 11:00 AM—3:00 PM
Contact: 313-670-9422 or 313-670-9372

2. IIRB Rock Baptist Church
Available Resources: Food assistance at no charge
Hours: 2nd Friday of Every Month 9:00 AM—Line up 9:30 AM—Distribution begins Contact: 313-672-2900

3. Oakland Avenue Farmer's Market
Available Resources: Pay-what-you-can options WIC/SNAP Benefits accepted
Hours: Saturdays, 11:00 AM—3:30 PM June through Mid-October
Phone: 313-649-7756

4. Michigan Urban Farming Initiatives
Available Resources: Pay-what-you-can
Hours: Seasonally varied
Call for more info
Contact: 313-444-6834

5. Metropolitan United Methodist
Available Resources: Food assistance at no charge
Assistance limited to 25 people per week and only once per month
Contact for more info
Hours: Wednesdays—Doors open at 9:00 AM Distribution at 11:45 AM
Contact: 313-675-7407

6. Priches & Cavers (operated by IIC)
Available Resources: SNAP/WIC Senior Project benefits accepted
Free residential delivery available
Hours: Tuesday—Friday, 10am—6pm Saturday, 10am—2pm
Contact: 313-670-9230

Additional Resources:
Forgotten Harvest provides food assistance programs, including the Summer Food Service Program for school age children as well as mobile pantries—They can help identify available food resources and program eligibility. For more info: 248-967-1500 or info@forgottenharvest.org
Detroit Black Community Food Security Network is an organization founded to support African American involvement in the food and urban agriculture movement—They are currently developing a co-op expected to open in 2019. For more info: 313-345-3663 or info@dbcfan.org
Vanguard is a community development organization, focused on Detroit's North End Neighborhood. They regularly hold community education seminars. For more info: 313-872-7831
The W—Wayne State University Food Pantry provides food assistance for currently enrolled Wayne State students. For more info: 313-577-0154 or thefoodpantry@wayne.edu

Field work by the student team confirmed six food support resources accessible to the North End community. All sites provided food at no cost. These establishments were visited to confirm operating hours, range of support resources and requirements for participation. This information was compiled and added onto a resource guide for the North End population.

Over 2,000 individuals in Detroit's North End now have access to this resource guide highlighting the food aiding organizations in the community.

Conclusion

Evidence-based projects such as this one can provide public health professionals with the opportunity to make a tangible, community-wide impact by collaborating with other disciplines and community leaders to empower those who are food insecure.

Future Considerations

1. The need for promoting access to food resources is integral for the North End Community.
2. Difficulty in accessing food resource information from organizations needs to be addressed.
3. Future groups should focus on further building relationships and improving communication across organizations.
4. Addressing food insecurity in the North End Community is an upstream approach that could influence overall nutrition among the community and decrease adverse health outcomes.

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