Community Collaboration to Address Food Access on the Navajo Nation

LT Jenna Cope, MPH, RD, LD, CHES
Lydia Kim, MD, MPH
Objectives

• Learn about the rates of childhood food insecurity locally and nationally.
• Understand food insecurity’s impact on health outcomes.
• Learn about different opportunities to increase access to healthy foods in rural and/or tribal communities.
Hunger generally refers to the physiologic effects of food deprivation.

Food Insecurity can typically predict hunger; it includes problems like poor access to food, poverty, and eating unhealthy food.
DEFINITION OF FOOD INSECURITY

“Limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways.”
FOOD INSECURITY IN THE U.S.

U.S. households by food security status, 2017

- Food-insecure households—11.8%
- Households with low food security—7.3%
- Households with very low food security—4.5%

Food-secure households 88.2%

FOOD INSECURITY IN CHILDREN

17.9%

Food Insecurity

The percentage of children under age 18 living in households that experienced limited or uncertain availability of safe, nutritious food at some point during the year. (Source: Feeding America)

28% of New Mexico children don’t always get enough to eat

The percentage of children who are food insecure (2013)

Source: Map the Meal Gap, Feeding America, 2015
Navajo Nation Food Insecurity Survey (2012)

Fig. 1 Percentage of food-secure (■) and food-insecure (□) households (n 276) in ten communities on the Navajo Nation using the ten-item Radimer/Cornell food insecurity instrument, May–November 2007

WHY FOOD INSECURITY?

Increased risk of diseases or negative health outcomes may be related or as result of food insecurity:

- Increased risk for emotional distress
- Consumption of less expensive, less healthy foods
- Limited options of foods bought or received for free, leading to difficulty/impossibility of eating balanced meals.
- Experience time periods with no food, overconsumption when food is available.
- Greater risk for being overweight or obese.
- Increased likelihood for diseases, such as diabetes.

IHS + AAP Food Insecurity Screening Tool

• “We worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more.”

• “The food we bought just didn’t last and we didn’t have money to get more.”

Answers (over the last 12 months):

[] Often true
[] Sometimes true
[] Never true
[] DK or Refused

Likely Food Insecurity: If client responds “often true” or “sometimes true” to either statement.
Food insecurity has been linked with chronic health conditions.

13.3% of rural households faced food insecurity in 2017, compared to 11.5% of households in metropolitan areas.

“Coexistence of food insecurity and obesity is expected given that both are consequences of economic and social disadvantage”

(Frongillo & Bernal, 2014).


New Mexico’s Hispanic and Native American populations are more likely than non-Hispanic whites to be poor or low-income

The percentage of adults and children in poverty and the rate of working families who are low-income (2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Population in poverty</th>
<th>Children in poverty</th>
<th>Working families who are low-income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S. (all races)</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico (all races)</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NM Hispanics/Latinos</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NM Non-Hispanic Whites</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NM Native Americans</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census, American Community Survey, 2013
NEW MEXICO VOICES FOR CHILDREN
New Mexico’s communities of color disproportionately suffer from a variety of chronic health conditions
The percentage of adults in New Mexico with chronic health conditions by race/ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Diabetes</th>
<th>Obesity</th>
<th>High Blood Pressure</th>
<th>High Cholesterol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico (all races)</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic White</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, with NM Dept. of Health
NEW MEXICO VOICES FOR CHILDREN
Nearly the entire Navajo Nation is considered a food desert.
Shiprock, NM

- Four Corners Region
- Hosts 1 of about 10 grocery stores in entire Navajo Nation.
- Elevated Food Insecurity
- High number of SNAP Recipients
- Sugar-sweetened drink consumption
- Large distances, challenges with transportation
Coalition Purpose:

- Form a coalition of public, private and non-profit organizations and community members to act as the champions, leaders, community representatives and a resource for food access in the Shiprock community.
GRASSROOTS COALITION FORMATION

Identification of Community Food Resources → Development of internal team → Community Relationship Building, Exploration of Community Strengths → (September 2018) First Shiprock Area Coalition Meeting (Overview of Organizations, Visioning)


(April 2019) Increasing awareness, presence (social media, radio) → Identification of Measurable Objectives → Identification of leadership within Coalition, Sustainability plan
FAC Meeting – December 4, 2018
SHIPROCK AREA FOOD ACCESS COALITION

**Mission:** Community stakeholders working together to improve access to healthy food and water that will build sustainable food systems change and improve generational health outcomes for Native American communities.

**Focus Areas:**

- Consumers
- Communities
- Growers
COALITION-IDENTIFIED PROJECT PRIORITIES

**Short-Term / High Priority:**
- Communication on Coalition, food access issues
- Survey of Chapter Houses, Schools & Communities
- Healthy Cooking of Traditional Food
- Greenhouses, Gardens, Playgrounds, Trails for Chapters
- Healthy food accessibility at local grocery store

**Long-Term:**
- CCSD Farm to School Policies, Food Donations
- Food Hub & MoGro
- Community Kitchen
- Identification of available land for farming
- Shiprock Fair 2019 & “Ag Days” 2020
SUGAR-SWEETENED BEVERAGES AT THE LOCAL GROCERY STORE
Saturday, March 10, 2018
40 survey responses
Food samples (salad packets, veggies + dip, fruits, seltzer water)
Prize wheel (cutting boards, spatulas, oven mitts from COPE), healthy recipes, flavored water samples
FOOD INSECURITY 1: "WITHIN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, WE WORRIED WHETHER OUR FOOD WOULD RUN OUT BEFORE WE GOT MONEY TO BUY MORE."

- Often True: 11%
- Sometimes True: 34%
- Rarely True: 34%
- Never True: 21%

45% of shoppers are Food Insecure according to Question 1.

FOOD INSECURITY 2: "WITHIN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, THE FOOD WE BOUGHT JUST DIDN'T LAST AND WE DIDN'T HAVE MONEY TO GET MORE."

- Often True: 15%
- Sometimes True: 36%
- Rarely True: 23%
- Never True: 26%

51% of shoppers are Food Insecure according to Question 2.
WHAT COULD THIS GROCERY STORE DO TO HELP YOU EAT HEALTHIER?

- More selection, and healthier selection
- Promote healthy eating with fliers/special programs/recipes
- Lower prices
- Fresher selection
- Place produce in the front
- Decrease junk foods
- Seafood
WOULD YOU BUY MORE FRUITS OR VEGETABLES IF THEY WERE LOCATED AT THE FRONT OF THE STORE?

Yes (92%)

No (8%)
GROCERY STORE INITIATIVE – BARRIERS

- Communication Channels
  - Survey vs. preference of community
- Marketing placements
- Shopper Consumption & Knowledge
  - Healthy Dine Nation Act – the “Junk Food Tax”
  - Healthy eating
IMPROVING ACCESS AT THE LOCAL GROCERY STORE: PROGRESS TO DATE

- FVRx Program
- Community Survey
- Piloting moving fresh fruits to front of store
- Increased discussion with store manager
- Expanded community interest → Food Access Coalition
- Fruit Stand
- Chapter House Resolution
Local support of efforts to improve access to healthy options & education

RESOLUTION OF THE SHIPROCK CHAPTER
SHIPROCK, NAVAJO NATION

SUPPORTING HEALTHIER CHANGES TO SHIPROCK CITY MARKET

WHEREAS:

1. The Shiprock Chapter of the Navajo Nation acts on this resolution pursuant to the authority conferred on the Chapter through Navajo Nation Code Title 26, Chapter 3, Section 1 B. purpose, which states, "Through adoption of this Act, the Navajo Nation Council delegates to Chapters governmental authority with respect to local matters consistent with Navajo Law, including custom and tradition" and the industries provided by the Diné Fundamental Law, that it is entirely appropriate for the government itself to openly observe these fundamental laws; and
2. The Shiprock Chapter supports efforts by Shiprock City Market and Northern Navajo Medical Center Staff to make changes to support healthier eating in the community, and
3. The Shiprock Chapter supports a store remodel supported by customers to relocate fruits and vegetables to the front of the store, and
4. The Shiprock Chapter supports the promotion of healthier products and decreased marketing of soda and other sugar-sweetened beverages, and
5. The Shiprock Chapter supports labels that promote healthy foods as "tax-free healthy foods" and labels unhealthy foods as "tax-free taxable," and
6. The Shiprock Chapter supports the use of revenue from the Healthy Diné Nation Act to support health promotion activities such as cooking demonstrations at Shiprock City Market.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Shiprock Chapter Membership hereby supports healthier changes be made by the management at Shiprock City Market.

Seconded by: ________ Secorded by: ________

CERTIFICATION

We hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was presented and considered at a duly called Special Chapter meeting at which a quorum was present and that the same was approved by a vote of ______ in favor, ______ opposed and ______ abstentions on the ______ day of July, 20____.

Dwane Haupput
President

TJ. Bitah
Secretary/Treasurer

Dr. J. Ahavets

M. K. Kohkoveny
Vice President

T. A. C. C. K. E. N. E. N.

Tom Coot, Council Delegates
IMPROVING ACCESS AT THE LOCAL GROCERY STORE: ONGOING COMMUNITY WORK

- Partnership with the community and the Shiprock Area Food Access Coalition
  - Collection of community feedback
  - Postcard Initiative
  - Collaboration and discussions with store manager and staff
  - Shelf talkers / On shelf messaging (in development)
- Collection and sharing of data with FVRx
SHIPROCK/NNMC FVRX
- Increase access to healthy foods among Navajo families;
- Increase consumption of healthy and locally grown fruits and vegetables;
- Improve health outcomes in people affected by diet related diseases; and
- Stimulate the economy and promote local sales of healthy foods on Navajo Nation
CHANGE IN FRUIT AND VEGETABLE CONSUMPTION (N=15)
CHANGES IN HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY

Intake

- Food Secure: 18%
- Low or Very low food security: 82%

Exit

- Food Secure: 35%
- Low or Very low food security: 65%

p<0.001
LOCAL HOSPITAL EFFORTS TO INCREASE VISIBILITY AND EMPHASIS ON FOOD SECURITY

- Food Resource List
- FVRx Program
- Food Security In-Service with PHN team
- Referral System to local food resources (currently in development)
- Addition of Food Security as a code in EHR, beginning of coding
- Integration of USDA/IHS Food Security Screening Tool into clinics
- Increased interest and collaboration from and with providers
- Hospital Community Garden
THANK YOU + AHEHEE. QUESTIONS?