



Food & Nutrition Coalition Meeting Minutes
June 9, 2021, 8:30am – 10:00am

Meeting Attendees:	Aaron Estrada, Abigail LaLonde, Alyssa Stickney, Brianne Robach, Brookelyn Guynn, Carola Carassa, Colene Johnson, Crystal Scott-Tunstall, Deanna Howland, Emily Madsen, Erin Skidmore, Erynn Adle, Heidi Vanderlaan, Jennifer Smith, Julie Brunson, Kamara Sudberry, Karrie Brown, Miah Gonzales, Nancy Cromley, Nicole Driesenga, Paula Kerr, Phillip Greene, Rachel Bessire, Wende Randall <i>(List may not be complete- please contact Brianne if you were on the call but are not listed here.)</i>		
Time Convened:	8:35	Time Adjourned:	10:01

Welcome & Introductions	
Shared Vocabulary & Narrative Change	
Discussion	
<p>Over the past few months, this group has been discussing shared vocabulary and narrative change. Emily shared the guiding star and near star that this group created a few years ago. These statements are radical statements – they defy the status quo and the narrative that things will always be as they are now. The stars challenge us to remove the things that normalize lack of essential resources – food insecurity is rooted in poverty. In our work to reach the near and guiding star, it is important for partners and peers to have the language talk about this. As we change our language, norms, etc. within the Food and Nutrition Coalition, we cannot to let normalization of lack of access continue.</p> <p>Kam shared that we are building upon the work over the past few months and years. The goal of these narrative change conversations is to try to unthink the unconscious biases around words we use and how they impact how we interact with our neighbors and constituents. These biases are a result of how we grew up and the culture that we grew up in, but the Food and Nutrition Coalition has committed is not here to normalize living in poverty. Instead, the group wants to communicate that living in poverty is not normal. With the work, it is important to recognize that we will mess up at times. When we do, we have to learn and give grace.</p> <p>Julie shared her experience with recently educating someone around why the term “food insecure” is not accurate when referring to the families that they serve. She suggested that the group look at websites of other partners and reach out to ask organizations to consider the language they are using. Recognize that when writing grants, some of these terms are what funders want to hear</p> <p>In breakout groups, attendees discussed and edited the considerations of use, counternarrative, headlines, and hashtags for food-related terms that the group developed last month.</p> <p><u>Reflection:</u> Being uncomfortable is normal and necessary when we are coming to terms with things. It is important to continue to wrestle through these difficult conversations.</p> <p>In breakout groups, attendees created the considerations of use, counternarrative, headlines, and hashtags for food-related terms.</p>	



Food & Nutrition Coalition Meeting Minutes June 9, 2021, 8:30am – 10:00am

Reflection:

Carola shared that her group wrestled with the notion of anti-Black concepts are in the West Michigan community. The target zip codes for many organizations are primarily those of redlined neighborhoods. She challenged folks to call out policies and practices that historically have been anti-Black and continue to lead to inequity today.

Crystal noted that in her role at GVSU, she teaches students text book language as well as terms such as “food apartheid”. Teaching the original terms means that professors and students have to recognize and learn about systemic racism. It can be hard as the person of color to be the educator at times. She shared that it is everyone’s responsibility to do the research on their own as well as educate others.

Jennifer shared about her experience in with difficult conversations around the shifting of words we use, specifically around changing the language in contracts from male pronoun to gender neutral pronoun language.

Community Partner Updates

Discussion

DHHS has DSS funds available to help remove employment barriers for our families receiving assistance. If you want more info, please email Colene Johnson at johnsonc18@michigan.gov.

HOPE Gardens is excited to do in person programming with 500+ students in Wyoming this summer

West Michigan Works! Has a virtual job fair on 6/16. More info at:

<https://jobs.westmiworks.org/virtual-job-fair/>. Also, they did a State of WM Workforce webinar this week and shared great community feedback on what job seekers need.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6DFxtqY5Q1w>

Summer Meet Up to Eat Up feeding program sites will be listed on the Food Service website www.grps.org/nutrition - meals will be available for those 18 years and under

Senior Neighbors has two centers open currently (Grand Rapids & Grandville) and plan on opening Sparta and Lowell on July 2, 7, 9, 12, 14 & 16 and then five days a week starting July 19. If any of you have seniors that need help please don't hesitate to reach out to Nicole - ndriesenga@seniorneighbors.org

There is a Juneteenth Celebration, Saturday 6/19, 1 PM -6 PM, at Dickerson Buffer Park. Crystal will be helping with a food justice table. If you have information to shar with the community, connect with Crystal at scotttuc@gvsu.edu

From Collective Impact Forum - [The Role of Narrative Change in Collective Action](#)

ENTF will be hosting a redistricting townhall with the League of Women Voters tonight! Register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlod-yhqjliEtzbfU7TBzju_1rk5rNMni-0



Food & Nutrition Coalition Meeting Minutes
June 9, 2021, 8:30am – 10:00am

Another interesting articles: <https://civileats.com/2021/05/26/op-ed-hunger-is-a-political-decision-we-can-work-to-end-it/amp/>

Meeting slides:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yK1lg5k0KzC2x8eXuFE4g2S0v4UH8ZTG/view?usp=sharing>

Adjourn