

Hungry for Change: The Role of Youth in Building a Sustainable Food System in Bayview Hunters Point



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Community Health Assessment
Fall 2010: October 5, 2010
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Acknowledgements

The members of the assessment team would like to thank the following individuals and organizations. We are grateful to have had the opportunity to conduct this assessment, which would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of everyone involved.

We would first like to thank the key informants and youth that participated in our interviews and focus groups. They are the crux of this assessment. We appreciate their powerful stories, insight about the community and their ability to share their ideas with us. We learned and experienced a tremendous amount during this project.

We would also like to acknowledge the staff of Literacy for Environmental Justice for providing us with the resources necessary to get this project accomplished. We would especially like to thank Tracy Zhu and Malik Looper, who contributed their time and expertise to connect us with the community and provide us with the wonderful space at the Eco Center in which to conduct our research. We would also like to thank South East Food Access Workgroup (SEFA), especially Susana Hennessey-Lavery, for their support from the project's inception.

We would also like to thank our Professors Jessica Wolin and Marty Martinson who provided countless hours of their time to guide this process. Their support kept us strong and committed to our cause, and we are very grateful for that.

We would also like to thank Claudia Guerra for all her logistical support, and time that she very graciously provided to our team. We would also like to thank our partners, families, and friends for their support, love, and patience through this process.

Assessment Team Members:

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Executive Summary

Agency Description

Literacy for Environmental Justice (LEJ) is a San Francisco-based community organization that was established in 1998. The mission of the organization is based on the principles of Environmental Justice. LEJ offers paid internships to youth in the community, and also offers free hands on training to schools and other community based organizations. In addition to education, LEJ also sponsors efforts to restore and maintain wetlands, mainly in Heron's Head Park, where their Eco Center is located. Key staff involved in this assessment partnership include, Executive Director, Malik Looper and Eco Center Program Manager, Tracy Zhu.

Community Description

The community of Bayview Hunters Point (BVHP) is located in the South East of the City of San Francisco. BVHP is divided from the rest of the city by highways, and the only pedestrian friendly access route in and out of the neighborhood is 3rd Street. BVHP has one of the highest poverty rates in San Francisco, with 30% of families earning less than \$10,000 per year, and a median annual household income of only \$29,640, as compared to the \$65,000 average citywide. BVHP also has the highest population of children in the entire city, but also has one of the lowest rates of residents achieving their high school diplomas (Bayview Hunters Point-A Context, 2010).

Literature Review

Bayview Hunters Point is a neighborhood that experiences food insecurity and the outcomes associated with it. There is a wide variety of literature looking at the different issues that affect or influence food insecurity, including socioeconomic status, social equality, geography, transportation, and redevelopment plans. Food insecurity is often linked to poverty, which is then linked to purchasing of food that is nutritionally poor, but is readily available and inexpensive. BVHP has been infiltrated by dozens of fast food establishments, and convenience stores on almost every block. The presence of these types of establishments and the limited buying power of the residents makes the community vulnerable to poor health outcomes associated with food, such as the following health outcomes identified in the research: diabetes, hypertension, (Seligman, Laraia, & Kushel, 2010), and obesity (Drewnowski, 2009; Olson, 1999; Dietz, 1995). Also researched were the current interventions that are in place to alleviate the

issue of food insecurity (Cyzman, et. al, 2009; Gottlieb, R. & Fisher, A. 1996; Henderson, B.R. and Hartsfield, K. 2009). From federal to local programs, there are many solutions being offered to address the issue of food insecurity. These range from federal programs such as Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and Food Stamps to local programs like community gardens and farmers markets.

Purpose and Key Questions

There is limited information about youth opinions regarding the issue of food insecurity and how being part of the BVHP community affects their lives. In BVHP there is a need for cohesive youth-lead programs and, this assessment was created to evaluate the barriers and opportunities of creating such programs where youth will play a central role in addressing this issue. To guide the assessment, the following key questions were used:

1. What activities are currently involving youth on the issue of food insecurity in the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood?
2. How can activities currently addressing food security work with youth (ages 14-24) to improve their programs?
3. What youth led initiatives have attempted to address food insecurity in BVHP in the past five years?
4. What can be learned from other urban initiatives around the country working with youth (ages 14-24) about creating sustainable, effective programs to address the issue of food insecurity?
5. What characteristics are needed to create a lasting sustainable youth program addressing food insecurity in BVHP neighborhood?
6. What resources can help sustain a youth focused food program in Bayview Hunters Point?
7. What is the current viewpoint of youth ages 14-24 of the food access issue in the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood?

Methods

The assessment was created to explore the opportunities and barriers that exist in BVHP to creating successful programs about food with youth in the lead. The data collection took place May through July of 2010. There were 13 key informant interviews conducted with community program managers, local government officials, and other respected BVHP members. Seven youth focus groups were conducted with youth from different BVHP youth programs. The

majority focus group participants were males ages 14-17 that are native to BVHP or greater San Francisco. Data was collected and organized throughout the project period. Data analysis was conducted in September 2010 to form findings and recommendations from the information collected.

Findings and Recommendations

Eight findings were generated from the analysis of the data collected from the assessment. The findings come from interviews conducted with key informants from the neighborhood as well as youth focus groups. These findings should speak to the main questions of what it takes to create a successful youth engaged program, and what youth in BVHP think about the issue of food insecurity.

Findings

1. Youth in Bayview Hunters Point accept and normalize the consumption of fast foods and processed foods in part because inexpensive foods are easily accessible, and do not have immediate impacts on health. Fast food restaurants also have the added function as a location of socialization for youth in the neighborhood.
2. The food environment in BVHP does not affect all residents of the community equally. Some resident families leave the immediate neighborhood to purchase and eat more nutritious foods, often with cultural importance, which are not as easily accessible in BVHP.
3. A barrier to creating a sustainable youth program addressing food insecurity in BHVP is programmatic overlap. Overlap is exacerbated when programs do not have the resources or are unable to collaborate with other similar programs in the neighborhood.
4. Past and intermittent youth-led initiatives have made a positive impact on the food environment in BVHP. Despite their perceived effectiveness, many, if not all, have been suspended due to a loss of sufficient funding, insufficient planning or a lack of programmatic support.
5. There are many programs currently working with youth, utilizing varying strategies to address the issue of food insecurity in BVHP. Despite this, many youth are unaware of how to become involved. In addition youth programs aimed at other structural levels could make further impact.

6. In order for an organization to engage youth to work on food insecurity in BVHP and be sustainable, it must be effectively run by staff who offer consistent, quality programming to youth in the neighborhood.
7. Youth and community experts agree that incentives such as a paying job and the opportunity to develop transferable skills, help to attract and maintain youth participation in food security related programs.
8. Youth involvement at all levels of program development and implementation is necessary for a youth-based program in the neighborhood to be successful.

Recommendations

1. The long-term impacts of eating healthy foods as opposed to eating processed foods must be taught to youth in BVHP, specifically, how to buy and shop for inexpensive healthy food. Programs serving youth must incorporate workshops that train young people to become better healthy food consumers.
2. In order to undo food insecurity trends among youth in BVHP, further research using a transdisciplinary theory* analysis (which is the application of an integrative approach to addressing and solving health disparities) could highlight how to bridge current programs. This approach could help by collectively developing youth programs that attempt to minimize inconsistencies of youth access.
3. BVHP residents should not be forced to leave their neighborhood to gain access to culturally specific food products they are accustomed to. Local organizations should make an effort to provide these types of foods at their programs.
4. Organizations serving youth in BVHP must maintain consistent food programming as to not deviate from the mission and vision of the Organization. This will establish the organization with the community and with funding sources of future food programs.
5. Before developing a youth program, organizations should ensure that a strong foundation is created. Start with small and slow solutions and build a food justice program over time based on the interest and ideas of the youth as well as the strengths and capacity of the organization. In doing so, agencies should work to avoid duplication of programming and build strong, collaborative relationships with other youth development organizations in the community.

6. Agencies should continue to invest in current and future staff by providing further training opportunities and support in areas of organizational interests.
7. Ensure that the program design and budget includes opportunities for youth to gain paid employment that provides training and education about food security, in a safe and enjoyable environment, while also developing transferable job skills.

Agency Description

Literacy for Environmental Justice (LEJ)

Literacy for Environmental Justice (LEJ) is located in the heart of the Bayview Hunters Point community and was founded in 1998 by a coalition of youth, educators, and community leaders to foster the principles of environmental justice and urban sustainability in BVHP youth (www.Lejyouth.org). In addition to offering paid internships to Bayview Hunters Point youth in environmental health, natural ecology, and food security, LEJ also provides free hands-on environmental educational programs to schools and youth programs.

LEJ also sponsors efforts to restore and maintain wetlands and natural settings like Heron's Head Park, a former shipyard Brownfields site which is now a vibrant wetland. After years of planning and fundraising, LEJ recently celebrated the grand opening of its Eco Center at Heron's Head Park, an education facility that is the first 100% "off-grid" building in San Francisco modeling new alternative energy and wastewater technologies.

Key Staff

Malik Looper is LEJ's Executive Director and served as the Community Adjunct Faculty (CAF) for this project. He manages seven full-time staff and an approximate \$800,000 budget. LEJ's Eco Center Program Manager, Tracy Zhu, also served as a primary contact person and directly supported the data assessment and collection phases of the project as well.

Why LEJ wants to develop a Youth Nutrition Program

As documented in other sections of this assessment, a major reason for the poor health of BVHP residents is the lack of access to fresh, healthy food. With no major grocery stores in the area, corner stores and fast food outlets selling high fat, high calorie foods become a primary food source for the community. In 2002, LEJ youth conducted an assessment of corner stores and found an abundance of foods with low nutritional value. As an example, only 5% of food products sold at convenience stores were fresh produce (www.lejyouth.org). Since that time, LEJ has been committed to increasing healthy food access throughout the community. LEJ is hopeful this assessment will help identify opportunities to foster the development of youth-based nutrition programming that will build upon LEJ's already significant accomplishments in this field. They also hope the project will draw additional community awareness and youth involvement as it provides a critical example of community-based service learning initiatives and long-term research projects with higher learning institutions such as SFSU and UCSF.

Community Description

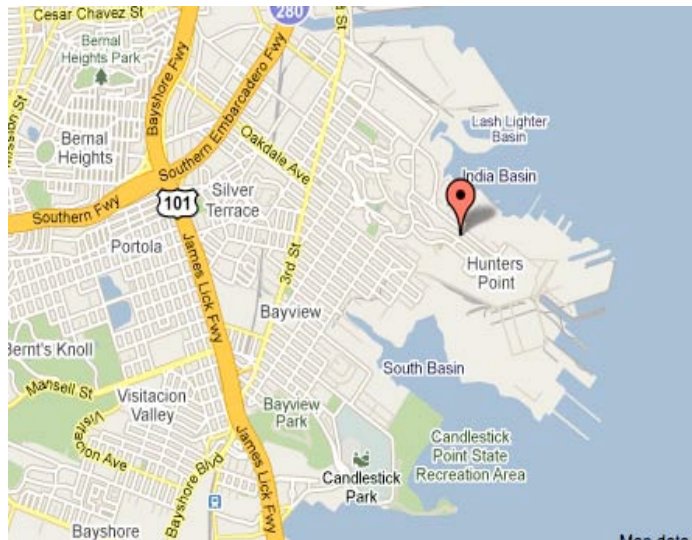
This assessment focused on youth ages 14 to 24 years. LEJ staff helped recruit youth from various youth-based programs to participate in discussions about food. The rationale is that youth recruited from other programs have been exposed to structured environments, which would facilitate a productive engagement for both the graduate students and the youth as opposed to recruiting youth at random from the street.

Demographics

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, BVHP's population is approximately 50% African American (7.6% citywide) 27.6% Pacific Islander, 16.7% Latina/Hispanic, 5.4% White, and .3% Native American, of which 5,603 were youth ages 14-24. BVHP has one of the highest poverty rates in San Francisco, with 30% of families earning less than \$10,000 per year, and a median annual household income of only \$29,640, as compared to a \$65,000 citywide average. BVHP also has one of the highest percentages of children in the city: 30.0% (16.7% citywide), though one of the lowest levels of educational attainment with 36.6% of its residents having no high-school diploma (18.8% citywide) and only 11.6% having a Bachelors Degree (45.0% citywide) (Bayview Hunters Point-A Context, 2010).

Geography

BVHP sits in the southeast part of the City of San Francisco and is connected to downtown San Francisco via the 3rd Street corridor, Highway 280 and Highway 101. Ironically, these access roads also divide and create barriers for the residents of



BVHP to access goods and services in other parts of the city. The map (above) shows how the two highways (101 and 280) surround the district's northern, southern and western perimeters, while the bay waters to the east bound the remainder of the neighborhood. Residents without an automobile or access to public transportation only have 3rd Street as a pedestrian friendly access road to leave the neighborhood.

Literature Review

Introduction

Until the mid-1900's, the Bayview Hunters Point (BVHP) neighborhood had a history of serving as a critical food shed for the City of San Francisco. The pastures were full of cattle and the bay was in constant harvest for fish and shrimp. (http://www.bayviewfootprints.org/BVHP_History_HMRS.html) Presently, however, BVHP residents are hungry. One in four residents live with a daily threat of hunger (San Francisco Food Bank, 2007) and nearly 40 percent of them are youth. Fortunately, these youth have hope: driven by their hunger not only for quality food, but also for change. Literacy for Environmental Justice (LEJ), and other community-based organizations, are working to harness that hope to make changes in the food system in Bayview Hunters Point. So that all residents have access to the healthy foods they deserve. Similar to any complex issue of such importance to a community's health and well-being, multiple factors must be explored before considering a strategy that will be effective for youth engagement around the issue of food insecurity.

Food Insecurity

The USDA defines food insecurity as “a lack of access to enough food for an active, healthy life” (Nord, 2004, p.2). According to a report by the USDA, “in 2004 38.2 million people lived in food insecure households. They constituted 13.2 percent of the U.S. population and included 24.3 million adults and 13.9 million children” (p.4). In contrast, food security is defined as either having reported no food-access problem or limitations or not having “anxiety over food sufficiency of shortage of food in the house” (United States Department of Agriculture). Beyond the general problem of food insecurity in the overall US population, people of color have higher rates of food insecurity. In relation to 13 percent of white non-Hispanic people who were found to be food insecure, black and Hispanic were found to be 31 and 29 percent food insecure respectively (Nord, 2004).

Bayview residents range “between food secure and hungry.” Because of this, BVHP is referred to as a “food insecure” community (Kushel, Gupta, Gee, & Hass, 2006). According to a 2007 assessment conducted by the San Francisco Food Bank, “one in 3 people in Bayview Hunters Point live with the daily threat of hunger” (2007, p.5) 11,325 residents live at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty line and are considered food insecure; nearly forty percent of

these are children or youth (2000 Census; San Francisco Food Bank, 2007). Multiple factors have been identified in the literature that play a role in the issue of food insecurity: Socioeconomic status (Chaloupka & Powell, 2009; Beaulac & Kristjansson, 2009), geography (Schafft, Jensen, & Hinrichs, 2009), social disconnection (Misselhorn, 2009), neighborhood perspectives about food (SEFA, 2007), the impacts of redevelopment (Winne, 2003; Halburg 2009; Cambell, 1997), and transportation (Halberg, 2009; Gotlieb & Fisher 1996) all contribute to this devastating issue.

Socioeconomic Status and Social Inequality

Socioeconomic status and social inequality play a major role in food insecurity and food access. Chaloupka and Powell (2009) looked specifically at socioeconomic status, the price and availability of food, and the relationship to youth obesity. They found that healthier food was less available in communities with lower incomes and larger proportions of racial/ethnic minorities. They further concluded that lower fruit and vegetable prices were associated with higher fruit and vegetable intake, while lower fast food prices were associated with lower fruit and vegetable consumption. Beaulac and Kristjansson (2009) reviewed the research of “food deserts” defined as areas with relatively low access to healthy and affordable food. They concluded that in the U.S. there was clear evidence for disparities in healthy and affordable food access linked to income and race. Specifically, Chaloupka and Powell (2009) reported that there are fewer chain supermarkets in lower-income communities. Predominantly African American communities had approximately half as many chain supermarkets as predominantly white communities. Predominantly Latino communities had approximately one-third as many as did non-Latino communities. Not only is there a lack of places to get food, in terms of perceptions, BVHP residents seem to have a negative view of the available food options in their neighborhood. “Residents described the shops on Third Street “depressing,” “unappealing,” “unsafe,” and “threatening” (SEFA Survey Report, 2007). Overall, the research shows that lack of access to healthy food can be harmful to a population, and can be exacerbated by low socioeconomic status.

Geography

Geography also plays an important role in the issue of food insecurity in Bayview Hunters Point. The geographic location of BVHP neighborhood, in relation to the other neighborhoods in San Francisco, creates a unique physical disconnect among the BVHP residents from other parts

of the city. The major barriers in accessing these other parts of the city are the bordering freeways and bay waters. This is especially relevant for youth because they are less likely to drive and have less money to access public transportation. Hence, many youth are isolated in their community because of the built environment. In addition, the lack of a major grocery store in BVHP hinders adequate access to healthy and fresh food and is a larger challenge for youth ages 14-24. As a matter of fact, Coveney and O'Dwyer found that in a town in South Australia, what mattered most in accessing healthy food was not distance from a grocery store but "independent transport to shops" (Coveney & O'Dwyer, 2009).

As a result of this isolation from the rest of the city, BHVP is commonly referred to as a 'food desert' by some researchers and food advocates (Schafft, Jensen, & Hinrichs, 2009). The concept of 'food desert' has been defined as an idea that connotes "spatial inequity" and "research has demonstrated that food deserts are frequently characterized by higher levels of poverty and food insecurity" (Schafft, Jensen, & Hinrichs, 2009, p.2). Further, Alkon and Norgaad (2009) highlight how institutional racism shapes the physical landscape, which prevents many black and indigenous communities from purchasing the quality of food they once produced (historically as sharecroppers and later as farmers). Without convenient access to healthy and nutritious foods in their communities, residents of Bayview Hunters Point and other poor urban neighborhoods end up having greater access to processed and fast foods with added sugars, salt and fats than to fresh fruits and vegetables (Hallberg, 2009).

Redevelopment

Economic development in the Bayview Hunters Point community is on-going and extensive. Within the next five years up to 10,000 new homes will be developed in the community along with other significant commercial and retail business development (<http://www.cleantuptheshipyard.com/plan.html>). As a result, a review of the literature addressing how these development plans will impact the community's access to healthy and nutritious foods is essential to understanding the long-term outlook of food insecurity in the BVHP community.

Much of the literature focuses on lessons learned from prior community development planning processes focused in the BVHP community. The literature concludes that the concerns of food insecurity must be a focal point in all phases of the planning effort (Winne, 2003). Hallberg asserts, "The food needs of a community are at least as essential as other traditional

planning functions including housing, land use, economic development, transportation, retail development, environmental planning and historic preservation” (Hallberg, 2009, p.8). Local governments have a responsibility to promote programs that allow community residents to gain improved access to nutritious foods. Municipal governments need to proactively cooperate with community-based organizations; the development community; as well as nutrition, health, food security, and environmental advocates to ensure access for low-income community residents who might otherwise not be represented in the development process. Further, there is a need for community involvement in the planning and development process (Campbell,1997; Winne 2003). Cambell suggests grassroots organizing to form what he called “community-controlled economic development” (1997, p.17). This approach asserts democratic community driven control in areas such as key power relationships in the food and agricultural systems. Further, this promotes community organizing and mobilization of social capital, which leads to partnerships between the urban and rural components of the food system. Winne goes on to state that community food security is “concerned with agriculture, the availability of supermarkets and other affordable outlets for quality food” as well as “the services and environments that encourage healthy food choices including schools, nutrition service providers, and commercial food operations” (2003, p.1).

Although there was consensus amongst the literature that the issue of food insecurity must be a focal point of any economic development planning process, the actual Redevelopment Plan for the BVHP neighborhood has not addressed food insecurity directly. The Redevelopment Plan also has not incorporated many of the lessons learned from the prior redevelopment efforts. There was only one indirect reference to the issue in the report, though this reference was not made in the context of food insecurity, rather it was written in the context of developing “...community destinations and gathering places – including plazas and locations for festivals, fairs, a farmer’s market and community events” (Redevelopment Plan for the BVHP Project Area, 2006).

Transportation

It is suggested that food insecurity in low-income neighborhoods was made worse when supermarkets followed the mass of urban dwellers as they fled inner city neighborhoods during the 1970's due to the new freeway systems and the movement to suburban lifestyles in America (Hallberg, 2009). The lack of convenient access to healthy and nutritious foods raises significant

barriers for residents of low-income urban neighborhoods, like Bayview Hunters Point.

Therefore, ensuring convenient access to round-trip transportation to healthy and nutritious foods is a critical element to addressing food insecurity for communities like the BVHP, and even more so for youth in this community who lack access to any form of private transportation and limited access to public transportation. As Feenstra (1997) found, youth who lack convenient access to transportation have an increased reliance on corner stores and fast foods.

The literature stresses the importance of locating new transportation infrastructure within close proximity to both the new as well as the existing housing developments where the low-moderate socioeconomic status (SES) population will reside. Without effective and convenient “intra-neighborhood” transportation, no solution to food insecurity can be truly sustainable (Winne, 2003; Gottlieb & Fisher, 1996).

Finally, the Redevelopment Plan for the Bayview Hunters Point Project Area does not discuss intra-neighborhood transportation. The focus on transportation is aimed at commuters who travel to and from downtown San Francisco for work. As stated in the Redevelopment Plan, “Promote the enhancement of transit hubs, including Muni and CalTrain, to bring people to BVHP and to provide residents with improved connections to employment” (Redevelopment Plan, 2006, p.30). There is no mention of ensuring convenient intra-neighborhood access to nutritious and healthy foods for existing and future residents of the community's affordable housing units.

There are many variables that contribute to the issue of food insecurity. Many of those issues have been described as, socioeconomic status, social disconnection, redevelopment, and transportation. These same neighborhood issues have been linked to health outcomes by the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SF DPH). In 2006, SF DPH published a study called: Health Programs in Bayview Hunter’s Point & Recommendations for Improving the Health of Bayview Hunter’s Point Residents. This study reported that, “Lack of access to healthy foods, inadequate transportation, lack of exercise facilities, and violence all serve to restrict BVHP residents’ ability to exercise and eat healthy foods” (Katz, 2006, pg.14). This lack of access to healthy foods and exercise exacerbates the risk of poor health outcomes among both youth and adults.

Food Related Health Outcomes

Food insecurity leads to many adverse health outcomes. Some of the major health

outcomes identified in the research as associated with food insecurity include: diabetes, hypertension (Seligman, Laraia, & Kushel, 2010), and obesity (Drewnowski, 2009; Olson, 1999; Dietz, 1995). In BVHP, 13.6% of residents are living with Type 2 Diabetes (BVHP Family, 2010), as compared with California, where 8.3% of the adult population is living with diagnosed diabetes. In San Francisco there was an even lower percentage (7.4%) of adults living with diagnosed diabetes (Centers for Disease Control, 2010). Obesity, another main health outcome of food insecurity is also more prevalent in BVHP as compared to San Francisco. “BVHP residents have the highest rates of obesity (28.1%) and overweight (34.6%) in the city as compared to an average of 11.9% for obesity and 28.4% overweight for the city as a whole” (BVHP Family, 2010, hunterspointfamily.com).

One of the main ways that food insecurity can lead to poor health outcomes is the phenomenon of supplementing diets with low-cost fats and sugars. “Fats, oils, sugar, refined grains, potatoes, and beans provided dietary energy at minimal cost” (Drewnowski, 2009). This lack of access to healthy foods (fruits and vegetables) due to financial constraints leads to adverse health outcomes as described previously. The relationship between food insecurity and poverty was a very common theme among the literature about health outcomes associated with food insecurity, (Drewnowski, 2009; Seligman, Laraia, & Kushel, 2010; Seligman, Bindman, Vittinghoff, Kanaya, & Kushel, 2007). “It may be time to point out that obesity is an economic issue” (Drewnowski, 2009). Not only does food insecurity relate to health outcomes, but some studies also point to mental health issues. Siefert, Heflin, Corcoran, and Williams (2004) suggest that food insufficiency leads to poor mental health and depression among welfare recipients. Many of the studies refer to adult health outcomes, like diabetes and hypertension (Seligman, Laraia, & Kushel, 2010). However, there are adverse outcomes directly linked to teen and child health.

Food insecurity causes adverse health outcomes in teens and children. Casey and colleagues(2006) and Dietz (1995) state that obesity is linked to food insecurity in youth. Further stating that children in food insecure households are more likely to be obese than their food secure counterparts. Many of the studies not only point to health outcomes, but also behavioral and cognitive impacts from food insecurity. In regards to mental health, one study stated that food insufficient teens were, “more likely to have seen a psychologist, have been suspended from school, and have had difficulty getting along with other children” (Alaimo, Olson, Frongillo,

2001). Food insecurity among teens is even thought to be associated with increased thoughts of death and suicide (Alaimo, Olson, and Frongillo, 2002). One study also stated that teens may be at greater risk from affects of food insecurity because they do not have as many protective factors as younger children. The same study also stated teens are also more likely to eat calorie dense, processed foods because of cheapness and availability and also think that healthy food does not taste good (Widome, Neumark-Sztainer, Hannan, Haines, and Story, 2009). This could lead to an even higher risk of nutrition related food outcomes among teens that are food insecure. Some of these same effects have also been observed among school-aged children. Aggression and anxiety among children has been correlated with being hungry. Hunger has also been correlated with poor academic performance (Kleinman, Murphy, Little, Pagano, Wehler, Regal, and Jellinek, 1998). Developmental and emotional problems among children were also very prevalent in severely food insecure households (Weireb, et al, 2002).

Most of the articles reviewed describe a cycle of: low income status and lack of access to healthy foods leading to poor food choices, which can in turn lead to chronic disease among adults (Drewnowski, 2009; Seligman, Laraia, & Kushel, 2010; Seligman, Bindman, Vittinghoff, Kanaya, & Kushel, 2007). The literature on children and teens shows many of the same health effects, such as obesity, occur for youth more frequently among food insecure households. Similar to adults, children and teens also experience mental problems like depression or anxiety, but for children and teens it plays out in a school setting.

Food insecurity may also play a role in social disconnection. In one case study, researchers identified that “some social capital-related failures are linked to food insecurity in the community” (Misselhorn, 2009). Bayview Hunters Point is a unique neighborhood in that it has a mix of residents who have been residents for a long time, those who have recently moved in and those who only work in the neighborhood. This mixture has created a perception of disconnect within the community and among the residents, which has made it difficult for the existing agencies to better address the food insecurity issue. These factions among the residents, which are also perhaps related to cultural differences, have made it difficult for under-funded non-sustainable food programs to make any progress in BVHP.

Federal, State and County Level Interventions

There are many federal, state and local programs addressing food insecurity. The federal food stamp program is one of the largest programs working to address hunger in the United

States. According to the 2005 San Francisco Collaborative Food System Assessment, the food stamp program is budgeted at over \$34 billion per year and serves approximately 24.9 million people nationally. According to the same 2005 report, California was ranked last nationally in terms of food stamp participation. Bayview Hunters Point and the Tenderloin Neighborhoods of San Francisco have both the highest number of residents receiving food stamps and the highest number of eligible residents who are not receiving food stamps. As of 2005, the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood had the lowest number of food outlets accepting food stamps in relation to the high number of recipients residing there (San Francisco Food Systems, 2005).

Other food assistance programs working to address the issue of food insecurity and hunger in San Francisco include 15 federal nutrition programs funded through the USDA. These outlined by the San Francisco Food Systems include:

Child nutrition programs such as the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Summer Food Service Program, and Child and Adult Care Food Program.

Discretionary programs include the Special Supplemental Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) and WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP). Mandatory programs include The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program" (2005, p 46).

Operationally, grants are provided to a local network of agencies, community based organizations, churches, schools, businesses, funders and residents to administer the benefit of the federal program. Unfortunately these federal programs are often underutilized. However, Cook and colleagues (2004) found that food stamps and the Woman Infants and Children (WIC) Supplemental food program can be protective factors in looking at the issue of food insecurity, so more research is needed on how economic stability can lead to better health outcomes in terms of access to healthy food.

Food Banks

In addition to federal programs, San Francisco has a large network of charitable food programs that provide in-kind food assistance or redistribute food donations from private industry and government commodity programs. These programs are different from the federal programs in that they often do not have as strict eligibility requirements. The San Francisco Food Bank is the largest distributor of donated food in the city providing a food stream for more than

450 non-profit anti-hunger programs in the city. According to the San Francisco Food Bank's Neighborhood profile for Bayview Hunters Point as of 2007 there were 22 food pantries serving residents or families with children (2007).

Community Gardens

Beyond the traditional forms of food assistance, there is a range of literature suggesting that community gardens have a positive impact on food security and health of residents in urban communities. It is suggested that community gardens have the potential to promote overall public health by increasing opportunities for increased physical activity, improved nutrition and greater social interaction (Cyzman, et. al, 2009; Gottlieb, R. & Fisher, A. 1996; Henderson, B.R. and Hartsfield, K. 2009; Tieg et al, 2009; Twiss et al 2009). In addition to supporting greater food security and health, community gardens have been shown to increase community connectedness (Gottlieb & Fisher, 1996; Cyzman et al, 2009), and community capacity (Twiss et al, 2009) by giving citizens a sense of ownership and pride thereby leading many to engage in policy change or other initiatives to better their community (Henderson & Hartsfield, 2009; Gottlieb & Fisher, 1996). Finally, gardens are discussed as a way to beautify urban neighborhoods (Cyzman et al, 2009; Gottlieb & Fisher, 1996; Henderson and Hartsfield, 2009), provide inexpensive productive recreation and utilize private and city owned vacant lots for community benefit (Henderson & Hartsfield, 2009, Gottlieb & Fisher 1996).

San Francisco Food Systems (2005) describes community gardens or urban agriculture as providing opportunity for producing food, beautifying neighborhoods, improving urban air and soil quality, improving health, developing social connections, and improving institutional practices through cooperation of institution and resident. As of the 2005 report San Francisco had 59 community gardens, and 30 school gardens. Two of these community gardens were in Bayview Hunters Point, but it is unknown whether they are still active.

Since 2005, there has been an increased interest in community gardening and programs to encourage the use of public lands for small gardens around the city. Locally, the Mayor's Office in San Francisco has recently taken a significant approach in addressing food insecurity throughout the entire city. An Executive Directive issued by Mayor Gavin Newsom in July 2009, is comprehensive and attempts to address food insecurity using a multi-leveled and holistic approach. Many parts of the ecological model are considered, and more importantly, the directive ordered all departments within the city to identify resources and city owned land that

can be used to grow food (Newsom, 2009). However, another accounting of community gardens has not been done since the 2005 San Francisco Food System Assessment.

Farmers Markets

In much of the literature, community gardens are discussed in tandem with community farmers markets (Cyzman, et. al, 2009; Gottlieb & Fisher 1996; Henderson, & Hartsfield, 2009). Farmers markets are discussed as tools for economic development, opportunities for local jobs (Cyzman, et. al, 2009; Gottlieb, R. & Fisher, A. 1996; Henderson, B.R. and Hartsfield, K. 2009) an additional space for community recreation or entertainment, and a place for community celebration (Tieg et al, 2009). Both gardens and farmers markets were discussed as venues for education regarding both nutrition and trade skills (Cyzman, et. al, 2009; Gottlieb & Fisher, 1996; Henderson & Hartsfield 2009; Tieg et al, 2009; Twiss et al 2009). Much of the literature on the topic of community gardens outlines the basic needs for sustaining community garden programs. Local leadership, volunteer and community commitment (Twiss et al 2009), land availability, sustained funding; broad government support (in the case of publicly sponsored programs), and effective program design (Gottlieb & Fisher, 1996; Henderson, & Hartsfield, 2009) were outlined as necessities for a successful community garden program.

In 2005, the city received a grant it used to establish the Bayview Hunters Point farmers market collaborative and operate a pilot farmers market in the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood. That program ran from 2005 until 2009 when it was closed because it became economically unsustainable (Eng, 2009). That market was one of seven in 2005 that accepted food stamps (San Francisco Food Systems, 2005). In January 2007, a San Francisco ordinance was passed to require all farmers markets in the city to accept food stamps (<http://www.sfgov.org/site/sffoodindex.asp?id=66025>). To date there are no active farmers markets in Bayview Hunters Point.

Involving Youth

In general, youth development programs have been successful at providing support for youth living in low-income urban neighborhoods. According to the literature, programs that provide both a bonding mechanism for youth as well as offering opportunities to build self-efficacy have been most successful (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2004; Sillman, 2004). Other strong programs serve youth best when they offer a safe and supportive place in which to develop an identity and confront the tough pressures of growing up in low-SES

neighborhoods like the BVHP (Nicholson, Collins & Holmer, 2004). In a meta-review of multiple youth programs, Catalano and colleagues (2004) outlined multiple positive outcomes for youth. These outcomes included greater self-control, assertiveness, and healthy and adaptive coping in peer-pressure situations. In addition, many youth had improvements in school attendance, parental relations, academic performance, and peer emotional support. Nicholson and colleagues (2004), looking more specifically at nutrition and physical activity, asserted that “Young people stand to benefit from programs that engage them in their own experiments to see if a balance of healthy diet, sleep, and exercise makes them feel better, participate more enthusiastically, and win more often at their favorite competitive activities“ (pg 65).

Across the country and in BVHP, youth are involved in addressing the issue of nutrition insecurity and its health outcomes, such as diabetes and obesity. Through growing involvement in research initiatives, cultivation of local produce for retail at farmers markets, design and implementation of policy campaigns, young people play a critical role working to increase access to healthy foods and improve the overall health of their communities. In order for young people to maintain this critical involvement, infrastructure and support are necessary.

In August of 2009, San Francisco based Youth Leadership Institute (YLI) convened 18 successful youth-led organizations working on healthy eating and physical activity across the country. Through their discussions with multiple youth-led advocacy organizations a set of best practice recommendations were formed. These best practices included: outreach to diverse groups of youth; involvement of youth in decision making processes; youth involvement structurally in the leadership of the organization; community based learning; youth leadership development; learning processes that allow for mistakes, reflection and lessons; youth skill development with opportunity to explore, contribute and achieve mastery in areas of interest; intergenerational partnerships and relationships that keep youth connected; a social justice commitment and a sense of accomplishment with celebration and reflection (Youth Leadership Institute, 2009).

Beyond these recommendations the role of adults in supporting and partnering with youth was also discussed. Some recommendations for youth workers included: championing youth ideas, providing consistency and structure, reciprocity, listening more than speaking, meet youth where they're at, help build coalitions with youth as equal stake holders, support youth independence and interdependence and offer jobs, paid internships and stipends for “youth to

value their contributions” (YLI, 2009). These recommendations could be very useful to the success of future youth-led programs, particularly in California and the Bay Area. Of the 18 youth-led organizations who were a part of this discussion many of them are California based (5) and/or doing work in the San Francisco Bay Area (3).

Currently there are multiple programs in BVHP that have included youth-led food initiatives addressing food insecurity. Literacy for Environmental Justice has implemented multiple youth-led initiatives addressing access to healthy foods. The most recent project was a corner store conversion program called Good Neighbor Project where youth went into corner stores, conducted research, and advocated for more produce on the shelves (www.Lejyouth.org). The program has made a significant impact on the community and is used as a model all over the nation for similar projects. Other organizations in the community such as Girls 2000 (hunterspointfamily.org) and the SF Food Guardians (<http://www.sfgov3.org/index.aspx?page=1183#3>) are currently involved with community gardens to both distribute produce and support a store front that sell smoothies.

Conclusion

Overall the problem of food insecurity in Bayview Hunters Point is a complex, multifaceted subject. Issues of low resident SES, geographic isolation, transportation, significant redevelopment efforts that do nothing to address the issue, safety, and the lack of an actual full service grocery store all play a role in preventing residents from obtaining access to sufficient levels of nutritious foods for good health. There are many federal, state, and local programs which are working to alleviate hunger, but they are underutilized, delivered in an uncoordinated fashion, and do not have sufficient resources to create the change necessary in BVHP to eradicate food insecurity. This issue especially affects children and youth. Compared to greater San Francisco, the BVHP neighborhood has a one of the highest concentrations of individuals under 18. In addition to efforts in the past, there are currently multiple grassroots youth organizations attempting to develop a sustainable and effective strategy to improve the food system in BVHP. Despite these current and past efforts and all of the lessons learned, there is still confusion about how to effectively and sustainably engage youth in the BVHP to address this problem that so dramatically affects their health and well-being in such a negative way on a daily basis.

Purpose Statement and Key Questions

Purpose Statement

To assess opportunities and challenges to building a sustainable, nutritious, and accessible food system by engaging youth, ages 14-24, in the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood of San Francisco and to identify appropriate strategies to engage such youth.

Key Questions

1. What activities are currently involving youth on the issue of food insecurity in the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood?
2. How can activities currently addressing food security work with youth (ages 14-24) to improve their programs?
3. What youth led initiatives have attempted to address food insecurity in BVHP in the past five years?
4. What can be learned from other urban initiatives around the country working with youth (ages 14-24) about creating sustainable, effective programs to address the issue of food insecurity?
5. What characteristics are needed to create a lasting sustainable youth program addressing food insecurity in BVHP neighborhood?
6. What resources can help sustain a youth focused food program in Bayview Hunters Point?
7. What is the current viewpoint of youth ages 14-24 of the food access issue in the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood?

Methods

Overview

After reviewing the strengths and weaknesses of the various methods for gathering data for this community assessment, it was determined that focus groups and key informant interviews would be the most effective methods. Many factors were considered in the review of the various methods to gather data. As an example, LEJ youth had recently completed a survey on a similar topic, so as to not duplicate that effort, that method was eliminated. In the end, considering that the youth focus of our assessment was a new avenue that lacked sufficient background information, youth-based focus groups were deemed an effective means to gather data from this important demographic. In addition, key informant interviews were clearly the most practical means to gather data from key community leaders and informed parties with specific expertise on this topic.

Focus groups were chosen as a means to gather significant data for our study and so much effort was put into this data collection method. Tracy Zhu from LEJ was critical in the recruitment of local youth groups and arranging logistics. Since LEJ had recently completed its Heron's Head Park Eco Center, several summer youth programs were interested to tour the facility and hold activities there. This was fortuitous as it made scheduling more efficient.

Key informant interviews, on the other hand, were more structured conversations with community leaders with specialized knowledge about the topic of food security and/or youth in the BVHP. Key informant interviews allowed for exploration of the subject matter in greater depth than in the focus group setting (Butterfoss, 2006).

Focus Groups

Sample. In addition to conducting a small focus group pilot comprised of four youth from LEJ, multiple focus groups with youth from the BAYCAT and College Track summer youth programs were conducted. Each program accounted for three separate focus groups, totaling six focus groups with youth from two organizations in addition to the LEJ youth pilot. The initial contact to the youth organizations for focus groups was made through Tracy Zhu of Literacy for Environmental Justice (See Table 1 for descriptive statistics on focus groups). Due to the rich content provided, the pilot LEJ youth focus group data was included in the overall data analysis. Because focus groups work best when people feel comfortable, at ease and relaxed and when people see others like them in the group, (i.e., same age, sex, orientation,) the focus

groups were separated into, youth ages 10-15, 16-17, and ages 18-24. The focus group participants were also grouped based on their neighborhood of residence. In addition to focus groups from BAYCAT, College Track, and LEJ, we also conducted a hybrid focus group/KI interview with two current members of the Food Guardian program. Due to the fact that they were slightly older than other focus group members and they possessed more background and training on the specific topic, we created a hybrid Focus Group/KI Interview Protocol that was used specifically for this discussion (Appendix G).

Procedures. Of the three focus groups held on each of the planned focus group dates, two groups were led by one team member acting as the facilitator, joined by another team member acting as the observer/note taker. Tracy Zhu of LEJ, facilitated the third focus group on each of the two days, assisted by one of the program coordinators from the visiting youth program. Groups generally lasted between 50 minutes to an hour. Due to the fact that youth were recruited through summer programs that serve beyond the Bayview Hunters Point Neighborhood, we broadened our inclusion criteria youth who have connections to the neighborhood and are thereby affected by the food environment of BVHP.

After an initial ice-breaker discussion about the how many of their friends eat junk food and their thoughts on why that is the case given they know junk food is unhealthy. The protocol led the groups in a brainstorming session, capturing their ideas in four basic categories listed on 4 large pieces of poster paper, each titled with one of the four categories of intervention focused on by this study. Those categories of intervention were: Access, Norms, Policies and Media. In some cases, the groups were broken into smaller groups to develop their ideas, in other groups this was done as a whole. Both the size of the group and their willingness to participate were the key factors in deciding on which option best suited that specific group.

As part of the brainstorming session, some of the groups put their ideas on sticky notes before later attaching them to the larger poster sized sheets of paper specific to one of the four previously discussed intervention categories. Other groups who did not break into smaller groups had their ideas written on the relevant sheet of paper by the member of the team in charge of note taking. A brief discussion followed based on the thoughts provided, which led to even more ideas coming forth that were written under the appropriate category as well.

Once all of the brainstorming was complete and a discussion held, the groups were asked to create strategies to address one or more of the ideas about why kids would continue to eat junk

food though they were aware it was unhealthy. These strategies were then discussed and refined so that each focus group would have one or two strategies per category to consider. In actuality, there were several groups who were unable to come up with either ideas of why youth would continue to eat junk food though they knew it was unhealthy or a strategy for a specific reason when they did brainstorm one. In this case, the facilitator would focus on any ideas that were generated by the group. In a rare few cases, there were too many ideas, so the groups had to vote on which ideas to create strategies for.

In either case, once all the strategies were listed, each individual in the group was given colored sticky dots. One color represented a strategy that the individual thought would be fun to work on, the second color represented an idea that would benefit the community, the third color represented an idea that feasible to work on and the last color represented a strategy that would benefit the individual by improving their resume or work experience. The youth were allowed to put more than one sticky dot color per strategy if that strategy resonated with them on more than one level. Following this last component of the protocol, groups were thanked for their time and allowed to leave (See attached Focus Group Protocol in Appendix D).

In addition, 5 of the 7 focus groups that took place were also recorded and transcribed. Consent forms were sent out prior to the group to be discussed and signed with the youth group team leads. Two of the focus groups led by Tracy Zhu were not recorded but extensive notes were taken. After the notes were typed and the recordings transcribed, the data was uploaded to another Google document created for this purpose.

Key Informant Interviews

Sample. The participants in our key informant interviews were chosen because they were subject matter experts. In order to ensure a multi-level perspective on the issue at hand, key informants represented five basic areas: Youth workers, leaders of community organizations, policy level staff, redevelopment, and those who had historical experience with LEJ programs. It is important to note that many of the key informants fit into multiple areas (See attached Mind Map in Appendix A). These key informant interviews allowed us to gather more detailed information about the past history of community intervention efforts related to food insecurity and youth in the BVHP, as well as explore effective solutions in the future.

Procedures. The key informant interviews were based on a six-question interview protocol with multiple probes related to each question. The recruitment plan for the informant

interviews was to first make contact with key community leaders suggested by LEJ staff to encourage them to participate in key informant interviews. The snowball sampling technique was also employed whereby as new names surfaced of critical key informants, they became focused targets as interview candidates. Similar to the focus groups, two members of the project team conducted each interview with one member asking questions and the other taking notes and following up with probes as appropriate. These interviews generally lasted 45 minutes to an hour.

A key informant spreadsheet was created that allowed for team members to, track dates of contact, dates of interview, transcription completion and also to divide responsibilities for said tasks. Google Calendar was also used to ease in the scheduling of multiple individuals for interview. The note taker was responsible after the interview was held to create a transcription using ExpressScribe software to ease the process.

Data Analysis

Data was organized using the password protected shared document collaboration system Google Docs. By utilizing this tool we were able to cut down on the need for duplicative documents and were more able to stay connected. In order to ensure confidentiality for the key informants, a respondent number was assigned on the key informant spreadsheet and the name of the respondent was replaced with the number on the organized data sheet. After the data for both tools had the opportunity to sit for three weeks, and the final demographic information was received from the youth programs leaders for the focus group data, a process of clarifying the responses, eliminating incomplete information and finally taking stock of use-able responses took place.

After the data was cleaned it was coded for themes and findings. The process used to code the data was to first focus on how different focus groups and key informants responded to the same question. Consistencies and differences in responses we noted and compiled into a master list. The team of researchers then split up the focus groups and key informant transcripts so that two researchers were assigned to each set of transcripts. The team also agreed to several preset categories that best represented information consistent with our purpose statement and key questions. To begin the process and then searched for responses that matched these categories.

Those preset categories were: FM- Farmers Market; Sell- Food enterprise; Dist - Food distribution; Edu - Education; Peer - Peer education; Nutr - Nutrition education; Cook - Cooking

education; Grdn - Garden education; Local - Resident led; Act - Action/Advocacy; Chrch - Church based; Access - Transportation or finances; Rlshp - Relationships; GN - Good Neighbor; PAST - Past Program; FdG - Food Guardians.

The researchers coded the data captured in the transcripts and on the large poster paper from the youth focus groups and found statements consistent with the preset categories. After each researcher completed their coding process, they gave the same transcripts to the second reader to ensure the coders categorized all of the data consistently and completely. From this process, emergent categories began to become evident, and the researchers added to the list of predefined categories some of these emergent categories such as: Sklz - Skills Building; Fun - Enjoyable work environment; Pay - Paid employment.

In many ways, this coding of the data into categories was an iterative process that evolved over time for each reviewer. As these new themes and patterns were documented, it became important to find connections between the patterns and to analyze conflicting themes such as why some of the Asian students in the focus groups were not as affected by the issue of food insecurity in the BVHP as other ethnicities. This process also attempted to determine the relative importance of each theme and category. Fortunately, this process was guided by the purpose statement and key questions which eventually led to the findings and recommendations reported in the next section of this report.

Limitations

Of course, no method for gathering data for a community assessment is without its challenges. From the piloting of the focus group questions it was learned that youth may be unfamiliar with certain terms and language used when discussing food insecurity as an example. That certainly proved to be the case. It took several probes and guided conversation to garner the information the team desired. Group dynamics certainly influenced who spoke and what they were willing to say; a dominate personality often controlled the conversations, often a member of the focus group got off the subject, and some who participated were clearly hesitant to share confidential information with others who they did not know well.

Because of the focus group format, which encouraged the youth to share their ideas in an open conversation style, the interviewers had less control over the youth than would have been optimal at times. Key informant interviews also had their challenges. Many of those interviewed

admitted that, although they had knowledge about the issue of food insecurity, they had little to no experience working with youth on this topic. Although we were successful in completing 12 Key Informant interviews, they required a fair amount of time to make contact, arrange meetings and conduct the interviews.

Table 1. Focus Group Demographics						
	College Track		BAYCAT		LEJ Youth	
	N	%	n	%	n	%
Gender						
<i>Male</i>	19	68%	24	75%	3	75%
<i>Female</i>	9	32%	8	25%	1	25%
Race						
<i>White</i>	0	0%	2	6%	0	0%
<i>African American</i>	3	11%	15	48%	3	75%
<i>Hispanic</i>	14	50%	6	19%	1	25%
<i>Asian</i>	9	32%	0	0%	0	0%
<i>Other</i>	2	7%	9	27%	0	0%
Ages						
<i>10-13</i>	3	11%	16	50%	3	75%
<i>14-17</i>	25	89%	15	47%	1	25%
<i>18-26</i>	0	0%	1	3%	0	0%
Residence						
<i>BVHP</i>	8	29%	12	38%	4	100%
<i>San Francisco – Other</i>	20	71%	15	47%	0	0%
<i>East Bay</i>	0	0%	5	16%	0	0%

Findings

Introduction

The following eight findings summarize the key informant interviews and focus group data collected to explore the opportunities and barriers for youth to participate in creating a sustainable and accessible food system in the community of Bayview Hunters Point (BVHP) in San Francisco. The findings include the opinions of youth (ages 14-24) in BVHP and beyond, and of community experts.

Food Environment

Finding #1: Youth in Bayview Hunters Point accept and normalize the consumption of fast foods and processed foods in part because inexpensive foods are easily accessible, and do not have immediate impacts on health. Fast food restaurants also have the added function as a location of socialization for youth in the neighborhood.

“Yeah they [fast food restaurants] keep lowering the prices and so it’s like so easy. Oh I have like \$2 and I can get like three items. I can pay like \$3 and get like a biggie meal”

Focus Group Participant, 2010

Most youth focus group participants agreed that there are too many liquor stores and fast food establishments in BVHP. Several also mentioned that they believe that school programs offered unhealthy food selections. Focus group participants reported that accessing and consuming food from places other than fast food restaurants and/or liquor stores would be very difficult and inconvenient in their daily lives. One young person said it is “a ritual---you meet with your friends and go to a fast food place” (Focus Group Participant, 2010). A few focus group participants said that fast food tasted good and revealed that they believe that friends who ate frequently at fast food establishments showed no negative impacts on their physiques, making it even more acceptable. In addition, some youth said that they depend on their parents for money and for preparing and cooking their food, while others have to make food choices on their own. Here one young person describes their perspective on the relationship between parental presence, and the food choices youth are making:

A lot of people in this area eat junk food because some of them don’t have parents at home and a lot of them have to raise themselves or take care of themselves so they think let me go to

McDonald's and get this food. They don't really have [any]body to say 'eat your vegetables with this meal (Focus Group Participant, 2010).

For many youth, lack of support around food choices and limited access to healthy food choices force some to shop at corner liquor stores or the nearest fast food establishment. For many youth in BVHP this has become a normal scenario.

Many key informants and some of the youth interviewed also stated that youth needed a better understanding of how food impacts one's body and a better understand of how processed foods lead to poor health outcomes later in life. One young person said, "when you eat fast food you don't know what they [do] to the food maybe they add sugar or salt" (Focus Group Participant, 2010). One youth also mentioned how the shock-type documentary, *Super Size Me*, helped him understand how fast food can impact one's health in a short period of time (in this documentary the film maker embarks in only eating McDonalds food for over a month and documents how much weight he gains in addition to monitoring his cholesterol.) A few respondents also said that youth would respond and be charged to change behavior if they actually understood how food is processed, what other bad ingredients are put in the food, and how fast food chains strategically target poor communities.

Finding #2: The food environment in BVHP does not affect all residents of the community equally. Some resident families leave the immediate neighborhood to purchase and eat more nutritious foods, often with cultural importance, which are not as easily accessible in BVHP.

"Our parents like going to Chinatown and other districts that sell the foods we eat. We go a few times a month and buy enough until the next time. So we don't really shop in the BVHP."

Focus Group Participant, 2010

Some focus group participants who were less responsive to issues of food security were asked why this issue did not seem to resonate with them. They admitted that they were not as affected by the issue since their families left BVHP to shop for food in neighborhoods that catered to their ethnic tastes and traditions. In addition to stocking the foods they eat, these more culturally specific neighborhood shopping districts also provide other incentives for BVHP families to go outside of their neighborhood to shop. "Our parents shop in Chinatown or in the

Richmond near Clement. The prices are better and they have all the vegetables and other products we like” (Focus Group Participant, 2010).

What was also found through further discussion with these focus group participants was that they brought healthy food from home for lunch rather than purchasing food at the school or at locations near school. This was due to both affordability as well as the food preference of the youth and their parents. “Our parents pack us a lunch before school. We would rather eat our family's home cooked food anyway because it tastes better than the food they have at school or junk food” (Focus Group Participant, 2010).

Cause and Effect - Barriers and Past Projects

Finding #3: A barrier to creating a sustainable youth program addressing food insecurity in BHVP is programmatic overlap. Overlap is exacerbated when programs do not have the resources or are unable to collaborate with other similar programs in the neighborhood.

“And so we also have to address that issue and I think by doing this, by really making sure that people respect what it is that folks had the expertise to do, and then in this way, people are sharing knowledge, it’s like an inter-disciplinary model. I think that would be a sustainability piece.”

Key Informant Interviewee, 2010

Programmatic overlap leads to fierce competition for the same sources of funding amongst organizations offering similar programming. According to interviews with key informants, there is limited funding and many programs working on similar projects, all serving youth in BVHP. “I'm sure that there [are] just hundreds of other places that are serving youth. Maybe not serving youth as efficiently as they could, and that's really something. It's kind of a systemic problem generally in southeast SF” (Key Informant, 2010). This saturation of similar programs and reliance on city funding creates tension among these groups. This tension leads people to be guarded and perhaps to not act in a collaborative manner.

I think that's what’s really missing is the collaboration between all the agencies. Just because we're all dealing with the same kinda kids, and we all are in the same area and dealing with the same issues and everybody's kinda doing their own little things respectively but nobody is really bringing it together like a major movement when it - like it’s a big deal (Key Informant, 2010).

The data also showed little collaboration between community groups working on the food security issue in Bayview Hunters Point. One key informant asserted:

We have our South East Food Access Workgroup (SEFA), meetings, sometimes I feel like we don't have enough presence of just community folks that live here but not necessarily working in an agency. Finding ways to get SEFA better connected with the Park committee would be helpful too (Key Informant Interview, 2010).

There appears to be a siloed approach to problem solving and program development in the neighborhood with respect to food insecurity. Groups may participate in meetings and discuss partnerships, but those discussions are not supported by on-going, reciprocal relationships at the implementation stage. What many said was that a sustainable program in the BVHP requires not only long-term collaborations amongst community groups, these collaborations require effective and consistent, local, grass-roots leaders involved in both program design and implementation with youth involvement in all phases. Another key informant stated:

The people who strategize and launch new programs in the BVHP need to have some say and roots in the BVHP. It definitely cannot be some external people coming in and saying these are all your problems and this is how we are going to fix it. It has to be from the BVHP (Key Informant Interview, 2010).

These local leaders need to be credible in the eyes of the community. Finally, another assertion made by multiple informants was that the religious community may be an untapped resource for enhancing community collaboration and attracting more youth participation in programs.

Many of the key informants also indicated that fostering greater expertise on certain subject matters could alleviate some of the similarity in community programs. By building relationships and making clear organizational missions, BVHP service providers could become experts in certain areas to serve the community more efficiently, while simultaneously alleviating some of the competition for funding especially when providing similar services. A key informant describes it like this: "I think being really clear--let's just take LEJ for example, I think you can be financially sustainable as long as you continue to have demonstrated ability in your mission and vision" (Key Informant, 2010). It was also mentioned that showing support community-wide can increase participation across organizations throughout the community through supporting each other's expertise and mission. One key informant explains how "people's impressions, reputations and relationships in the neighborhood actually play a huge role in any sort of CBO" (Key Informant, 2010).

Finding #4: Past and intermittent youth-led initiatives have made a positive impact on the food environment in BVHP. Despite their perceived effectiveness, many, if not all, have been suspended due to a loss of sufficient funding, insufficient planning or a lack of programmatic support.

“I think people look at the Good Neighbor Program; it gets mixed reviews I think because it was one of the first corner store conversion programs it is well known. But I've heard people say things like, ‘why did Good Neighbor fail?’ I wouldn't necessarily say it failed, but the funding ran out and I think that you do see some results from that program if you go to the stores in the neighborhood.”

Key Informant Interviewee, 2010

Multiple respondents asserted that the Good Neighbor Program was, in many ways, an effective program. Good Neighbor is regarded as a successful program that has made a positive impact on the community and nation-wide. One respondent asserted that it was a successful program and its decline was just a matter of lost funding, “I think that you do see some results from [The Good Neighbor] program if you go to the stores in the neighborhood” (Key Informant, 2010). Others were struck by the amount of funding that went into the program and its eventual close. One respondent stated about Good Neighbor, “That’s a really sad story. That program got hundreds of thousands of dollars and for some reason, was unable to gain traction” (Key Informant, 2010). Key informants added that staff at BVHP agencies could use support in areas such as grants management and other leadership skills so as to sustain sources of funding. It was also mentioned that the organizations should not only focus on city money, but seek out a more diverse portfolio of funders to stay a viable organization. Having access to larger grants and different types of funding can also facilitate more of the activities that are enjoyed by youth, such as overnight, educational field trips

The food delivery program, Something Fresh, was described by one key informant as a successful way to help vulnerable populations receive more quality nutrition. She asserted that, “Something Fresh helps with food insecurity - there's not really a lot of different things offered, but it's something and they go to all the different housing projects” (Key Informant, 2010). This program was referred to both as a current and a past program by key informants. It is unclear whether the program is still active, intermittent or no longer active.

The 3rd Street farmers market was discussed in many key informant interviews as an opportunity in which youth had been involved on multiple levels. The farmers market lost funding in 2009 and is currently suspended. Time of day, location, a lack of community endorsement, and criminal activity surrounding the market were discussed as reasons for its decline. One respondent expressed the potential for youth involvement:

I had a lot of hopes for LEJ at the farmers market and it was something that was not a relationship that was jelled with the community. It was like they're there, but ok what are they doing now? And there were some kids that were connected to it, but honestly I didn't see a real integration of the program into the community (Key Informant, 2010).

Another respondent discussed how to improve community utilization of the market:

The way it [farmers market] was structured was not the best fit for the neighborhood. It was like in the middle of the week during work hours. I would love to see something on a Saturday afternoon or Sunday afternoon after people get out of church. Both youth and other community members would be able to be more involved if it were at a time more conducive to school and work schedules (Key Informant, 2010).

Needs & Opportunities

Programatic

Finding #5: There are many programs currently working with youth, utilizing varying strategies to address the issue of food insecurity in BVHP. Despite this, many youth are unaware of how to become involved. In addition youth programs aimed at other structural levels could make further impact.

“Maybe trying to make cooking at home more interesting, cause if you really want to keep it real cooking at home is like more healthy than going to any fast food restaurant cause you see what you're putting into it and your actually creating it.”

Youth Focus Group Participant

Cooking classes, internships, corner store conversion, youth advocacy, media projects, peer education, awareness raising, garden to farmers market enterprise, and nutrition fairs, were all suggestions made by the community about how youth can be involved in working with programs addressing food insecurity.

According to key informants, there are multiple cooking programs available to youth. One key informant outlined their food programming as follows, “besides running 3 gardens we

have a nutrition and cooking class program, that's all of our different programs offer to the youth" (Key Informant Interview, 2010). Despite this fact, the suggestion of providing cooking and nutrition classes to youth was a strong theme in the youth focus groups. Youth suggested, "Maybe trying to make cooking at home more interesting, [be]cause if you really want to keep it real cooking at home is like more healthy than going to any fast food restaurant cause you see what you're putting into it and your actually creating it." Another key informant suggested that peer cooking classes and food systems education may offer an opportunity for youth to help address the issue of food insecurity in their community. She stated, "I spoke with the woman at the Foundation who does the cooking classes and she is really interested in incorporation of more stuff around food and for having her youth more involved, not just with the cooking or the eating but actually the whole food cycle." It was suggested that cooking and nutrition education could occur through peer education, youth media projects, garden to farmer's market enterprise, and nutrition fairs.

On another level, focus groups and key informants agree youth activism/advocacy is an approach that has made an impact in the past and may be an effective way for youth to be involved in the future. Key informants suggest organizing youth around issues they are excited about. One respondent suggested approaching youth engagement by asking, "What are the young people already doing? What are they already excited about? Can we build capacity around that, so that it is really and especially theirs." He asserted that unless it comes out of the ideas of the youth, a program will not gain traction in the community. Youth focus group participants made multiple references to advocating for fewer fast food retailers and the creation of healthier options at a similarly reasonable price. One youth stated specifically, "I think they should take out less fast food places. Remove the fast food places. Put in healthier ones." Another recommendation by a key informant included using the community garden as a starting point for youth activism. She suggested:

Mobilizing communities around gardens is I think really effective and you start with kids. You start from the lowest hanging fruit. The easiest way is to get the kids. They're a captive audience, they're here in school and they don't even want to leave. They're eager to come and they hate to leave (Key Informant, 2010).

Another key informant suggested that youth advocacy requires many resources and must be part of a larger community movement. She shared her experience with youth led policy development:

Youth have been involved in the process of developing the policy, right? But that takes a lot of technical assistance for the youth. They can't be expected to know how to write about policy, how to approach stakeholders, how to just sort, the ins and outs of policy development (Key Informant, 2010).

From her perspective youth advocacy requires more resources than may be available in Bayview Hunters Point. Some methods suggested by youth focus groups for youth advocacy included: corner store conversion, internships, media projects, and social networking campaigns.

Finding #6: In order for an organization to engage youth to work on food insecurity in BVHP and be sustainable, it must be effectively run by staff who offer consistent, quality programming to youth in the neighborhood.

“It takes a lot of dedication. I believe it takes a lot more of, cause you have to keep it entertaining, you have to - something has to draw the youth attention and stuff in so it takes- in my personal opinion I believe it takes a lot of grants because you need the funding to be able to get things to attract attention to them and take the kids places.”

Key Informant Interviewee, 2010

Interviews with service providers and focus groups with youth indicated that,

To make a peer to peer model sustainable, you need outstanding adult leadership and allies for the youth. That means you need a perfect blend of an adult who is clear and cognizant of the cultural sensitivities and believes in advocacy and activism around access to food as a gateway to overall health. And loves to work with young people and remembers what it's like to be young, and has that level of patience (Key Informant Interview, 2010).

Focus group participants mentioned that they would like to have a meaningful relationship with staff in organizations and hiring the type of people described by service providers could give that opportunity to the youth.

Finding competent professionals to staff organizations will not only benefit the participants, but should also have a positive effect on the management of the organization. “One of the biggest issues that we face is real genuine capacity” (Key Informant Interview, 2010). Organizations should encourage and require training for staff to further build capacity at BVHP agencies. The staff will benefit from training and transfer those skills on to the youth.

Systematically

Finding #7: Youth and community experts agree that incentives such as a paying job and the opportunity to develop transferable skills, help to attract and maintain youth participation in food security related programs.

“Our success was that we were paying the youth. It was a job, not a make do thing. They were actually contributing to our work. It’s a job that is useful, paying them, providing useful skills, adding something to their lives.”

Key Informant Interviewee

The consensus of both the youth that participated in focus groups as well as key informants was that youth were more engaged and committed to learning about the issue of food security when this learning occurred as part of a paying job. Clearly, being paid was incentive alone; however, the true value of paying the youth was that it gave a sense of value to the work as well as confidence. As one key informant stated, “we, as a progressive movement, need to figure out that it is okay to pay young people and teach them the value of a dollar, teach the value of their labor” (Key Informant Interview, 2010). Also, as another key informant stated “everyone else is getting paid. You are not going to keep kids involved if they are not getting something” (Key Informant Interview, 2010).

Youth especially enjoyed jobs that provided them not only pay, but also a range of new experiences and education in a fun work environment. Most youth began their employment as a convenient job opportunity, it was reported by some that as they learned about nutrition and healthy eating as part of their job, that knowledge “changes their lives, and their family’s lives because they’ve taken the food and knowledge home with them and educated their families as well” (Key Informant Interview, 2010). Another means to getting youth involved and keeping them involved in food security programs is a paying job that provides skills building opportunities. As one key informant stated, “Once they got through the beginning training, a lot of the students in the program took ownership and therefore became more engaged.” In addition, another critical component was a work place or program safe from crime and other negative factors. Having grown up in a neighborhood plagued by violence and crime, working in a safe and enjoyable environment was an important contributing factor to a youth’s ability to thrive on the job.

Finding #8: Youth involvement at all levels of program development and implementation is necessary for a youth-based program in the neighborhood to be successful.

“Youth can convey the message to everybody else in a way that other people can understand.”

Key Informant Interviewee

Although youth are directly impacted by the food security issue, they are often not at the table when solutions to this issue are developed. This is counterproductive on many levels since, as one key informant stated, “Once students understand basic issues around food access, it is really easy to engage them. It’s a tangible environmental issue that they can understand and actually be motivated and passionate to participate in” (Key Informant Interview, 2010). Involving youth early in the process of problem solving is a critical component of a successful program on many levels.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings illustrate and exemplify the extent of the food insecurity problem in BVHP impacting youth, which cover all the areas of the ecological model. Some of the findings speak to the issues of program service deliverables, while other findings speak to the problem at the individual and community level. The difference in perceptions between youth and community experts regarding food insecurity were wide-ranging. Finally, some of the findings provide potential remedies and solutions to better addressing food insecurity in BVHP.

Recommendations

Introduction

The following seven recommendations are based on the key findings that were developed. They are divided into two parts and were synthesized using findings gleaned from key informant interviews and youth focus groups. These two recommendation areas suggest how to address youth concerns about the food environment in BVHP. In addition, further recommendations provide suggestions for how programs serving youth in Bayview Hunters Point should function in order to be successful. These recommendations are important to address some of the cause and effects of past programs and are intended to be used by all programs trying to address food insecurity in BVHP, specifically those employing and serving youth.

Food Environment

Recommendation #1: The long-term impacts of eating healthy foods as opposed to eating processed foods must be taught to youth in BVHP, specifically, how to buy and shop for inexpensive healthy food. Programs serving youth must incorporate workshops that train young people to become better healthy food consumers.

Many youth in BVHP are certainly aware that eating processed foods, distinctively fast food, is harmful and unhealthy to one's body. Despite this, many still mentioned that succumbing to these foods was quite common. Part of the issue is that youth had limited understandings of how food is processed, grown and described how difficult is to distinguish between 'healthy' choices and not so healthy food options. Another difficulty for youth was knowing how to shop for healthy food and how to properly read food labels.

Programs serving or employing youth should integrate food education into their scopes of work and overall work environments. Programs should only provide healthy food options in their respective agencies and should provide fun and interactive workshops focusing on why it is important to eat healthy and how food is linked to negative health outcomes. Programs that employ youth should have monthly in-services that focus on specific food education. In both processes, youth should be part of the planning process of these workshops and in-services. In addition, both the workshops and in-services should be relevant to the culture of the youth. This may include discussing how to make specific ethnic dishes more healthy or using pop culture to

teach about buying healthy food. Inevitably, incorporating this type of paradigm shift at agencies could increase food knowledge capacity in youth of BVHP.

Recommendation #2: In order to undo food insecurity trends among youth in BVHP, further research using a transdisciplinary theory* analysis could highlight how to bridge current programs This approach could help by collectively developing youth programs that attempt to minimize inconsistencies of youth access.

Youth need to be better targeted by current programs addressing the food insecurity issue in BVHP. Many resources are available in BVHP, however, youth are either not accessing these programs, are not sure how they may benefit from the services or are simply not aware of the programs. More research is necessary to find ways to more successfully bridge existing programs. An analysis using transdisciplinary theory*, which is the application of an integrative approach to addressing and solving health disparities, may illustrate where programs intersect and where sharing resources would be ideal. This analysis involves practical problem solving not only of unmet needs, but also of unrecognized needs in health disparity populations (Dankwa-Mullan, I. , Rhee, K. , Stoff, D. , Pohlhaus, J. , Sy, F. , et al., 2010). Ultimately, this could increase efficiency in delivering a more comprehensive food program in BVHP. Moreover, the linking and sharing of resources would create a network that youth may perceive as seamless, which would minimize the inconsistency of youth access.

Recommendation #3: BVHP residents should not be forced to leave their neighborhood to gain access to culturally specific food products they are accustomed to. Local organizations should make an effort to provide these types of foods at their programs.

Focus groups comprised of mostly Asian youth provided important insight into the fact that because of their preference for foods related to their culture are unavailable to them in the BVHP, they are forced to commute to distant communities that do offer outlets for these culturally specific foods. As ethnically Chinese residents are one of the two fastest growing groups in the BVHP, we recommend that organizations providing food consider cultural appropriate food choices.

One important reason for making culturally specific foods more readily available for the diverse residents in BVHP is the previously discussed issue of a lack of efficient public transportation in the neighborhood combined with the geographic isolation of BVHP. Knowing

efficient transportation is not available; the lack of culturally specific food outlets are necessary for greater community health. Residents should be afforded convenient access to the foods they desire. Programs should strengthen culturally specific diet awareness, in doing so policies and practice will work to being inclusive of all community groups. Ultimately, the hope is that the neighborhood markets will follow suit to offer more culturally specific foods.

Cause and Effect - Barriers and Opportunities

Recommendation #4: Organizations serving youth in BVHP must maintain consistent food programming as to not deviate from the mission and vision of the Organization. This will establish the organization with the community and with funding sources of future food programs.

Key informants expressed the idea of an organizational identity that the community would identify with now and in the future. With some agencies in Bayview Hunters Point deviating from their organizational missions to find other sources of funding, it is hard for community members, especially youth (as mentioned above), to figure out what types of food programs are being offered by BVHP agencies. Organizations must strengthen programming in their specific area of expertise. By doing so, tension for funding may be alleviated between organizations. Furthermore, organizations should strengthen relationships with funders by maintaining well-attended programs and with quality health outcomes. In doing so, this would alleviate the need to follow funding trends that are outside organizational missions where staff members may be outside their area of training. As one key informant put it:

Problem is [that] most people go past their mission and vision to stay with the funding trends. If I am the Y[MCA] I do, after-school enrichment, and sports, and fitness. Well, the Y in BVHP now does truancy, they are starting a charter school, they do wrap-around intensive case management, the Family Resource Center, they have an African American health and wellness whatever, and all of those things are ghost-towns. Nobody utilizes that (Key Informant, 2010).

Organizations should continue to provide quality food programs with measurable results so that funders will reinvest in the programs. Based on interviews it is evident that if programs must be of high quality and well attended to receive funding in the future. It is imperative that agencies find their niche and become the premier community agency around a particular issue.

Recommendation #5: Before developing a youth program, organizations should ensure that a strong foundation is created. Start with small and slow solutions and build a food justice program over time based on the interest and ideas of the youth as well as the strengths and capacity of the organization. In doing so, agencies should work to avoid duplication of programming and build strong, collaborative relationships with other youth development organizations in the community.

Many key informants interviewed were concerned by the fact that multiple programs had started but eventually ended for various reasons. The gap between what youth are interested in and what is actually provided by youth serving organizations was also discussed. Furthermore, many organizations should build additional capacity to house effective programs around the issue of food justice. Organizations should evaluate their own strengths and capacity; as well as the interests of youth in the community. This can be done by starting with a narrow scope of work and as capacity builds allowing the program to expand over time. As the program grows it is highly important to provide continuing support for staff to learn as they go and to include youth in the development of ideas and projects for the program.

In order to avoid duplication of programming and build partnerships among community agencies, we recommend priority participation with South East Food Access Workgroup (SEFA). South East Food Access workgroup (SEFA), a part of the San Francisco Department of Public Health currently convenes a monthly meeting of community members involved in the issue of Food Justice in South East San Francisco. Making it a priority to stay consistently connected to SEFA will offer a big picture understanding of what collaborations are currently happening in the community and provide an opportunity for greater and future collaboration. Above and beyond involvement with SEFA, it is important to check in periodically with other youth based organizations in the community who may not be involved with SEFA. For example, a garden group could network with a program focused on teaching cooking by providing food and nutrition education and could consult with a youth development agency in dealing with social support for the youth. The idea is to increase program availability throughout BVHP for youth, but increasing programs that extend throughout the ecological model. That way youth could benefit from a comprehensive network of programs addressing food insecurity from various points: from the individual level up to a policy level.

Recommendation #6: Agencies should continue to invest in current and future staff by providing further training opportunities and support in areas of organizational interests.

The final program design should provide a means to not only identify leadership among program staff, but also further cultivate leadership development skills and training to ensure the sustainability of this new leadership base. Many key informants suggested the benefits of building additional capacity among front line staff at organizations in BVHP. It is particularly important for organizations to continue to support staff by building on skills, such as leadership, effective communication, budget, and management in order to ensure longevity. As an additional benefit, staff will be able to pass on these transferrable life skills to youth participants of their programs. By doing so, these programs will work to create a strong resident base who can provide highly successful programs in the future.

Recommendation #7: Ensure that the program design and budget includes opportunities for youth to gain paid employment that provides training and education about food security, in a safe and enjoyable environment, while also developing transferable job skills.

The consensus of key informants interviewed offered the recommendation of providing paying job opportunities to youth as a first or second option when asked how to attract youth to be more engaged in the food insecurity issue. Understandably, some youth may feel undervalued and taken for granted when they are always asked to do volunteer work rather than being paid for their time. As one key informant stated, “I’d say our success [in working with youth] was when we were paying them. It was a job. They were actually contributing good work to our work distribution.” Another advantage key informants expressed about providing a paying job opportunity is that they were able to attract youth to learn about the food insecurity issue even when the youth were not specifically looking for that type of knowledge or previously interested in the topic.

We always sit down and talk to our interns at the end of the summer and talk to them about what they experienced and they tell us that they often came in here not knowing really what they were going to get. They just wanted a summer job. But, what they learned about food has been phenomenal. It has made changes in their lives and the lives of their families (Key Informant, 2010).

Therefore, ensuring the final program design and budget account for this need to provide paying job opportunities that have training and job skills development opportunities will undoubtedly

add viability and sustainability to a program, since it will attract youth both interested in simply a job opportunity as well as those interested in the specific topic while providing benefits to both groups regardless of the initial motivation.

Conclusion

These recommendations are intended to be shared and utilized by new or existing food programs that employ and serve youth in BVHP. They illustrate how past programs may have faced challenges in the past and illustrate where some of the gaps between youth and program services are perceived to be. Not all youth in need are completely accessing or benefitting from the existing programs in BVHP. Program overlap, limited collaboration among resident leaders and programs may be some of the reasons why youth are not maximizing their understanding of food education. Ultimately, in order to decrease the impact of food insecurity among youth in BVHP, programs must further collaborate, share resources, figure out how to increase funding streams and incorporate consistent food education messages in the scope of their work across all current and future food programs in BVHP.

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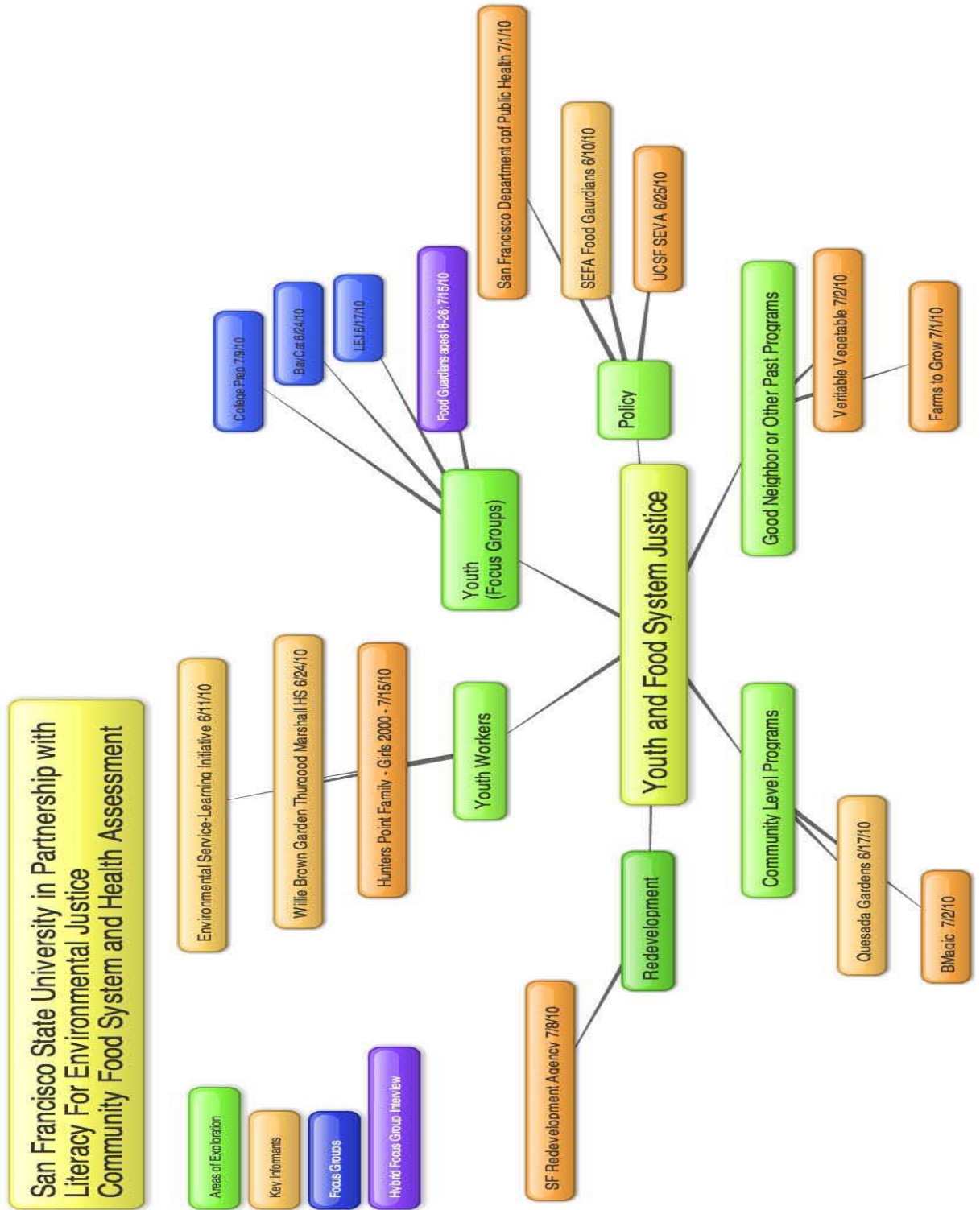
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APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B

Key Informant Protocol

The Role of Youth in Building a Sustainable Food System in BVHP

In-depth Key Informant Interviews: Organizational Stakeholders in BVHP

I. Introduction

My name is _____ and this is _____ we are graduate students in the Masters of Public Health program at San Francisco State University. I will be interviewing you today and my colleague _____ will be taking notes. We are part of a team of four students working with the Bayview Hunters Point non-profit organization, Literacy for Environmental Justice, or “LEJ.” Our objective is to assess opportunities and challenges to building a sustainable, nutritious, and accessible food system by engaging youth, age 14-24, in the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood of San Francisco.

We are gathering information over the summer by conducting key informant interviews and focus groups with youth. We hope to add some value to the significant and important work that has already been accomplished on the topic of food insecurity by investigating how youth involvement can be integrated into a sustainable solution. Our goal is to compile and analyze the information we gather over the summer, and then share what we learn with LEJ staff early next fall. All the information we gather in this process will remain confidential and only be shared with key staff at LEJ. We expect the interview will take approximately 45 minutes and thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Do you have any questions for us before we begin? Now I want to turn your attention to the informed consent form. Also, would you mind if we record today’s interview so we may accurately capture all of the information you will share with us today? Your responses will be coded for your privacy. (Thank you so much! *or*; That’s absolutely no problem. We respect your wishes.)

II. Key Informant Interview Questions

1. **Please describe any work your organization has been involved in regarding the issue of food insecurity in the BVHP neighborhood?**
 - In what ways has your organization worked with youth in the BVHP neighborhood?

2. **What can be learned from past urban initiatives in BVHP that have successfully worked with youth (age 14-24) addressing the issue of food insecurity?**
 - How can these lessons be implemented?
3. **There are many approaches involving youth currently under way in the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood. In order to ensure an extensive list could you please share with us the programs that you are aware of?**
 - How are the youth (14-24) activity engaged in the process?
 - How might youth be actively involved?
 - What makes these approaches different than others?
4. **What opportunities are there currently for youth-based food programs to be successful in the BVHP neighborhood?**
 - How would you envision this program to look like?
5. **Based on your experience, what would be components of a sustainable, youth driven (ages 14-24) initiative focused on resolving food insecurity in BVHP neighborhood?**
 - How might such a program be funded?
 - What would prevent such a program from being successful?
 - What would be the **best programmatic strategy** to engage youth in creating a sustainable food environment?
 - What are **common characteristics of lasting** sustainable youth **programs** in BVHP?
 - Why have these approaches been successful in the BVHP neighborhood?
6. **Past programs working with youth to resolve this issue in the BVHP neighborhood have run into the difficulty of financial sustainability. What could be done to address this issue?**
 - What local/state/federal programs that could be accessed to support the sustainability of such programs in the BVHP community?

III. Closing

We have reached the end of our time, and we want to thank you for your expert knowledge. Here are some key points that we took from the interview: (summarize notes quickly), is there anything you would like to add?

As you know, my colleagues and I will combine what you have shared with us today along with information from other interviews and focus groups to assist in understanding how

youth in the community could be integrated into a sustainable solution for the issue of food insecurity in the BVHP area. We invite you to continue your involvement in the community health assessment as we progress over the next four months if you are interested? Would you like us to contact you in the future with more information?

Thank you again for your willingness to speak with us today!

APPENDIX C

Informed Consent to Participate in Community Assessment

The Role of Youth in Building a Sustainable Food System in

Bay View Hunters Point, San Francisco, CA

Assessment Team Names:

Robin Haguewood

Greg Garrett

Mariela Lopez

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San Francisco State University Faculty Names:

Jessica Wolin, MPH, MCP

Clinical Faculty

Director of Practice, Graduate Program

San Francisco State University

A. Purpose and Background

We are a team of students from the San Francisco State Masters in Public Health Program. We are working with the Bay View Hunters Point organization, Literacy for Environmental Justice, or “LEJ.” We are conducting a community assessment to identify the opportunities and challenges to building a sustainable, nutritious, and accessible food system by engaging youth, age 14-24, in the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood of San Francisco. We hope to add some value to the important work that has already been accomplished on the topic of food insecurity. We will be conducting in-depth interviews and focus groups with local youth about the topic of food insecurity. The information gathered will aid LEJ in assessing what the needs of youth are in the community and focus resources in these areas.

B. Procedures

In-depth interviews will be conducted with community experts about the topic. The information will then be coded for privacy and shared with LEJ.

C. Risks

You run no known physical risks if you choose to participate. The information sought is not of a sensitive nature. However, all steps will be taken to ensure confidentiality throughout the process.

D. Direct Benefits

The information gathered will aid LEJ to assess what the needs of youth are in the community and focus resources in these areas.

E. Costs

There are no costs associated with this assessment.

F. Compensation

Literacy for Environmental Justice will be giving small tokens of appreciation in the form of (insert incentive here).

G. Alternatives

You can choose to not be part of the assessment.

H. Questions

Any questions can be referred to Jessica Wolin, Director of Practice at San Francisco State University or Malik Looper, Executive Director of_4 Literacy for Environmental Justice.

I. Consent

By signing this form you are consenting to participate in this assessment and also allowing the information collected to be used for the purposes of this assessment.

Participation in this assessment is voluntary. You are free to decline to participate in this assessment, or withdraw your participation at any point, without penalty. Your decision whether or not to participate in this assessment will have no influence on your present or future status at San Francisco State University and/or at Literacy for Environmental Justice.

Signature _____

Date: _____

Assessment Participant

Signature _____

Date: _____

Assessment Team Member

APPENDIX D

Focus Group Protocol: Education vs. Environment

TIME: 45 MIN

MATERIALS: Flip Charts, Markers, Sticky Dots, Sticky Dot Meaning Key, Ads as examples

*** The intention of this activity is to have the youth come to the conclusion that education alone is not sufficient in addressing food insecurity and food related health outcomes in BVHP. Answers to the next two questions should help facilitate a discussion about what influences people to make food choices and how the environment plays a major role in that***

INTRO:

- Thank for joining us today.
- We are four students from San Francisco State working with Literacy for Environmental Justice trying to understand what young people think about why young people eat junk food in Bayview Hunters Point.
- What young People think can be done about people eating junk food, so that residents of Bayview Hunters Point can be healthier.
- This is part of a larger set of conversations we are having with Bayview Hunters Point youth.
- It will become part of a larger report that will help organizations like Literacy for Environmental Justice and others make decisions about the programs they offer to youth.
- Anything you say here will be confidential, your names will not be used in the report, and you all should all respect others privacy by not talking about what is said here to others.
- Before we start lets come up with some ground rules:
 - One Mic – please have only one person speaking at a time. This is both respectful and will make sure you get your voice heard on the recorder.
 - Respect - if you disagree offer an alternative but don't judge.
 - Right to Pass
 - Explain your slang

PART 1 – Ask Youth 2 questions regarding food habits

Question 1: Do you think young people in Bayview Hunters Point eat junk food?

Question 2: Of those young people who eat junk food, do you think they know that eating too much can be bad for your health?

So if everyone knows, then that means they have been taught or told at some point that junk food is bad for your health.

If that is the case:

Well then why do you think so many students still eat junk food if they know it's bad for

them? Wow, we really appreciate your information. (Note taker or other team member will write down the “reasons” from each person and write them on a colored strip of paper)

1. After gathering participant reasons, reveal second flip chart with 4 boxes on it. Each box will have one of the following four categories: Norms, Media, Policies, Access.
2. Place the participant ideas (on the colored paper) in the box that best corresponds with the formal Environmental Prevention Categories.
3. Brainstorm more ideas in each of the categories if some are blank or to stimulate additional ideas that may result from the discussion.

Guiding Questions

- **Think about what other people do when it comes to food.**
 - Where do they usually go and why?
 - What do they usually eat and why?
 - Who do they usually eat with?
- **Think about how people get their food.**
 - Where do they go? Why?
 - How do they get there?
 - Is money an issue?
- **Think about what foods people buy.**
 - Why do they choose these foods?
 - How do they make these decisions?
- **Think about what messages we are sent by media (TV, magazines, billboards, radio) about what we should eat.**
 - What do the messages tell us?
 - Do you think these messages have an impact on youth?
- **Think about policies that affect what we eat.**
 - Do school rules affect what you eat? How?
 - Are there other rules that tell us what we can and can’t eat?
 - Are there rules that shape our environment to make it easier to get one kind of food and not the other?

AREAS OF EXPLORATION:

<p>Norms: what everyone else does and believes Traditional foods What parent’s eat</p>	<p>Policies: Food Stamps WIC</p>
<p>Media Messages: what TV, radio, and ads, tell us about food. Food Advertising</p>	<p>Access: how people get food Transportation</p>
<p>Personal Choices: It tastes good</p>	<p>Bike Rack: for outliers</p>

Break

PART 2 of ACTIVITY

1. Ask youth to develop strategies to address each of the issues that were raised. (Break the group into two smaller groups) (Make sure to do at least one strategy development as a full group for an example.
2. If time is of issue, at least come up with one strategy per Environmental Prevention Category.
3. The Strategies must be specific to the BVHP and not just generalized to the broader community.
4. Start with one Environmental Prevention Categories box and work around to other boxes. Depending on Part 1 results choose area (i.e. norms or access) or specific root cause to strategize about.

Guiding Questions for Each Area

- **How can youth be involved to make that change?**
 - Ok now building on that idea – how could we make that happen?
 - Are you doing something currently that is changing this?
 - If you and a group of friends were to work to change this issue – how would you do it?
- **What is a strategy that you could use to change this issue?**
- **Which of these areas do we want to make change?**

WRAP-UP ACTIVITY (*if time permits*)

Use the sticky dots to sort through the participant ideas based on the following criteria:

Sticky Dot Color 1: Feasible to work on

Sticky Dot Color 2: Fun to work on

Sticky Dot Color 3: Very important to our community to work on

Sticky Dot Color 4: Will get something out of working on (Resume Building)

Optionally

Use a call out strategy to tally youth responses

Closing

We have reached the end of our time, and we want to thank you for your expert knowledge. Here are some key points that we took from our conversation: (summarize notes quickly), is there anything you would like to add?

As you know, my group and I will combine what you have shared with us today along with information from other interviews and focus groups to assist in understanding how youth in the

community could be involved in a solution for healthy food availability in the BVHP area. We invite you to continue your involvement in this project as we progress over the next four months if you are interested?

Please leave your name and contact information on the sign-up sheet before you leave.

Thank you again for your willingness to speak with us today!

APPENDIX E

SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY

Assent to Participate in a Research Study

The Role of Youth in Building a Sustainable Food System in Bayview Hunters Point

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

We are a group of four graduate students at San Francisco State University and we are working with the nonprofit organization Literacy for Environmental Justice. We are conducting a research study about *the role of youth in building a sustainable food system in Bayview Hunters Point*. I am inviting you to take part in the research because you are a *youth who lives in or has lived in Bayview Hunters Point*.

PROCEDURES

If you agree to participate in this research study, the following will occur:

- You will be a part of a *90 minute focus group discussion* where *I will ask questions about the challenges and opportunities for youth to be involved in improving access to healthy foods in Bayview Hunters Point*.
- *I will audiotape the interview to be sure I record your thoughts correctly.*

RISKS

There is a risk of loss of privacy. However, the researcher will not use your name or any other identifying information in any published reports of the research. The research material will be kept in a secure location, and only the researcher will have access to the data. At the conclusion of the study, the researcher will destroy all audiotapes of your interview, will remove all identifying information from the transcripts, and will keep the data in a locked cabinet or office.

Also, because the focus groups include discussion of personal opinions, extra measures will be taken to protect each participant's privacy. The researcher will begin the focus group by asking the participants to agree to the importance of keeping information discussed in the focus group confidential. She will then ask each participant to verbally agree to keep everything discussed in the room confidential, and will remind them at the end of the group not to discuss the material outside. Only the researcher will have access to the data collected. Any tapes and transcripts of the focus group will be destroyed after one year or at the end of the study.

DIRECT BENEFITS

There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this research. However, we hope that what we find may inform Literacy For Environmental Justice about the opinions and perceptions of Bayview Hunters Point youth.

COSTS

There will be no cost to you for participating in this research other than your time and personal transportation costs.

COMPENSATION

There will be no compensation for participating in this research.

ALTERNATIVES

The alternative is not to participate in the research.

QUESTIONS

You have spoken with the SFSU-Literacy for Environmental Justice Assessment Team about this study and have had your questions answered. If you have any further questions about the study, you may contact the researcher by email at haguer@sfsu.edu or you may contact Professor Jessica Wolin, the researcher’s advisor, at 415: 338-1413 or jwolin@sfsu.edu.

You may also ask questions about your rights as a research participant, or send any comments or complaints about the study, to the Office for the Protection of Human Subjects at San Francisco State University at 415: 338-1093 or protocol@sfsu.edu.

Participation in research is voluntary. You do not have to participate, and you may stop participating at any time, or at any point in the project, without any penalty to yourself.

CONSENT

I understand the purpose and the procedures of the research as stated above, and agree to participate.

Participant’s Name (print) _____

Signature _____

Date: _____

Research Participant

Signature _____

Date: _____

Researcher

APPENDIX F

SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study

18-24 years of age, Bayview Hunters Point Focus Group

The Role of Youth in Building a Sustainable Food System in Bayview Hunters Point

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of this research study is to learn how youth can be involved in addressing some of the food insecurity issues in Bayview Hunter's Point. The researchers, Sergio, Mariela, Greg and Robin are a group of graduate students at San Francisco State University working with Literacy for Environmental Justice in conducting research for Needs Assessment.

You are being asked to participate in this study because you are considered an expert by Literacy for Environmental Justice staff in the field of food issues. Also you are someone that has been identified as being under the age of 25 and have lived or worked in Bayview Hunter's Point.

PROCEDURES

If you agree to participate in this research study, the following will occur:

- You will be interviewed for approximately 90 minutes by (*name*).
- The interview will be audio taped to ensure accuracy in reporting your statements.
- The interview will take place in the researcher's office at a time convenient for you.
- The researcher may contact you later to clarify your interview answers for approximately fifteen approximately forty-five minutes.

RISKS

There is a risk of loss of privacy. However, no names or identities will be used in any published reports of the research. Only the researcher will have access to the research data. Also, because the focus group will include discussion of personal opinions, extra measures will be

taken to protect each participant's privacy. The researcher will begin the focus group by asking the participants to agree to the importance of keeping information discussed in the focus group confidential. She will then ask each participant to verbally agree to keep everything discussed in the room confidential, and will remind them at the end of the group not to discuss the material outside. Only the researcher will have access to the data collected. Any tapes and transcripts of the focus group will be destroyed after one year or at the end of the study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The research data will be kept in a secure location, and only the researcher will have access to the data. At the conclusion of the study, all identifying information will be removed and the data will be kept in a locked cabinet or office and all audiotapes will be destroyed.

DIRECT BENEFITS

There will be no direct benefits to the participant.

COSTS

There will be no cost to you for participating in this research.

COMPENSATION

There will be no compensation for participating in this research.

ALTERNATIVES

The alternative is not to participate in the research.

QUESTIONS

You have spoken with (*researcher*) about this study and have had your questions answered. If you have any further questions about the study, you may contact the researcher by email at Sergio.martinez21@gmail.com or you may contact the researcher's advisor, Professor Jessica Wolin at 415-338-1413 or jwolin@sfsu.edu.

Questions about your rights as a study participant, or comments or complaints about the study, may also be addressed to the Office for the Protection of Human Subjects at 415: 338-1093 or protocol@sfsu.edu.

CONSENT

You have been given a copy of this consent form to keep.

PARTICIPATION IN THIS RESEARCH IS VOLUNTARY. You are free to decline to participate in this research study, or to withdraw your participation at any point, without penalty. Your decision whether or not to participate in this research study will have no influence on your present or future status at San Francisco State University.

Signature _____ Date: _____

Research Participant

Signature _____ Date: _____

Researcher

APPENDIX G

Key Informant Focus Group: BVHP Youth Ages 18-25 Protocol

I. Introduction

My name is _____ and this is _____ we are graduate students in the Masters of Public Health program at San Francisco State University. I will be leading the discussion with you today and my colleague _____ will be taking notes. We are part of a team of four students working with the Bayview Hunters Point non-profit organization, Literacy for Environmental Justice, or “LEJ.” Our objective is to assess opportunities and challenges to building a sustainable, nutritious, and accessible food system by engaging youth, age 14-24, in the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood of San Francisco.

We are gathering information over the summer by conducting key informant interviews and focus groups with youth. We hope to add some value to the significant and important work that has already been accomplished on the topic of food insecurity by investigating how youth involvement can be integrated into a sustainable solution. Our goal is to compile and analyze the information we gather over the summer, and then share what we learn with LEJ staff early next fall. All the information we gather in this process will remain confidential and only be shared with key staff at LEJ. We expect the discussion will take approximately 45 minutes and thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Do you have any questions for us before we begin? Now I want to turn your attention to the informed consent form.

Also, would you mind if we record today’s interview so we may accurately capture all of the information you will share with us today? Your responses will be coded for your privacy. (Thank you so much! *or*; That’s absolutely no problem. We respect your wishes.

II. Interview Questions

- 1. Please describe any work you have been involved in regarding the issue of food insecurity in the BVHP neighborhood?**
 - In what ways have organization you have been involved with worked to incorporate youth in the BVHP neighborhood?
- 2. What can be learned from past urban initiatives in BVHP that have successfully worked with youth (age 13-25) addressing the issue of food insecurity?**

- How can these lessons help us make appropriate changes to current and future programs?
- 3. There are many approaches involving youth currently under way in the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood. In order to ensure an extensive list could you please share with us the food related youth programs that you are aware of?**
- How were you as a youth actively engaged in food programs?
 - What are ways youth become actively involved?
- 4. Given the resources in the BVHP neighborhood, what other youth based food programs could be successful?**
- How would you envision this program to look like?
- 5. Based on your experience, what would be components of a sustainable, youth driven (ages 14-24) initiative focused on resolving food insecurity in BVHP neighborhood?**
- What would prevent such a program from being successful?
 - What would be the best strategy to engage youth in creating a sustainable food environment?
 - How might such a program be funded?
 - What are common characteristics of lasting sustainable youth programs in BVHP?
 - Why have these approaches been successful in the BVHP neighborhood?
- 6. Past programs working with youth to resolve this issue in the BVHP neighborhood have run into the difficulty of financial sustainability. What could be done to address this issue?**
- What local/state/federal programs that could be accessed to support the sustainability of such programs in the BVHP community?

III. Closing

We have reached the end of our time, and we want to thank you for your expert knowledge. Here are some key points that we took from our discussion: (summarize notes quickly), is there anything you would like to add?

As you know, my colleagues and I will combine what you have shared with us today along with information from other interviews and focus groups to assist in understanding how youth in the community could be integrated into a sustainable solution for the issue of food insecurity in the BVHP area. We invite you to continue your involvement in the community

health assessment as we progress over the next four months if you are interested? Would you like us to contact you in the future with more information?

Thank you again for your willingness to speak with us today!

