VOICES FOR FOOD
PANTRY TOOLKIT

Produced by: SDSU Extension

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Project Manager
Suzanne Stluka, Food & Families Project Director, SDSU Extension

Authors
Dan Remley, Associate Professor, Field Specialist, Ohio State University Extension
Briana Rapp, Purdue University
Dawn Contreras, Director, Improving Health and Nutrition Institute
Pam Duitsman, Nutrition and Health Specialist, University of Missouri Extension
Lindsay Moore, Community Food Policy Field Specialist, SDSU Extension
Jody Rauch, Ohio State University Extension
Lisa Franzen-Castle, Extension Nutrition Specialist, Associate Professor, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension

Design & Coordination Team
Michelle Cartney, Information Specialist, SDSU Extension
Lindsey Gerard, iGrow Technology Coordinator, SDSU Extension

Editors
Anita C. Stuever, Communication Works
Rebecca McKee, Senior Editor, ANR Communications, Michigan State University
Patty Adams, Editor I, ANR Communications, Michigan State University

Reviewers
Becky Henne, Associate Program Leader - SNAP-Ed Coordinator, Michigan State University Extension
Donna Mehrle, Family Nutrition Education Programs Assistant Coordinator, University of Missouri Extension
David P. Olson, Community Development Program Director, SDSU Extension
Ann Schwader, Nutrition Field Specialist, SDSU Extension
Lacey McCormack, Associate Professor, SDSU Extension
Ashley Gelderman, Swine Field Specialist, SDSU Extension
Heather A. Eicher-Miller, Associate Professor, Purdue University
Vivian Gabor, Gabor & Associates Consulting
Kathryn Colasanti, Academic Specialist, Center for Regional Food Systems, Michigan State University

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PART 1. GUIDED CLIENT-CHOICE: MYCHOICE

Introduction
Client-choice is one food distribution system that food pantries use. In this system, clients choose the foods they want, similar to shopping at a grocery store. Client-choice acknowledges that no two families or individuals have the same needs or preferences. It offers several potential benefits to the client and pantry.

Client-choice benefits clients by*:
- Enabling selection of desired products.
- Encouraging client dignity and self-esteem, and building trust and satisfaction.
- Accommodating their needs (for example, allowing for a certain type of diet or limited cooking equipment).
- Promoting critical thinking, budgeting and nutrition knowledge.
- Reducing food waste.

Client-choice benefits food pantries by*:
- Reducing waste and monetary losses because clients choose products they want and will use.
- Controlling inventory and improving finances by tracking the relative popularity of products.
- Spending time engaging and aiding clients rather than bagging products.
- Offering extended distribution hours because volunteers and staff don’t have to spend so much time bagging food.

*adapted with permission, Indiana’s Emergency Food Resource Network, 2013.

MyChoice is a guided client-choice food pantry model based on the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) MyPlate program (Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks, 2006). MyChoice aims to promote the health and food security of pantry clients by allowing clients to choose their foods from each food group within the food pantry. This model is designed to help clients provide a balanced diet for themselves and their families. Guided client-choice also increases the interaction between food pantry volunteers and staff and clients and fosters the building of relationships (Remley, Kaiser, & Osso, 2013).

In this food pantry model, the food pantry staff and volunteers guide the clients through each food group, providing basic nutrition information along the way. Since the MyChoice model is guided by MyPlate, nutrition education is easy to incorporate within the pantry, allowing educators to guide pantry clients to talk about healthy foods and how to use them.

Food-insecure populations must often make difficult dietary decisions that can negatively affect their overall health and well-being (Cook, et al., 2004; Dixon, Winkleby, & Radimer, 2001; Duffy, Zizza, Jacoby, & Tayie, 2009; Lee & Frongillo, 2001). People who are food-insecure often consume fewer fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy products and whole grain products than the general population. They consume more unhealthy foods than the general population, increasing the risk of obesity and diet-related diseases (Bernard, Banthin, & Encinosa, 2006; Gucciardi, Vogt, DeMelo, & Stewart, 2009; Monsivais & Drewnowski, 2007; Nelson, Cunningham, Andersen, Harrison, & Gelberg, 2001; Seligman, Jacobs, Lopez, Tschann, & Fernandez, 2012; Seligman, Laraia, & Kushel, 2010). Accessing healthy foods and understanding how to prepare healthy meals and snacks are important determinants of one's dietary quality. Part 2 of this toolkit offers the information that staff and volunteers need to know so they can guide pantry clients in making healthy food choices from each food group.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education, or SNAP-Ed, is the education component of SNAP (otherwise known as food stamps). The education program helps SNAP clients learn to make healthy choices on a restricted budget. SNAP-Ed is federally funded through the USDA Food and Nutrition Service.

Assessing Readiness
Prior to any implementing any Voices for Food activities, the readiness of the pantry to collectively implement new policies, practices, or activities should be assessed. By completing the National Institute of Health (NIH) Organizational Readiness for Implementing Change (ORIC) survey found at https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/library/materials/organizational-readiness-implementing-change-oric, pantry staff can determine shared confidence, willingness, and motivation to implement change and engage in action.

About the NIH ORIC
There are a total of 60 points available. Lower total points could indicate the group is not quite ready to work on making major changes or may take a little more time to work into a change mindset. Coaches can work with the group to meet them where they are and eventually move them the next level of change. Higher total points could indicate the group is ready to make changes within the food pantry and can move forward with the MyChoice Pantry Scorecard. Move forward with the MyChoice Pantry Scorecard if the ORIC assessment indicates that the group is ready. This tool can be used to measure ST5: Readiness & Need from the SNAP Ed Evaluation Framework.
To start using the NIH ORIC, please follow the steps below:

1. Meet with the leadership, director and staff, or those that are responsible for administration of the organization/group that you are working with.

2. Introduce yourself as a community coach that will be working with the group to help them identify possible opportunities for growth. Set a positive and non-judgmental tone.

3. Distribute Executive Summary and supporting materials.

4. Have the group fill out the ORIC
   - Please include multiple respondents from the same unit/location
   - In some cases, this may be one or two individuals if the site is small and is run by a small number of people.

MyChoice Pantry Scorecard
Before taking action, it is important to understand where the pantry is in terms of MyChoice. The MyChoice Pantry Scorecard (Appendix A) was developed to assess the level of MyChoice in food pantries that already have some level of choice, or those starting from the beginning and don’t currently offer client-choice. The MyChoice Pantry Scorecard is a practical tool that contains 21 questions that address the key areas of MyChoice for a total of 54 points. Each pantry is unique in the way they are organized and operate. Therefore, the scorecard is meant to be a way to mark progress over the course of time rather than providing a specific grade. During the Voices for Food study, it was found that food pantries that implemented more components from the Food Pantry Toolkit had higher scores, which means that they made more progress in making changes to the pantry environment. We encourage your food pantry to use it as a guide for new opportunities of growth and development.

The order in which items appear in the MyChoice Pantry Scorecard denotes the chronological importance of completion. Each item contains a corresponding page number that aligns with the toolkit. Full directions and a copy of the scorecard are found in Appendix A.

If you are a community coach using the MyChoice Scorecard, refer to Appendix B for specific coaching questions to help start the conversation about change.

Fundraising
Many food pantries rely on a variety of different methods of fundraising.

Grants: The pantry can apply for grants from many different sources including local, state, and federal government agencies, private foundations and other non-profit groups. The Voices for Food council in your area could serve as a resource for connecting you with someone who has grant writing experience.

Direct government funding: The pantry can inquire with local or country government agencies to become a direct line item in their budget. This could be a long term solution.

Community fund-raising drives: The pantry can engage in fundraising from businesses and people in the community. Fund raising efforts are also a great way to inform the community about the work the pantry does, recruit volunteers, and build partnerships.

Each pantry should identify methods of fund-raising that works best for them. It is always important, regardless of the method chosen, to focus on the good work that the pantry does. Be aware of any strings that may be attached to the funding. Stay true to the mission and vision of the pantry.

Training
Voices for Food Ambassadors are food pantry personnel who have been trained to guide clients through the MyChoice food pantry. To help equip ambassadors with the tools they need to succeed, a flexible training plan is outlined in Part 2 of this publication. Training should be completed before implementing MyPlate.

Finances
As an organization, the pantry likely operates under a financial plan for the year. When considering making changes in the pantry, questions about funding the changes that need to be made may arise. It is important to be fiscally responsible while also undertaking changes that benefit the pantry, pantry clients and community.

Creating a budget should occur after goals and objectives have been set. After that, an initial step is to begin to outline the needs of the pantry and detail the related costs. It’s okay to overestimate the expenses, because that provides you with a cushion to help with unexpected expenses. Be realistic in setting a budget for the pantry, and check back often to make sure you are following through on the things you laid out.

As a Voices for Food pantry, it will be important to forge a partnership with your local Voices for Food council. They can include items needed in their annual budget plan and/or network to procure the funding or items needed. Common items that have been requested to aid in the transition to MyChoice have included shelving, shopping carts, refrigerators, freezers, and shopping bags.
and annually thereafter to accommodate the changing body of knowledge in nutrition, food safety, and cultural competency.

The training program is intended for food pantry personnel, clients, food council members, and other interested individuals in the community. Because it encourages collaboration among all community members, communities are encouraged to bring together as many groups and individuals as possible to be trained.

Once participants complete this training, each earns the title “Voices for Food Ambassador” and receives the certificate provided in Appendix E.

**Voices for Food Ambassador**

The Voices for Food Ambassador Training program is for food pantry personnel, clients, and food council members. This training provides instruction on nutrition, food safety, and cultural competency. Participants learn how to effectively promote nutrition and be proactive about their food concerns, preferences, and needs. Once trained, Voices for Food Ambassadors become champions for nutrition in their homes, food pantries, and communities.

**Before You Start**

Following this section you will find the steps for fully implementing the gold standard of MyChoice. Note that while fully implementing all components of this toolkit is recommended, each pantry is unique in terms of what they can achieve feasibly at once. Taking steps towards MyChoice is a good way to make changes in an acceptable timeframe and manner that fits the unique situation of each pantry.

In addition, consider surveying clients about their needs and perceptions to assist with planning. The questions provided in APPENDIX C can be incorporated into a survey or regular needs assessment.

**How to Implement MyChoice**

The MyChoice system organizes foods on shelves according to food groups. Each food group is color coded to allow for easy identification. Clients select a certain number of items from each food group. Follow the steps below to implement MyChoice:

**Step 1**

Organize the food pantry by color-coded food groups with signs or stickers. Place posters (see Appendix D) on food pantry shelves to indicate the food group and the number of items each family size may take from each food group. These categories and colors follow the MyPlate model. For example, the color red represents fruits in both MyChoice and MyPlate. The same colors that represent vegetables, protein, grains, and dairy in MyPlate represent those food groups in MyChoice. MyChoice contains additional combination and miscellaneous groups to accommodate all the food a pantry may have available. The color scheme appears in Figure 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Food group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Fruits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Vegetables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purple</td>
<td>Protein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>Grains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>Dairy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>Combination (such as soups and boxed meals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Miscellaneous (such as oils and sweets)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. The color coding of food groups on pantry shelves in the MyChoice system matches that of the MyPlate system, with the addition of the combination group (brown) and miscellaneous group (yellow).

**Step 2**

Decide how many items clients will be allowed to choose from each food group. The food pantry’s current inventory and the client’s family size often influence this amount. For example, larger families are generally allowed to choose...
more items than smaller families. Pantries can use the shelf posters in Appendix D to display this information.

Some food pantries are not yet able to offer different amounts of choices to different family sizes. Tailor the limits to suit your unique pantry. Figure 3 is an example of a shelf labeled with a family limit.

Figures 4 through 10 show pantry foods from each food category.

Step 3
After the food has been reorganized on shelves color-coded by MyChoice food groups, quantity limits decided on, and volunteers and staff trained to serve as Voices for Food ambassadors, the food pantry is ready to serve clients. Figures 11 and 12 show food pantry ambassadors and clients discussing the nutritional value of the offered food selections.

These online videos explain the MyChoice system and how food pantries can adapt their operations to use it:
- **Making the Switch: A Guide for Converting to a Client Choice Pantry** developed by The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ztD_UobB0yE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ztD_UobB0yE).
- **Safe Food for the Hungry: Designing for Choice** developed by Safe Food for the Hungry (now Indiana’s Emergency Food Resource Network) at Purdue University: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q0zvTuEmliw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q0zvTuEmliw).
Recommended Practices for Implementing MyChoice

This section contains a list of recommended practices (Remley et al., 2013) for food pantries implementing the MyChoice system. Adopting the MyChoice model takes time and effort, so the recommended practices have been separated into two groups: a core set that will help the pantry build a solid foundation, and long-term set that can be implemented over time.

Core Recommended Practices

- Train staff and volunteers on how to set up and administer MyChoice.
- Educate staff and volunteers on the importance of guided client-choice and its positive impact on the client and pantry.
- Organize food according to MyPlate food groups with the addition of combination (brown) and miscellaneous (yellow) groups.
- Train staff and volunteers to offer respectful customer service to clients.
- Have staff and volunteers attend Voices for Food ambassador training sessions and workshops, which teach about nutrition education and promotion, food safety, and cultural competency.
- At least once per month, distribute education materials in one of the following topic areas: nutrition, meal preparation, food safety or resource management. Appendix E, and Appendix F have resources to assist with this.
- Ensure clients aren’t rushed and that they have an easy way to bag and carry selections, such as with shopping carts and bags.
- Label shelves with each shelf color coded and food group posters visible.
- Have staff and volunteers encourage clients to remove their own items from shelves and place them in their carts or bags.
- Allow space and time for SNAP-Ed nutrition workshops and food demonstrations.
- Implement creative marketing strategies such as the following to promote healthy choices and successful MyChoice pantries. Keep track of how many you implement.
  - Place healthy choices in special areas such as at the front of the line, at the beginning of the aisles, and on special displays (Hanks, Just, & Wansink, 2012; Wansink, 2013).
  - Place the unhealthy choices in harder to reach areas such as on the top or bottom of a shelf or in an inaccessible location where clients need to ask for help (Wansink, 2013).
  - Offer free choices for healthier food selections.
  - Promote healthy choices with signs for food samples.
  - Develop creative names for the foods you want to move quickly or are having difficulty moving, such as “filling whole grain rice” or “local, delicious apples” (Wansink, 2013; Wansink, Just, Payne, & Klinger, 2012; Wansink, van Ittersum, & Painter, 2005).
  - For unfamiliar healthy foods, offer the food sample and a recipe that includes the unfamiliar food. Highlight each ingredient in the recipe with its corresponding MyChoice food group color (Wansink, 2013). Appendix G has a template that can be used for recipes.

Not ready to move to this step? Try implementing a shopping list (Example can be found in Appendix L) until you are able to allow a full shopping experience. A shopping list allows the food pantry to still offer choice when there isn’t enough space or capacity to allow for physical removal of food form shelves.

Figure 11. A Voices for Food ambassador talks with a client about the nutritional benefits of choosing foods from each food group.

Figure 12. A pantry volunteer shows a client the ropes of shopping in the pantry.
Display MyPlate nutrition education posters and distribute MyPlate tip sheets.

Train staff and volunteers to engage clients in conversation to promote MyPlate and USDA food group messages.

Long-Term Recommended Practices

- Encourage volunteers and staff to attend food council meetings.
- Refer clients to or promote other public or private food assistance programs.
- Train volunteers to encourage clients to be proactive in the food community so that needs and preferences are understood.
- Offer staggered day, evening, and weekend hours to accommodate working families.
- Have sufficient staff or volunteers to provide intake and shopping assistant services.
- Have trained staff and volunteers wear Voices for Food ambassador buttons.
- Have trained staff and volunteers create a system for training new volunteers.
- Don’t force less popular products on customers for the sake of getting rid of those items.

Frequently Asked Questions About MyChoice

Implementing a guided client-choice system may be new for many food pantries and could pose several challenges. With careful consideration and knowledge of how others have moved to client-choice, your pantry can ease into the transition. A set of frequently asked questions about making the change follows.

Q. How will MyChoice affect the nutrient quality of clients’ diets?

A. Regardless of what choices clients make, allowing choice can help meet client needs because they choose what they prefer. MyChoice encourages clients to be aware of choosing healthy foods from each food group and presents an opportunity for nutrition education (adapted with permission, Indiana’s Emergency Food Resource Network, 2013).

Additional resources to help your food pantry offer healthier selections include Healthy and Safe Food Pantries at: https://flyi.extension.wisc.edu/healthyfoodpantries/ and the Healthy and Safe Food Pantry Assessment Tool: https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/library/materials/healthy-food-pantry-assessment-toolkit

Rainbow of Colors Choice Food Pantry Facebook Page can also be helpful at: https://www.facebook.com/RainbowOfColorsChoiceFoodPantries/

To encourage healthy choices, food pantries can also request donations of healthy foods for their clients. Increasing healthy food donations in the food pantry may seem to be an unattainable goal, but communication with donors about your pantry’s needs and the importance of a healthy diet can build awareness and change what foods are donated.

Visit the New York City Healthy Food Donation Initiative at https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/healthy-food-donation.page for more ideas and resources (such as the “Healthy Food Donation Checklist” and the “Healthy Food Drive Letter Template”) related to seeking specific donations to your food pantry. Even though they’re designed for use in an urban setting, they can be adapted for use in other settings.

Some healthy foods require refrigeration or freezer space. Communicate with your food donors about your food pantry’s capacity to store these foods. If you need more equipment in which to store these foods, try expressing this need to the community and requesting donations. You might be surprised at how easy it is to find a willing donor when you have a specific need identified.

Q. What if pantry volunteers and staff resist change, saying things like “It would be hard to change” or “This is the way we’ve always done it”?

A. Although change can be difficult, there are many positive reasons to change to MyChoice. Offering client-choice in this way can reduce the stress and humiliation of asking for food and promote dignity and trust (adapted with permission, Indiana’s Emergency Food Resource Network, 2013).

Q. How will MyChoice affect our ability to maintain inventory? (We may run out and not have enough for all of our clients.)

A. MyChoice functions with the inventory that is available. Pantries don’t need to worry about distributing identical predetermined food boxes. They can place limits on the amount each family may take. That amount could be similar to what the pantry previously gave in food boxes. Pantries can implement restrictions if certain items are running low. In addition, the transition to MyChoice can prompt evaluation and improvement in how a pantry obtains the food it distributes. The pantry may apply for USDA commodities, find ways to purchase more food per dollar at the food bank, or seek other sources of food (adapted with permission, Indiana’s Emergency Food Resource Network, 2013).
Q. How does the role of the volunteers and/or staff members change?
A. Volunteers and staff members no longer spend time packing bags for clients, but instead can facilitate a warm and welcoming atmosphere by interacting with and assisting clients. Because of this interaction, the volunteer experience is likely to be more rewarding and can promote increased volunteer participation (adapted with permission, Indiana’s Emergency Food Resource Network, 2013).

Q. Our pantry has limited space; how can this system work for us?
A. Offering MyChoice requires no set amount of space – it can range from large grocery-style shelving areas to a small table or a small closet. Size is not important, but the ability of the client to select from the foods presented is (adapted with permission, Indiana’s Emergency Food Resource Network, 2013).

Q. How will this system affect our hours of operation?
A. MyChoice allows for flexible hours that accommodate clientele needs. The hours that were previously spent packing bags can now be spent keeping the pantry open (adapted with permission, Indiana’s Emergency Food Resource Network, 2013).

Q. How does this system work when you also give away USDA commodities?
A. MyChoice is possible to implement no matter what programs the pantry participates in (adapted with permission, Indiana’s Emergency Food Resource Network, 2013).

Q. Can we place incentives or allow “free choice” on certain items?
A. Yes. Many pantries allow clients to freely take items with a short shelf life, such as fresh produce. Other items that a pantry to allow clients to take freely are foods that are difficult to move or those they wish to promote, such as whole grains (Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks, 2006).

Q. Where do we place foods that don’t fit easily into one of the food groups?
A. Items such as canned vegetables are easily placed, but others, such as soups, snacks, and foods with ingredients from more than one food group, can be challenging. To help with this sometimes difficult situation, MyChoice has additional groups called combination and miscellaneous.

Combination foods are those that have ingredients from more than one food group, such as soups, boxed meals, and other recipe mixes. Miscellaneous foods include items that don’t fit in any other category, or tend to be high in added sugars and fats. Examples include baking ingredients, coffee and tea, condiments, snacks, candies and many desserts.

Additionally, some foods may fit into more than one food group, allowing the pantry to choose where to place the item. For example, baked beans could be placed in the vegetables, protein, or combination groups. Finally, some pantries may choose to place desserts and snacks into one of the other food groups, instead of combination or miscellaneous. For instance, crackers may be placed in grains instead of miscellaneous or likewise pudding might be place in diary instead of miscellaneous. This decision is up to the pantry and depends on inventory (Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks, 2006).

PART 2. VOICES FOR FOOD AMBASSADOR TRAINING

Introduction
Voices for Food Ambassadors are food pantry personnel who have been trained to guide clients through the food pantry. To help equip ambassadors with the tools they need to succeed, training is provided. This training should be completed before implementing MyPlate and thereafter on a regular basis. A PowerPoint presentation and post-training evaluation tool can be used to facilitate the process.

The training program is intended for food pantry personnel, clients, food council members, and other interested individuals in the community. It provides instruction on nutrition, food safety, and cultural competency. Participants learn how to effectively promote nutrition and be proactive about their food concerns, preferences, and needs.

This training encourages collaboration among all community members. Once trained, participants become champions for nutrition in their homes, food pantries, and communities! Communities are encouraged to bring together as many groups and individuals as possible to receive this training.

Pantries can offer this training in any way that is convenient for the pantry and the community. Training can be offered all at once or divided into half-day sessions or multiple mini-sessions tailored to participants needs. The training format is flexible to recognize the unique situations of all participants.

Once participants complete the training, each earns the title “Voices for Food Ambassador” and receives the certificate provided in Appendix G. The pantry may also provide ambassadors with buttons that indicate their status and show that they completed the training. Ambassadors should complete this training once a year to accommodate the changing body of knowledge in nutrition, food safety, and cultural competency.
Training Checklist
The food pantry director or any other leader or facilitator in the community can administer Voices for Food ambassador training. To ensure you carry out all aspects of the training, review the following checklist:

- Ensure that participants have received at least the first four lessons from the nutrition education curriculum, Small Steps to Health, and completed the evaluation questionnaires for the Small Steps to Health curriculum (see the Nutrition Education section that follows).

- At least once per month, distribute educational materials in one of the following topic areas: nutrition knowledge, meal preparation tips, food safety information, and resource management education. Appendix I and Appendix J have resources to assist with this.

- Ensure that participants have received food safety training using the program provided in Appendix H and have completed the evaluation questions (see the “Food Safety Training” section that follows).

- Ensure that participants complete cultural competency training using the activities provided in Appendix I (see the Cultural Competency Training section that follows).

- Post the USDA Civil Rights poster in a visible, high-traffic location in the food pantry. (Download the poster at www.fns.usda.gov/cr/and-justice-all-posters.)

Nutrition Education

Introduction
An emphasis on nutrition education is central to MyChoice. Voices for Food ambassadors need knowledge of nutrition to be comfortable discussing nutrition with others in the pantry or community. Nutrition education encourages a healthy lifestyle and balanced diet, which can aid in preventing and managing widespread obesity and associated chronic diseases in the United States. Offer nutrition education in a format that’s convenient for the food pantry personnel, clients, and food council members. MyChoice works well with SNAP-Ed and other nutrition messages, such as the MyPlate program from USDA.

Anyone in the community can deliver the nutrition curriculum for this project. Work with leaders in your community to identify potential trainers. The local county or regional Extension office is often a good resource. Once a trainer is identified, work with community partners to develop an implementation plan for the curriculum.

Small Steps to Health Curriculum

Small Steps to Health is a SNAP-Ed curriculum designed to improve the diet quality, food security, and food safety practices of families and individuals. This research-based, ten-lesson curriculum encourages behavior change through goal-setting, discussions of personal experience, and application of lesson principles among participants. The curriculum is suitable for a wide audience.

Each lesson begins with a set of open-ended questions designed to prompt thoughtful reflection and conversation. These questions can be used to start conversations about nutrition and healthy behaviors among pantry volunteers and clients, and between parents and children. To learn more about this type of communication, called Change Talk, see Appendix K.

Digital English and Spanish versions of Small Steps to Health are available for purchase and download from Purdue University Extension’s online Education Store at https://mdc.itap.purdue.edu/newsearch.asp.

The Smalls Steps to Health Curriculum can be substituted with the approved nutrition education curriculum in your state.

Food Safety Training

Introduction
Food pantry staff and volunteers need to understand food safety principles to ensure the safety of food pantry clients. According to Indiana’s Emergency Food Resource Network (2013), food pantries often rely on donated and salvaged foods to meet the needs of hungry people, so dented cans and damaged boxes are familiar sights. Intact cans and packages with cosmetic damage are safe to use, but if a package’s integrity has been compromised, the food inside may be hazardous.

The combination of a clientele that is more at risk for food poisoning than the general population and donated and salvaged foods means that emergency feeding programs must be especially diligent in monitoring the safety of the foods they provide. Examine all incoming food for safety, and handle and store food safely at your facility. Proper sanitation and time and temperature control are essential.

SAFE AID: Food Safety Training for Food Pantry Programs
SAFE AID training covers important food-handling procedures and provides a solid food safety foundation in food pantries. The program’s five main lessons includes a “Test Your Knowledge” evaluation and answer key. A bonus lesson covers proper sanitizing with bleach. The lessons can be configured so that the entire program runs between from 30 minutes to 2 hours. The SAFE AID materials appear in Appendix I.
Cultural Competency Training

Introduction

Culture in its broadest sense is the underlying fabric that holds together a person's world. Culture binds people to a particular group and time. People who share attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, practices, products, experiences, or conditions of existence may share cultural views. Culture includes language, values, customs, rituals, oral and written history, art, music, dance, and food. More than race or ethnicity, culture encompasses values, lifestyle and social norms, including such things as communication styles, manners and customs, and values and beliefs. Culture is constantly changing as people interact with each other. Differences in culture may be due to age, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, and other factors.

Cultural competence is the ability to understand and respect people across cultures and to consider and respond appropriately to differences.

Cultural competency has four components:

a. Awareness of one's own cultural worldview
b. Attitudes toward cultural differences
c. Knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews
d. Skills in interacting with people across cultures

People can practice their skills in cultural competency in every interaction they have with others. Choice pantries offer many opportunities for client engagement. In a pantry that offers choice, volunteers spend less time boxing or bagging food and more time interacting with clients than in traditional pantries. If interactions are positive, volunteers will have the opportunity to understand clients’ needs, preferences and their situations, and then to offer ideas that might enhance the clients’ overall quality of life.

Cultural competency is essential for fostering positive interactions and also creating nonjudgmental, inclusive environments. A culturally competent person seeks to understand cultures different from his or her own, but also is in tune with his or her own culture and inherent biases. An awareness of biases is the first step to building knowledge and skills that enable one to find common ground with different cultures. Biases can also negatively influence nonverbal communication and these unchallenged biases could be detrimental to the overall choice-pantry atmosphere and experience.

Voices for Food seeks to build bridges between cultures in order to fully capitalize on local human, natural, and financial resources to effectively address health and food insecurity. People who are food insecure often have untapped skills, talents, and experiences that can be realized by using cultural competency skills. Empowering clients to engage with the food system, specifically with the food pantry and the food council, will ultimately result in more appropriate activities that address food insecurity.

Activities

Three cultural competency activities are recommended to help food pantry staff, volunteers, clients, and food council members feel more comfortable interacting with each other. Appendix J contains these three activities that may help meet the needs of your food pantry. Change Talk (see Appendix K) skills should especially be incorporated so that participants can effectively encourage nutrition when engaging with different cultures.

• Activity 1: Golden Ticket (about 45 minutes)
• Activity 2: Beyond the Tip of The Iceberg (about 25 minutes)
• Activity 3: Meet My Generation (about 60 minutes)

These cultural competence activities are intended for participants to explore:

• Their own culture and inherent biases especially related to cultures of privilege and generation.
• Strategies to move beyond biases in order to foster positive client interactions and create nonjudgmental, inclusive social environments.
APPENDIX A: MYCHOICE PANTRY SCORECARD

Using the MyChoice Scorecard
Who should use the MyChoice Scorecard?
It was designed for use by community coaches in Extension to assess pantries and help in planning. Although food pantry personal can use the scorecard independently, it is highly recommended that trained Extension coaches collaborate in the process. Ideally, the community coach works with pantry personnel to complete the scorecard.

What does this MyChoice Scorecard measure?
It scores food pantries based on the content of the Voices for Food: Food Pantry Toolkit. The scorecard is designed for use by community coaches in Extension to assess food pantries and provide guidance on best practices. The easy-to-use scorecard allows coaches and pantry personnel to assess where pantries should begin based on the unique situation and then progress towards the MyChoice model.

When should the MyChoice Scorecard be used?
The scorecard should be completed prior to MyChoice implementation and then semi-annually to measure progress. The scorecard should be completed during food pantry hours.

How should the results be used?
Based on the results the coach can use coaching questions (APPENDIX B) in conversations with pantry personnel to identify strengths and opportunities. The results of the scorecard can help the food pantry set realistic organizational goals and measure progress.

What does the score mean?
The total score does not denote a “good” or a “bad” score. Rather, the scorecard should be used to measure total progress in transitioning to MyChoice. Lower scores indicate more opportunities for growth, while higher scores indicate that progress has been made towards MyChoice.

Instructions:
1. Read through the scorecard in its entirety.
2. Assign points based on your unique pantry observations.
3. Tally points from within Columns A, B & C.
4. Add Columns A, B & C to get a total score.
5. Discuss each item with food pantry personnel. Use the Food Pantry Toolkit (corresponding page numbers appear next to each item in the scorecard) and coaching questions to determine next steps.
6. Reassess progress on a regular basis and then set new goals using the same process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>2 pt</th>
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<th>Notes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Is the food on the pantry shelves organized and labeled by the MyPlate food groups? (pp. 6-7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Are each of the food shelves color-coded by food groups? (vegetables=green, fruit=red, dairy=blue, grains=orange, protein foods = purple, combination = brown, miscellaneous = yellow) (pp. 6-8)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>With variations</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Did pantry users have the opportunity to choose all, some, or none of the foods they take from the pantry? (this could be in the form of a shopping list) (p. 6)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>With variations</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Did pantry users appear to have enough time to choose their food selections? (p. 6)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Using the MyChoice Scorecard

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Instructions:

1. Read through the scorecard in its entirety.
2. Assign points based on your unique pantry observations.
3. Tally points from within Column A, B & C.
4. Add Columns A, B & C to get a total score.
5. Discuss each item with food pantry personnel. Use the Food Pantry Toolkit (corresponding page numbers appears next to each item in the scorecard) and coaching questions to determine next steps.
6. Reassess progress on a regular bases and then set new goals using the same process.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Is the food on the pantry shelves organized and labeled by the MyPlate food groups? (pp. 6-7)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>With variations</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Are each of the food shelves (includes all shelves) color-coded by food groups? (vegetables=green, fruit=red, dairy=blue, grains=orange, protein foods = purple, combination = brown, miscellaneous = yellow) (pp. 6-8)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>With variations</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Did pantry users have the opportunity to choose all, some, or none of the foods they take home from the pantry? (this could be in the form of a shopping list) (p. 6)</td>
<td>All foods</td>
<td>Some foods or variation of choice (list)</td>
<td>No foods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Did pantry users appear to have enough time to choose their food selections? (p. 8)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Did pantry users have an easy way to bag and carry their food selections, such as with shopping carts and bags? (p. 8)</td>
<td>Yes, all pantry users did</td>
<td>Some pantry users did</td>
<td>No pantry users did</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Did staff and volunteers encourage physically able clients to remove their own items from shelves and place them in their carts or bags? (p. 8)</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Are one or more MyPlate nutrition education posters displayed at the pantry where users can see them? (p. 9)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>In progress</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Are nutrition education materials (such as MyPlate tip sheets, magnets, newsletters, etc.) offered to pantry users? (pp. 19-22)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>In progress</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Are any of the following marketing strategies observable at the pantry to promote users making healthy choices at the pantry? (p. 8)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Healthy food choices are placed in special areas such as at the front of the line, at the beginning of the aisles, and on special displays. (p. 8)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>In progress</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Unhealthy food choices are placed in harder to reach areas such as on the top or bottom of a shelf or in an inaccessible location where clients need to ask for help. (p. 8)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>In progress</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Pantry offers incentives for healthier food selections (e.g. two items count as only one choice). (p. 8)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>In progress</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. There are samples of healthy food choices offered to pantry users. (p. 8)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>In progress</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. There are appealing labels for healthy food choices (e.g., “filling whole grain rice” or “local delicious apples”). (p. 8)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>In progress</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. Pantry users are offered recipes with healthy foods available at the pantry. (p. 8)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>In progress</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>g. Pantry users are offered recipes that highlight food group colors in the ingredients listing. (pp. 8, 24)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>In progress</td>
<td>No</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Did pantry staff and volunteers offer respectful customer service to clients? (pp. 8-9)</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Does the pantry have signage or other methods of providing information about and/or referrals to other public or private food assistance programs? (p. 9)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>In progress</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Does it appear that the pantry has enough staff or volunteers to provide intake and shopping assistant services? (p. 9)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>In progress</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Are you able to identify between staff/volunteers and clients (i.e. VFF Ambassador’s button, nametags, aprons)? (p. 9)</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Is there a system for training new pantry staff/volunteers? (p. 9)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>In progress</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Is the USDA Civil Rights poster posted in a high-traffic visible location within the food pantry? (p. 11)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>In progress</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Do food pantry volunteers talk about nutrition with the clients? (pp. 10-11)</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
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Voices for Food Ambassador Training

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>17. Do food pantry staff and volunteers, or clients participate in nutrition education lessons? (pp. 10-11)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Do food pantry staff and volunteers, or clients participate in food safety training? (pp. 10-11)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Do food pantry staff volunteers, or clients participate in cultural competency training? (pp. 10-11)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>20. Are Voices for Food Ambassador training components offered to food pantry clients? (pp. 10-11)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. Do pantry staff, volunteers, or clients participate in a local food council, coalition, or task force? (p. 12)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>No</td>
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Score of each column
A. B. C.

TOTAL SCORE (Sum of columns A,B,C)

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<tr>
<th>Action item</th>
<th>Person Responsible</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
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Comments
## APPENDIX B: MYCHOICE SCORECARD COACHING QUESTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voices for Food: MyChoice Scorecard</th>
<th>Coaching Questions</th>
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</table>
| **Is the food on the pantry shelves organized and labeled by the MyPlate food groups? (pp. 6-7)** | 1. I’ve noticed your pantry is organized by MyPlate food groups, what impact has that had on your pantry clients?  
2. I’ve noticed your pantry is organized (but not by MyPlate food groups), what factors influenced your decision to organize the pantry in the way you did?  
3. What might be some organization methods that you suspect would help pantry clients make the healthier choice the easier choice in the pantry?  
4. What might be some organization methods that you suspect would help pantry clients make food last longer? |
| **Are each of the food shelves (includes all shelves) color-coded by food groups? (vegetables=green, fruit=red, dairy=blue, grains=orange, protein foods = purple, combination = brown, miscellaneous = yellow) (pp. 6-8)** | 1. What might be some ways that you can help pantry clients identify food groups in your pantry?  
2. You are allowing ___ choices per food group. How might we be able to help pantry clients recognize where those choices can come from? |
| **Did pantry users have the opportunity to choose all, some, or none of the foods they take home from the pantry? (this could be in the form of a shopping list) (p. 6)** | 1. I’ve noticed that you don’t allow pantry clients to choose their foods from the pantry. What would be some benefits to switching to this model? What do you suspect some barriers might be? How can we work to overcome those barriers?  
2. What might be some factors that influence food waste among your pantry clients?  
3. What might be some ways in which you can provide pantry clients more choice?  
4. How have you shown pantry clients respect and created a welcoming environment? How can you continue to expand on this?  
5. Are there any potential modifications to the MyChoice model that you can implement? (Example: “shopping list”) |
| **Did pantry users appear to have enough time to choose their food selections? (p. 8)** | 1. I’ve noticed that some pantry users are rushed through the pantry. What might you be able to do to provide the users more time? What are barriers to providing more time?  
2. What strategies do you use to ensure that pantry users have enough time to choose their food? |
| **Did pantry users have an easy way to bag and carry their food selections, such as with shopping carts and bags? (p. 8)** | 1. What might you do (have you done in the past) to help pantry users carry their food? |
| **Did staff and volunteers encourage physically able clients to remove their own items from shelves and place them in their carts or bags? (p. 8)** | 1. What are some ways you might help clients feel they have a choice?  
2. What are some ways you might help clients feel they have a choice if they are physically unable to remove their own items from the shelf?  
3. Is there an intermediate step you can take if you can’t allow clients to remove their own items from the shelf? For example, provide a shopping list. |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Voices for Food: MyChoice Scorecard</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are one or more MyPlate nutrition education posters displayed at the pantry where users can see them? (p. 9)</td>
<td>1. What might be some ways to help clients understand what choices are part of a nutritious meal?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are nutrition education materials (such as MyPlate tip sheets, magnets, newsletters, etc.) offered to pantry users? (pp. 19-22)</td>
<td>1. What materials do you suspect, if provided, would help clients make healthier choices? 2. In terms of nutrition education materials, what are some ways to accommodate diversity in culture, languages, reading or vision abilities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are any of the following marketing strategies observable at the pantry to promote users making healthy choices at the pantry? (p. 8)</td>
<td>1. What might be some ways you can set-up the pantry to encourage your clients to make healthier choices? 2. How might you help pantry users to try new foods?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Healthy food choices are placed in special areas such as at the front of the line, at the beginning of the aisles, and on special displays. (p. 8) 2. Unhealthy food choices are placed in harder to reach areas such as on the top or bottom of a shelf or in an inaccessible location where clients need to ask for help. (p. 8) 3. Pantry offers incentives for healthier food selections (e.g., two items count as only one choice). (p. 7) 4. There are samples of healthy food choices offered to pantry users. (p. 8) 5. There are appealing labels for healthy food choices (e.g., “filling whole grain rice” or “local delicious apples”). (p. 8) 6. Pantry users are offered recipes with healthy foods available at the pantry. (p. 8) 7. Pantry users are offered recipes that highlight food group colors in the ingredients listing. (p. 8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did pantry staff and volunteers offer respectful customer service to clients? (pp. 8-9)</td>
<td>1. What techniques have you tried in the past show pantry clients respect? 2. What would help pantry staff and volunteers offer respectful customer service to clients? 3. What types of training would be helpful?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the pantry have signage or other methods of providing information about and/or referrals to other public or private food assistance programs? (p. 9)</td>
<td>1. What might be some ways you can help pantry users access other food assistance programs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does it appear that the pantry has enough staff or volunteers to provide intake and shopping assistant services? (p. 9)</td>
<td>1. What have you done in the past to recruit volunteers? 2. How do you encourage volunteers to return? 3. Is there an intermediate step you think you could take to get to MyChoice if you don’t have enough volunteers?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you able to identify between staff/volunteers and clients (i.e. VFF Ambassador’s button, nametags, aprons)? (p. 9)</td>
<td>1. How might pantry clients distinguish between staff/volunteers and other clients?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a system for training new pantry staff/volunteers? (p. 9)</td>
<td>1. What do you suspect are the training needs of your staff/volunteers? 2. What have you done in the past to train staff/volunteers?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the USDA Civil Rights poster posted in a high-traffic visible location within the food pantry? (p. 11)</td>
<td>1. Is there a place that you feel would be a good place for a USDA Civil Rights Poster?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voices for Food: MyChoice Scorecard</td>
<td>Coaching Questions</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Do food pantry volunteers talk about nutrition with the clients? (pp. 10-11)                        | 1. In what ways do you encourage clients to make healthier choices?  
2. In what ways could you prepare pantry volunteers to talk about nutrition with clients?       |
| Do food pantry staff and volunteers, or clients participate in nutrition education lessons? (pp. 10-11) | 1. What education or training would be helpful for your clients?                                                                                   |
| Do food pantry staff and volunteers, or clients participate in food safety training? (pp. 10-11)    | 1. In what ways could you prepare pantry staff/volunteers to provide up to date food safety information to clients?                                |
| Do food pantry staff volunteers, or clients participate in cultural competency training? (pp. 10-11) | 1. In what ways could you prepare pantry staff/volunteers to interact in culturally sensitive manner with clients?  
2. What would a cultural competency training consist of? What kind of training would be appealing to your volunteers? How long would it need to be? What type of format (face-to-face, video, etc)? |
| Are Voices for Food Ambassador training components offered to food pantry clients? (pp. 10-11)     | 1. What might be the benefit of offering the Voices for Food Ambassadors’ Training components to your pantry clients?  
2. In what ways would offering the training to your pantry clients help the food pantry?  
3. How could you promote the training to your pantry clients?                                       |
| Do pantry staff, volunteers, or clients participate in a local food council, coalition, or task force? (p. 12) | 1. What might be some ways to get input from clients on the pantry?  
2. What might keep your volunteers/clients from sharing feedback?  
3. In what ways may a task force/food council help your pantry? What might be some challenges?     |
APPENDIX C: OPTIONAL QUESTIONS TO ACCESS PANTRY CLIENT PERCEPTIONS

The following questions can be included in pantry client needs assessment surveys to assess client perceptions of the pantry, health status and needs. It is recommended that Extension coaches work with pantry personnel to decide which questions might be most useful. In addition to the MyChoice scorecards, coaches and pantry personnel can use the survey results to guide planning or to support change.

1. Do you have use of a place to make a meal?
   - Yes
   - No, SKIP TO QUESTION 3

2. Do you own or have use of any of the following. (Please check all the responses that apply)
   - Hotplate
   - Toaster
   - Toaster oven
   - Stove
   - Microwave
   - Refrigerator
   - Can opener
   - Bread knives
   - Utensils
   - Slow cooker

3. Which form of transportation do you usually use to get food for your household? (Check only one box)
   - I drive
   - I take public transportation (taxis, buses)
   - Someone else drives me
   - I walk
   - I ride a bicycle
   - Other form of transportation (Please specify) ___________________
   - Someone brings my food to me
   - Don’t know

4. Have you been told by a doctor or other health professional that you or anyone in your household has any of the following health conditions:
   - High blood pressure
   - High cholesterol
   - Diabetes
   - Obesity
   - Food allergies
   - Don’t know

5. How satisfied are you with the amount of food that you and others in your household receive at this food pantry. Are you…
   - Very satisfied
   - Somewhat satisfied
   - Somewhat dissatisfied
   - Very dissatisfied
   - Don’t know

6. How satisfied are you with the variety of food that you and others in your household receive at this food pantry? Are you…
   - Very satisfied
   - Somewhat satisfied
   - Somewhat dissatisfied
   - Very dissatisfied
   - Don’t know
7. Which types of foods do you want but do not usually get from this food pantry?
   - Fresh fruits and vegetables
   - Low-fat protein food items such as lean meats
   - Skim or low-fat dairy products, such as milk, yogurt or cheese
   - Whole grain foods
   - I get all the types of foods I want at this food pantry
   - OTHER
   - Don’t know

8. When you come to this food pantry, how often are you treated with respect by the people who distribute food?
   - Very often
   - Usually
   - Sometimes
   - Never
   - Don’t know

9. When you come to this food pantry, how comfortable do you feel talking with pantry workers about your food and other needs?
   - Very comfortable
   - Somewhat comfortable
   - Not comfortable
   - Don’t know

10. Which of the following reasons are the main reasons you go to food pantries. (Check all responses that you think are the main reasons you go to food pantries)
    - I go to food pantries when food is running low.
    - I go to food pantries so I can use my money to pay for bills and other necessities.
    - I go to food pantries to provide my household with extra foods.
    - I go to food pantries to provide my household with more healthy foods.
    - I go to food pantries for another reason
      (Please specify other reason) ____________________________________________________________
    - Don’t know

11. Please rate your agreement with the statement below about the My Choice food pantry model. In this model, food pantries allow people to walk through the aisles and choose items from different food categories such as vegetables, fruits, dairy, grains and protein.

    Using a MyChoice model in a food pantry can help people eat a healthier diet.
    - Strongly agree
    - Agree
    - Neither agree nor disagree
    - Disagree
    - Strongly disagree

12. How satisfied are you with the amount of choice you have in the foods you can take home from this food pantry? Are you...
    - Very satisfied
    - Somewhat satisfied
    - Somewhat dissatisfied
    - Very dissatisfied
    - Don’t know

    Please explain your answer. ____________________________________________________________
    ____________________________________________________________
    ____________________________________________________________
13. In the last 12 months, have you been to any food or nutrition-related classes, workshops or food demonstrations at this pantry?
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ How many did you attend? __________#
   ☐ SKIP TO QUESTION 15
   ☐ Don’t Know, SKIP TO QUESTION 15

14. Which of the following topics were covered by those classes, workshops, or food demonstrations? (Check all responses that apply)
   ☐ Nutrition
   ☐ Food safety
   ☐ How to stretch limited food dollars and eat healthfully
   ☐ Don’t know

15. In the last 12 months, did you see any written information about nutrition at this food pantry, for example handouts, brochures, recipes, or posters?
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No
   ☐ Don’t know

16. In the last 12 months, did pantry staff or volunteers talk to you about nutrition or healthy foods?
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No
   ☐ Don’t know

17. Is there a Voices for Food Council active in your area?
   ☐ Yes
   ☐ No, SKIP TO QUESTION 18
   ☐ Don’t Know, SKIP TO QUESTION 18

17a. During the last 12 months, have you gone to any meetings of the local Voices for Food Council?
   ☐ Yes, SKIP TO QUESTION 18
   ☐ No

17b. What prevented you from going to meetings of the local Voices for Food Council?

___________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________

18. If there is anything else you would like to tell us about how this food pantry helps you, please include here.

___________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________

19. If there is anything else you would like to tell us about what should be improved at this food pantry, please include here.

___________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________________
**APPENDIX D: FOOD PANTRY SHELF POSTERS**

These posters can be printed and laminated, then placed on pantry shelves to indicate the food group and number of items clients may take. There are blanks below each family size where the item limits for that food group can be written.

Next to each food group title is the MyPlate message about the group. These messages serve as excellent nutrition talking points for Voices for Food ambassadors to use as they interact with food pantry clients.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruit Group - Make half of your plate fruits and vegetables!</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family Size</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Number of choices</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>Vegetable Group - Make half of your plate fruits and vegetables!</th>
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<td><strong>Family Size</strong></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grains Group - Make at least half of your grains whole grains!</th>
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<td><strong>Family Size</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>Protein Group - Go lean with protein and vary your choices!</th>
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<td><strong>Family Size</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dairy Group - Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk!</th>
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<td><strong>Family Size</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>Combination Group - Use caution; check your labels!</th>
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<td><strong>Family Size</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>Miscellaneous Group - Use caution; check your labels!</th>
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<td><strong>Family Size</strong></td>
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</table>
Fruit Group - Make half of your plate fruits and vegetables!

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Vegetable Group - Make half of your plate fruits and vegetables!

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Grains Group - Make at least half of your grains whole grains!

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Protein Group - Go lean with protein and vary your choices!

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[Image: A food plate with icons for fruits, vegetables, grains, and dairy]
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APPENDIX E: MYPLATE MATERIALS

On the following pages are 14 one-page MyPlate tip sheets in a convenient, printable format. The easy-to-follow tips from the Ten Tips Nutrition Education Series offer suggestions that can help people make food choices for a healthy lifestyle. These tip sheets can be used to accompany the nutrition education curriculum and given to clients as handouts to reinforce the basic nutrition messages.
Let’s eat for the health of it

Start by choosing one or more tips to help you...

- Build a healthy plate
- Cut back on foods high in solid fats, added sugars, and salt
- Eat the right amount of calories for you
- Be physically active your way
Build a healthy plate

Before you eat, think about what goes on your plate or in your cup or bowl. Foods like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, and lean protein foods contain the nutrients you need without too many calories. Try some of these options.

Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Eat red, orange, and dark-green vegetables, such as tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli, in main and side dishes.
- Eat fruit, vegetables, or unsalted nuts as snacks—they are nature’s original fast foods.

Switch to skim or 1% milk.
- They have the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but less fat and calories.
- Try calcium-fortified soy products as an alternative to dairy foods.

Vary your protein food choices.
- Twice a week, make seafood the protein on your plate.
- Eat beans, which are a natural source of fiber and protein.
- Keep meat and poultry portions small and lean.

Keep your food safe to eat—learn more at www.FoodSafety.gov.

Cut back on foods high in solid fats, added sugars, and salt

Many people eat foods with too much solid fats, added sugars, and salt (sodium). Added sugars and fats load foods with extra calories you don’t need. Too much sodium may increase your blood pressure.

Choose foods and drinks with little or no added sugars.
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks. There are about 10 packets of sugar in a 12-ounce can of soda.
- Select fruit for dessert. Eat sugary desserts less often.
- Choose 100% fruit juice instead of fruit-flavored drinks.

Look out for salt (sodium) in foods you buy—it all adds up.
- Compare sodium in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals—and choose the foods with lower numbers.
- Add spices or herbs to season food without adding salt.

Eat fewer foods that are high in solid fats.
- Make major sources of saturated fats—such as cakes, cookies, ice cream, pizza, cheese, sausages, and hot dogs—occasional choices, not everyday foods.
- Select lean cuts of meats or poultry and fat-free or low-fat milk, yogurt, and cheese.
- Switch from solid fats to oils when preparing food.*

*Examples of solid fats and oils

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Solid Fats</th>
<th>Oils</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beef, pork, and chicken fat</td>
<td>Canola oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butter, cream, and milk fat</td>
<td>Corn oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coconut, palm, and palm kernel oils</td>
<td>Cottonseed oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hydrogenated oil</td>
<td>Olive oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partially hydrogenated oil</td>
<td>Peanut oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortening</td>
<td>Safflower oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stick margarine</td>
<td>Sunflower oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tub (soft) margarine</td>
<td>Vegetable oil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Eat the right amount of calories for you

Everyone has a personal calorie limit. Staying within yours can help you get to or maintain a healthy weight. People who are successful at managing their weight have found ways to keep track of how much they eat in a day, even if they don’t count every calorie.

Enjoy your food, but eat less.

- Get your personal daily calorie limit at www.ChooseMyPlate.gov and keep that number in mind when deciding what to eat.
- Think before you eat...is it worth the calories?
- Avoid oversized portions.
- Use a smaller plate, bowl, and glass.
- Stop eating when you are satisfied, not full.

Cook more often at home, where you are in control of what’s in your food.

When eating out, choose lower calorie menu options.

- Check posted calorie amounts.
- Choose dishes that include vegetables, fruits, and/or whole grains.
- Order a smaller portion or share when eating out.

Write down what you eat to keep track of how much you eat.

If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so sensibly—limit to 1 drink a day for women or to 2 drinks a day for men.

Be physically active your way

Pick activities that you like and start by doing what you can, at least 10 minutes at a time. Every bit adds up, and the health benefits increase as you spend more time being active.

Note to parents

What you eat and drink and your level of physical activity are important for your own health, and also for your children’s health.

You are your children’s most important role model. Your children pay attention to what you do more than what you say.

You can do a lot to help your children develop healthy habits for life by providing and eating healthy meals and snacks. For example, don’t just tell your children to eat their vegetables—show them that you eat and enjoy vegetables every day.
Use food labels to help you make better choices

Most packaged foods have a Nutrition Facts label and an ingredients list. For a healthier you, use this tool to make smart food choices quickly and easily.

Check for calories. Be sure to look at the serving size and how many servings you are actually consuming. If you double the servings you eat, you double the calories.

Choose foods with lower calories, saturated fat, trans fat, and sodium.

Check for added sugars using the ingredients list. When a sugar is close to first on the ingredients list, the food is high in added sugars. Some names for added sugars include sucrose, glucose, high fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, maple syrup, and fructose.

Dietary Guidelines for Americans

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010 are the best science-based advice on how to eat for health. The Guidelines encourage all Americans to eat a healthy diet and be physically active.

Improving what you eat and being active will help to reduce your risk of chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, some cancers, and obesity. Taking the steps in this brochure will help you follow the Guidelines.

For more information, go to:

- www.ChooseMyPlate.gov
- www.Health.gov/paguidelines
- www.HealthFinder.gov

USDA Publication number: Home and Garden Bulletin No. 232-CP
HHS Publication number: HHS-ODPHP-2010-01-DGA-B
June 2011

The U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services are equal opportunity providers and employers.
The 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines provides the information you need to help Americans make healthy food choices. Based on the current body of nutrition science, the Dietary Guidelines is a go-to resource for policymakers, public health professionals, and other experts working to improve the health of individuals, families, and communities across the nation.

The current edition is structured around 5 overarching Guidelines. This overview gives busy professionals the essentials—a rundown of each Guideline along with supporting Key Recommendations—to help you apply the Guidelines in practice.

**Guideline 1. Follow a Healthy Eating Pattern Across the Lifespan.**

The 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines emphasizes the importance of overall healthy eating patterns. They’re important because people don’t eat foods and nutrients in isolation. What really matters is the big picture—how a person’s food and beverage choices add up over their lives.

**Key Concept:**

Eating pattern. The combination of all the foods and beverages a person eats and drinks over time.

Eating patterns have a significant impact on health. Diet is one of the most powerful tools we have to reduce the onset of disease. Healthy eating patterns can help prevent obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, and Type 2 diabetes. Currently, about half of all American adults have one or more of these diet-related chronic diseases.

Healthy eating patterns are adaptable. When people follow a healthy eating pattern, they can incorporate many of the foods they enjoy. Healthy eating patterns can work for anyone, accommodating their traditions, culture, and budget.

**Guideline 2. Focus on Variety, Nutrient Density, & Amount.**

The Dietary Guidelines gives clear recommendations about how to follow a healthy eating pattern. By definition, healthy eating patterns need to:

- Stay within appropriate calorie limits for a person’s age, sex, and activity level
- Meet nutritional needs
- Be achievable and maintainable in the long-term

There are many paths to a healthy eating pattern. The Dietary Guidelines provides examples of 3 eating patterns—the Healthy U.S.-Style, Healthy Mediterranean-Style, and Healthy Vegetarian Eating Patterns.
One important way of achieving a healthy eating pattern is to choose a variety of nutrient-dense foods across all food groups.

Key Concept:

Nutrient density. Nutrient-dense foods have the right balance—they pack in plenty of important nutrients and are naturally lean or low in solid fats and have little or no added solid fats, sugars, refined starches, or sodium. Nutrient-dense foods are the foundation of a healthy eating pattern.

Healthy eating patterns include nutrient-dense forms of:

- A variety of vegetables: dark green, red and orange, legumes (beans and peas), starchy, and other vegetables
- Fruits, especially whole fruits
- Grains, at least half of which are whole grains
- Fat-free or low-fat dairy, including milk, yogurt, cheese, and fortified soy beverages
- A variety of protein foods, including seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, legumes (beans and peas), soy products, and nuts and seeds
- Oils, including those from plants (canola, corn, olive, peanut, safflower, soybean, and sunflower) and oils that are naturally present in foods (nuts, seeds, seafood, olives, and avocados)

Note that these foods are only nutrient dense if they’re prepared with little or no added solid fats, sugars, refined starches, and sodium.

Guideline 3. Limit Calories from Added Sugars & Saturated Fats & Reduce Sodium Intake.

The Dietary Guidelines also recommends limits on a few specific dietary components.

**Added Sugars: Limit to less than 10% of total calories daily.**

When sugars or syrups are added to foods as they’re processed or prepared, they’re called added sugars. (Natural sugars—in fruits, vegetables, and milk—are not added sugars.) Added sugars add calories without other nutritional value. When a person’s diet is high in added sugars, it may be hard for them to achieve a healthy eating pattern.

**Saturated & Trans Fats: Limit saturated fats to less than 10% of total calories daily by replacing them with unsaturated fats and limit trans fats to as low as possible.**

Diets high in saturated and trans fats are associated with heart disease. Foods high in saturated fats include butter, whole milk, and meats that aren’t labeled lean. Trans fats are in processed foods, like desserts, frozen pizza, and coffee creamer.

**Sodium: Limit to less than 2,300 mg daily (for adults and children 14 years and older).**

Most Americans get 50% more sodium than recommended. Diets high in sodium are associated with high blood pressure and heart disease.

**Alcohol: Limit to no more than 1 drink daily for women and no more than 2 for men.**

The Dietary Guidelines doesn’t recommend that people start drinking alcohol for any reason and many people shouldn’t drink, such as women during pregnancy. But for adults of legal drinking age who already do, moderation is essential.

When it comes to improving food and beverage choices, small changes can add up to big benefits. That’s why the Dietary Guidelines emphasizes shifts—doable, healthy changes to how people already eat.

Key Concept:
Shifts. A term for healthy substitutions—replacing typical food choices with nutrient-dense alternatives. Healthy shifts can be within food groups or between them.

Making healthy shifts is a great way to add more nutrient-dense foods while eating fewer foods with added sugars, saturated and trans fats, and sodium.

Examples include shifts from:

- Full-fat cheese or whole milk to low-fat cheese or milk
- White bread to whole wheat
- Fatty cuts of meat to seafood or beans
- Butter to olive or canola oil
- Soft drinks to water
- Potato chips to unsalted nuts

Don’t forget physical activity! In addition to the Dietary Guidelines, Americans should follow the Physical Activity Guidelines.

Adults need:
- At least 150 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity each week
- Muscle-strengthening exercises on 2 or more days each week

Children age 6 to 17 need:
- At least 60 minutes of physical activity per day, including aerobic, muscle-strengthening, and bone-strengthening activities

The concept of “healthy shifts” makes dietary change tangible and less overwhelming. By helping people focus on small improvements, eating healthy may seem more manageable.

Americans make so many choices every day about what to eat and drink. Help them see each choice as an opportunity to make a small, healthy change.
Guideline 5. Support Healthy Eating Patterns for All.

The vast majority of Americans aren’t following the recommendations in the Dietary Guidelines. You can help change that. Professionals can work together—with support from the public—to put the Dietary Guidelines into action around the nation. No matter your field of work or area of expertise, you can help bring about healthy changes:

At Home

- Add more veggies to favorite dishes
- Plan meals as a family and cook at home
- Incorporate physical activity into time with family or friends

In Schools

- Support healthier options in the cafeteria
- Encourage nutrition education programs or school gardens
- Increase physical activity during school

At Work

- Add healthier food options in vending machines and during staff functions
- Provide health and wellness programs and nutrition counseling
- Plan regular activity breaks and walking meetings

In the Community

- Start a community garden or farmers’ market
- Improve healthy food options at shelters and food banks
- Create walkable communities by maintaining safe public spaces

The Dietary Guidelines can help Americans eat healthier—regardless of zip code, age, sex, or ethnicity.

Take steps to learn even more about the Dietary Guidelines and spread the word. Go to health.gov/dietaryguidelines to:

- Dive into the complete Dietary Guidelines document
- Check out the Toolkit for professionals, which has more information and materials you can share with patients or clients
- Read the Top 10 Things You Need to Know About the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines
- Get answers to common questions about the Dietary Guidelines
10 tips

Kid-friendly veggies and fruits

10 tips for making healthy foods more fun for children

**Encourage children to eat vegetables and fruits by making it fun.** Provide healthy ingredients and let kids help with preparation, based on their age and skills. Kids may try foods they avoided in the past if they helped make them.

1. **Smoothie creations**
   Blend fat-free or low-fat yogurt or milk with fruit pieces and crushed ice. Use fresh, frozen, canned, and even overripe fruits. Try bananas, berries, peaches, and/or pineapple. If you freeze the fruit first, you can even skip the ice!

2. **Delicious dippers**
   Kids love to dip their foods. Whip up a quick dip for veggies with yogurt and seasonings such as herbs or garlic. Serve with raw vegetables like broccoli, carrots, or cauliflower. Fruit chunks go great with a yogurt and cinnamon or vanilla dip.

3. **Caterpillar kabobs**
   Assemble chunks of melon, apple, orange, and pear on skewers for a fruity kabob. For a raw veggie version, use vegetables like zucchini, cucumber, squash, sweet peppers, or tomatoes.

4. **Personalized pizzas**
   Set up a pizza-making station in the kitchen. Use whole-wheat English muffins, bagels, or pita bread as the crust. Have tomato sauce, low-fat cheese, and cut-up vegetables or fruits for toppings. Let kids choose their own favorites. Then pop the pizzas into the oven to warm.

5. **Fruity peanut butterfly**
   Start with carrot sticks or celery for the body. Attach wings made of thinly sliced apples with peanut butter and decorate with halved grapes or dried fruit.

6. **Frosty fruits**
   Frozen treats are bound to be popular in the warm months. Just put fresh fruits such as melon chunks in the freezer (rinse first). Make “popsicles” by inserting sticks into peeled bananas and freezing.

7. **Bugs on a log**
   Use celery, cucumber, or carrot sticks as the log and add peanut butter. Top with dried fruit such as raisins, cranberries, or cherries, depending on what bugs you want!

8. **Homemade trail mix**
   Skip the pre-made trail mix and make your own. Use your favorite nuts and dried fruits, such as unsalted peanuts, cashews, walnuts, or sunflower seeds mixed with dried apples, pineapple, cherries, apricots, or raisins. Add whole-grain cereals to the mix, too.

9. **Potato person**
   Decorate half a baked potato. Use sliced cherry tomatoes, peas, and low-fat cheese on the potato to make a funny face.

10. **Put kids in charge**
    Ask your child to name new veggie or fruit creations. Let them arrange raw veggies or fruits into a fun shape or design.

Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information.
10 tips
Nutrition Education Series

10 tips to help you stretch your food dollars

Get the most for your food budget! There are many ways to save money on the foods that you eat. The three main steps are planning before you shop, purchasing the items at the best price, and preparing meals that stretch your food dollars.

1. plan, plan, plan!
   Before you head to the grocery store, plan your meals for the week. Include meals like stews, casseroles, or stir-fries, which “stretch” expensive items into more portions. Check to see what foods you already have and make a list for what you need to buy.

2. get the best price
   Check the local newspaper, online, and at the store for sales and coupons. Ask about a loyalty card for extra savings at stores where you shop. Look for specials or sales on meat and seafood—often the most expensive items on your list.

3. compare and contrast
   Locate the “Unit Price” on the shelf directly below the product. Use it to compare different brands and different sizes of the same brand to determine which is more economical.

4. buy in bulk
   It is almost always cheaper to buy foods in bulk. Smart choices are family packs of chicken, steak, or fish and larger bags of potatoes and frozen vegetables. Before you shop, remember to check if you have enough freezer space.

5. buy in season
   Buying fruits and vegetables in season can lower the cost and add to the freshness! If you are not going to use them all right away, buy some that still need time to ripen.

6. convenience costs...
   go back to the basics
   Convenience foods like frozen dinners, pre-cut vegetables, and instant rice, oatmeal, or grits will cost you more than if you were to make them from scratch. Take the time to prepare your own—and save!

7. easy on your wallet
   Certain foods are typically low-cost options all year round. Try beans for a less expensive protein food. For vegetables, buy carrots, greens, or potatoes. As for fruits, apples and bananas are good choices.

8. cook once...eat all week!
   Prepare a large batch of favorite recipes on your day off (double or triple the recipe). Freeze in individual containers. Use them throughout the week and you won’t have to spend money on take-out meals.

9. get your creative juices flowing
   Spice up your leftovers—use them in new ways. For example, try leftover chicken in a stir-fry or over a garden salad, or to make chicken chili. Remember, throwing away food is throwing away your money!

10. eating out
    Restaurants can be expensive. Save money by getting the early bird special, going out for lunch instead of dinner, or looking for “2 for 1” deals. Stick to water instead of ordering other beverages, which add to the bill.

Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information.
What you drink is as important as what you eat. Many beverages contain added sugars and offer little or no nutrients, while others may provide nutrients but too much fat and too many calories. Here are some tips to help you make better beverage choices.

1. **Drink water**
   - Drink water instead of sugary drinks when you're thirsty. Regular soda, energy or sports drinks, and other sweet drinks usually contain a lot of added sugar, which provides more calories than needed. To maintain a healthy weight, sip water or other drinks with few or no calories.

2. **How much water is enough?**
   - Let your thirst be your guide. Water is an important nutrient for the body, but everyone’s needs are different. Most of us get enough water from the foods we eat and the beverages we drink. A healthy body can balance water needs throughout the day. Drink plenty of water if you are very active, live or work in hot conditions, or are an older adult.

3. **A thrifty option**
   - Water is usually easy on the wallet. You can save money by drinking water from the tap at home or when eating out.

4. **Manage your calories**
   - Drink water with and between your meals. Adults and children take in about 400 calories per day as beverages—drinking water can help you manage your calories.

5. **Kid-friendly drink zone**
   - Make water, low-fat or fat-free milk, or 100% juice an easy option in your home. Have ready-to-go containers filled with water or healthy drinks available in the refrigerator. Place them in lunch boxes or backpacks for easy access when kids are away from home. Depending on age, children can drink ½ to 1 cup, and adults can drink up to 1 cup of 100% fruit or vegetable juice* each day.

6. **Don’t forget your dairy**
   - When you choose milk or milk alternatives, select low-fat or fat-free milk or fortified soymilk. Each type of milk offers the same key nutrients such as calcium, vitamin D, and potassium, but the number of calories are very different. Older children, teens, and adults need 3 cups of milk per day, while children 4 to 8 years old need 2½ cups and children 2 to 3 years old need 2 cups.

7. **Enjoy your beverage**
   - When water just won’t do—enjoy the beverage of your choice, but just cut back. Remember to check the serving size and the number of servings in the can, bottle, or container to stay within calorie needs. Select smaller cans, cups, or glasses instead of large or supersized options.

8. **Water on the go**
   - Water is always convenient. Fill a clean, reusable water bottle and toss it in your bag or brief case to quench your thirst throughout the day. Reusable bottles are also easy on the environment.

9. **Check the facts**
   - Use the Nutrition Facts label to choose beverages at the grocery store. The label contains information about total sugars, fats, and calories to help you make better choices.

10. **Compare what you drink**
    - Food-A-Pedia, an online feature available at ChooseMyPlate.gov/SuperTracker, can help you compare calories, added sugars, and fats in your favorite beverages.

*100% juice is part of the Fruit or Vegetable Group. Juice should make up half or less of total recommended fruit or vegetable intake.

**Milk is a part of the Dairy Group. A cup = 1 cup of milk or yogurt, 1 ½ ounces of natural cheese, or 2 ounces of processed cheese.
Making food choices for a healthy lifestyle can be as simple as using these 10 Tips.

Use the ideas in this list to balance your calories, to choose foods to eat more often, and to cut back on foods to eat less often.

1. **Balance calories**
   - Find out how many calories YOU need for a day as a first step in managing your weight. Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov to find your calorie level. Being physically active also helps you balance calories.

2. **Enjoy your food, but eat less**
   - Take the time to fully enjoy your food as you eat it. Eating too fast or when your attention is elsewhere may lead to eating too many calories. Pay attention to hunger and fullness cues before, during, and after meals. Use them to recognize when to eat and when you’ve had enough.

3. **Avoid oversized portions**
   - Use a smaller plate, bowl, and glass. Portion out foods before you eat. When eating out, choose a smaller size option, share a dish, or take home part of your meal.

4. **Foods to eat more often**
   - Eat more vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and fat-free or 1% milk and dairy products. These foods have the nutrients you need for health—including potassium, calcium, vitamin D, and fiber. Make them the basis for meals and snacks.

5. **Make half your plate fruits and vegetables**
   - Choose red, orange, and dark-green vegetables like tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli, along with other vegetables for your meals. Add fruit to meals as part of main or side dishes or as dessert.

6. **Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk**
   - They have the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but fewer calories and less saturated fat.

7. **Make half your grains whole grains**
   - To eat more whole grains, substitute a whole-grain product for a refined product—such as eating whole-wheat bread instead of white bread or brown rice instead of white rice.

8. **Foods to eat less often**
   - Cut back on foods high in solid fats, added sugars, and salt. They include cakes, cookies, ice cream, candies, sweetened drinks, pizza, and fatty meats like ribs, sausages, bacon, and hot dogs. Use these foods as occasional treats, not everyday foods.

9. **Compare sodium in foods**
   - Use the Nutrition Facts label to choose lower sodium versions of foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals. Select canned foods labeled "low sodium," "reduced sodium," or "no salt added."

10. **Drink water instead of sugary drinks**
    - Cut calories by drinking water or unsweetened beverages. Soda, energy drinks, and sports drinks are a major source of added sugar, and calories, in American diets.

Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information.
10 tips
Nutrition Education Series

10 tips for purchasing and storing whole-grain foods

Whole grains are important sources of nutrients like zinc, magnesium, B vitamins, and fiber. There are many choices available to make half your grains whole grains. But whole-grain foods should be handled with care. Over time and if not properly stored, oils in whole grains can cause spoilage. Consider these tips to select whole-grain products and keep them fresh and safe to eat.

1 search the label
Whole grains can be an easy choice when preparing meals. Choose whole-grain breads, breakfast cereals, and other prepared foods. Look at the Nutrition Facts labels to find choices lower in sodium, saturated (solid) fat, and sugars.

2 look for the word “whole” at the beginning of the ingredients list
Some whole-grain ingredients include whole oats, whole-wheat flour, whole-grain corn, whole-grain brown rice, wild rice, and whole rye. Foods that say “multi-grain,” “100% wheat,” “high fiber,” or are brown in color may not be a whole-grain product.

3 kids can choose whole grains
The new school meal standards make it easier for your kids to choose whole grains at school. You can help your child adapt to the changes by slowly adding whole grains into their favorite recipes, meals, and snacks at home.

4 find the fiber on label
If the product provides at least 3 grams of fiber per serving, it is a good source of fiber. If it contains 5 or more grams of fiber per serving, it is an excellent source of fiber.

5 is gluten in whole grains?
People who can’t eat wheat gluten can eat whole grains if they choose carefully. There are many whole-grain products, such as buckwheat, certified gluten-free oats or oatmeal, popcorn, brown rice, wild rice, and quinoa that fit gluten-free diet needs.

6 check for freshness
Buy whole-grain products that are tightly packaged and well sealed. Grains should always look and smell fresh. Also, check the expiration date and storage guidelines on the package.

7 keep a lid on it
When storing whole grains from bulk bins, use containers with tight-fitting lids and keep in a cool, dry location. A sealed container is important for maintaining freshness and reducing the possibility of bug infestations or moisture.

8 buy what you need
Purchase smaller quantities of whole-grain products to reduce spoilage. Most grains in sealed packaging can be kept in the freezer.

9 wrap it up
Whole-grain bread is best stored at room temperature in its original packaging, tightly closed with a quick-lock or twist tie. The refrigerator will cause bread to lose moisture quickly and become stale. Properly wrapped bread will store well in the freezer.

10 what’s the shelf life?
Since the oil in various whole-grain flours differs, the shelf life varies too. Most whole-grain flours keep well in the refrigerator for 2 to 3 months and in the freezer for 6 to 8 months. Cooked brown rice can be refrigerated 3 to 5 days and can be frozen up to 6 months.

Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information.
be food safe

Nutrition Education Series

10 tips to reduce the risk of foodborne illness

A critical part of healthy eating is keeping foods safe. Individuals in their own homes can reduce contaminants and keep food safe to eat by following safe food handling practices. Four basic food safety principles work together to reduce the risk of foodborne illness—Clean, Separate, Cook, and Chill. These four principles are the cornerstones of Fight BAC!®, a national public education campaign to promote food safety to consumers and educate them on how to handle and prepare food safely.

CLEAN

1. wash hands with soap and water
   Wet hands with clean running water and apply soap. Use warm water if it is available. Rub hands together to make a lather and scrub all parts of the hand for 20 seconds. Rinse hands thoroughly and dry using a clean paper towel. If possible, use a paper towel to turn off the faucet.

2. sanitize surfaces
   Surfaces should be washed with hot, soapy water. A solution of 1 tablespoon of unscented, liquid chlorine bleach per gallon of water can be used to sanitize surfaces.

3. clean sweep refrigerated foods once a week
   At least once a week, throw out refrigerated foods that should no longer be eaten. Cooked leftovers should be discarded after 4 days; raw poultry and ground meats, 1 to 2 days.

4. keep appliances clean
   Clean the inside and the outside of appliances. Pay particular attention to buttons and handles where cross-contamination to hands can occur.

5. rinse produce
   Rinse fresh vegetables and fruits under running water just before eating, cutting, or cooking. Even if you plan to peel or cut the produce before eating, it is important to thoroughly rinse it first to prevent microbes from transferring from the outside to the inside of the produce.

SEPARATE

6. separate foods when shopping
   Place raw seafood, meat, and poultry in plastic bags. Store them below ready-to-eat foods in your refrigerator.

7. separate foods when preparing and serving
   Always use a clean cutting board for fresh produce and a separate one for raw seafood, meat, and poultry. Never place cooked food back on the same plate or cutting board that previously held raw food.

COOK AND CHILL

8. use a food thermometer when cooking
   A food thermometer should be used to ensure that food is safely cooked and that cooked food is held at safe temperatures until eaten.

9. cook food to safe internal temperatures
   One effective way to prevent illness is to check the internal temperature of seafood, meat, poultry, and egg dishes. Cook all raw beef, pork, lamb, and veal steaks, chops, and roasts to a safe minimum internal temperature of 145 °F. For safety and quality, allow meat to rest for at least 3 minutes before carving or eating. Cook all raw ground beef, pork, lamb, and veal to an internal temperature of 160 °F. Cook all poultry, including ground turkey and chicken, to an internal temperature of 165 °F (www.isitdoneyet.gov).

10. keep foods at safe temperatures
    Hold cold foods at 40 °F or below. Keep hot foods at 140 °F or above. Foods are no longer safe to eat when they have been in the danger zone between 40-140 °F for more than 2 hours (1 hour if the temperature was above 90 °F).
add more vegetables to your day

10 tips to help you eat more vegetables

It's easy to eat more vegetables! Eating vegetables is important because they provide vitamins and minerals and most are low in calories. To fit more vegetables in your meals, follow these simple tips. It is easier than you may think.

1. discover fast ways to cook
Cook fresh or frozen vegetables in the microwave for a quick-and-easy dish to add to any meal. Steam green beans, carrots, or broccoli in a bowl with a small amount of water in the microwave for a quick side dish.

2. be ahead of the game
Cut up a batch of bell peppers, carrots, or broccoli. Pre-package them to use when time is limited. You can enjoy them on a salad, with hummus, or in a veggie wrap.

3. choose vegetables rich in color
Brighten your plate with vegetables that are red, orange, or dark green. They are full of vitamins and minerals. Try acorn squash, cherry tomatoes, sweet potatoes, or collard greens. They not only taste great but also are good for you, too.

4. check the freezer aisle
Frozen vegetables are quick and easy to use and are just as nutritious as fresh veggies. Try adding frozen corn, peas, green beans, spinach, or sugar snap peas to some of your favorite dishes or eat as a side dish.

5. stock up on veggies
Canned vegetables are a great addition to any meal, so keep on hand canned tomatoes, kidney beans, garbanzo beans, mushrooms, and beets. Select those labeled as “reduced sodium,” “low sodium,” or “no salt added.”

6. make your garden salad glow with color
Brighten your salad by using colorful vegetables such as black beans, sliced red bell peppers, shredded radishes, chopped red cabbage, or watercress. Your salad will not only look good but taste good, too.

7. sip on some vegetable soup
Heat it and eat it. Try tomato, butternut squash, or garden vegetable soup. Look for reduced- or low-sodium soups.

8. while you’re out
If dinner is away from home, no need to worry. When ordering, ask for an extra side of vegetables or side salad instead of the typical fried side dish.

9. savor the flavor of seasonal vegetables
Buy vegetables that are in season for maximum flavor at a lower cost. Check your local supermarket specials for the best-in-season buys. Or visit your local farmer’s market.

10. try something new
You never know what you may like. Choose a new vegetable—add it to your recipe or look up how to fix it online.

Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information.
10 tips
Nutrition Education Series

enjoy foods from many cultures

10 tips to wisely celebrate healthier foods and customs

As a diverse Nation, we can embrace our cultural traditions for the foods we love and still prepare them in healthier ways. This involves being creative with favorite recipes by substituting foods and ingredients that are less healthy with flavorful and appealing choices that still help remind us of our treasured food ways.

1. **Cook with others**
   
   Learn about cooking different traditional or regional foods from others who use authentic recipes and ingredients and explore ways to improve the nutrition of some of your own family favorites. Cooking dishes at home allows you to add variety to meals. If needed, adapt recipes by cutting back on gravies, creams, and sauces; adding more vegetables; or baking instead of frying.

2. **Blend cultures**
   
   Many popular foods and beverages in America blend the cuisines of many cultures. Celebrate our Nation’s diversity and be inspired by dishes that include more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, seafood, lean meats, and low-fat dairy.

3. **Add a touch of spice**
   
   Combinations of herbs and spices often remind us of dishes from our own heritage or our favorite ethnic food. Add flavor to meals with herbs and spices, such as chili, garlic, ginger, basil, oregano, curry, or cilantro, which can replace salt and saturated fat.

4. **Use familiar foods to create exotic dishes**
   
   Use foods you know and prepare new recipes, such as adding curry to chick peas, cilantro to brown rice, or mango to your salad or smoothie. Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.

5. **Find the salt and sodium and go with lower numbers**
   
   All packaged foods are labeled to show amounts of sodium. Use “low-sodium” soy sauce, or broth or canned beans labeled “no salt added.” Check nutrition labels and use products that are lower in sodium or are salt-free.

6. **Think about beverages**
   
   Many cultures offer tasty beverages, such as fruit drinks, alcoholic drinks, rich coffees, and sweet teas. Consider using frozen fruits to create a great tasting smoothie, or adding spices, low-fat dairy, and small amounts of sugar to make beverages. When buying prepared beverages, choose items with less sugar and fat. To manage calories, drink water or other unsweetened beverages instead of sugary drinks.

7. **Delight in cultural gatherings**
   
   Celebrate traditions, especially those that help you stay physically active. Have fun with traditional dances, sports, and games that make you move. Balance what you eat with regular physical activity.

8. **Show children what’s important**
   
   Children learn to cook from their elders. Show kids how meals and dishes from various traditions are prepared. Let them taste foods they made, as you share related stories and customs from your own heritage or expose them to other cultures, but consider ways to cut back on high-calorie foods and ingredients.

9. **Make smart choices when dining out**
   
   Eating out offers tempting new dishes that make it easy to overeat. Choose lower calorie dishes, such as stir-fries, kabobs, or whole-wheat pastas with tomato sauce. Split a dish or ask for a take-home container at the start of a meal to save part of what’s served on your plate.

10. **Remember, all types of foods fit on MyPlate**
    
    MyPlate is designed to remind Americans to eat healthfully, using foods from the food groups. The MyPlate website provides practical information, tips, tools, and recipes that will help you build a healthier diet. Go to www.choosemyplate.gov.
Eating fruit provides health benefits. People who eat more vegetables and fruits as part of an overall healthy diet are likely to have a reduced risk of some chronic diseases. Fruits provide nutrients vital for health, such as potassium, dietary fiber, vitamin C, and folate (folic acid). Most fruits are naturally low in fat, sodium, and calories. None have cholesterol. Any fruit or 100% fruit juice counts as a part of the Fruit Group. Fruits may be fresh, canned, frozen, or dried, and may be whole, cut-up, or pureed.

1. Keep visible reminders
   Keep a bowl of whole fruit on the table, counter, or in the refrigerator.

2. Think about taste
   Buy fresh fruits in season when they may be less expensive and at their peak flavor. Add fruits to sweeten a recipe.

3. Think about variety
   Buy fruits that are dried, frozen, and canned (in water or 100% juice) as well as fresh, so that you always have a supply on hand.

4. Don’t forget the fiber
   Make most of your choices whole or cut-up fruit, rather than juice, for the benefits that dietary fiber provides.

5. Be a good role model
   Set a good example for children by eating fruit every day with meals or as snacks.

6. Include fruit at breakfast
   At breakfast, top your cereal with bananas, peaches, or strawberries; add blueberries to pancakes; drink 100% orange or grapefruit juice. Or, try a fruit mixed with fat-free or low-fat yogurt.

7. Try fruit at lunch
   At lunch, pack a tangerine, banana, or grapes to eat, or choose fruits from a salad bar. Individual containers of fruits like peaches or applesauce are easy and convenient.

8. Experiment with fruit at dinner, too
   At dinner, add crushed pineapple to coleslaw, or include orange sections, dried cranberries, or grapes in a tossed salad.

9. Snack on fruits
   Dried fruits make great snacks. They are easy to carry and store well.

10. Keep fruits safe
    Rinse fruits before preparing or eating them. Under clean, running water, rub fruits briskly to remove dirt and surface microorganisms. After rinsing, dry with a clean towel.

Go to www.choosemyplate.gov for more information.
10 tips to help you eat whole grains

**Any food made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley, or another cereal grain is a grain product.** Bread, pasta, oatmeal, breakfast cereals, tortillas, and grits are examples. Grains are divided into two subgroups, **whole grains and refined grains.** Whole grains contain the entire grain kernel—the bran, germ, and endosperm. People who eat whole grains as part of a healthy diet have a reduced risk of some chronic diseases.

### 1. Make simple switches
To make half your grains whole grains, substitute a whole-grain product for a refined-grain product. For example, eat 100% whole-wheat bread or bagels instead of white bread or bagels, or brown rice instead of white rice.

### 2. Whole grains can be healthy snacks
Popcorn, a whole grain, can be a healthy snack. Make it with little or no added salt or butter. Also, try 100% whole-wheat or rye crackers.

### 3. Save some time
Cook extra bulgur or barley when you have time. Freeze half to heat and serve later as a quick side dish.

### 4. Mix it up with whole grains
Use whole grains in mixed dishes, such as barley in vegetable soups or stews and bulgur wheat in casseroles or stir-fries. Try a quinoa salad or pilaf.

### 5. Try whole-wheat versions
For a change, try brown rice or whole-wheat pasta. Try brown rice stuffing in baked green peppers or tomatoes, and whole-wheat macaroni in macaroni and cheese.

### 6. Bake up some whole-grain goodness
Experiment by substituting buckwheat, millet, or oat flour for up to half of the flour in pancake, waffle, muffin, or other flour-based recipes. They may need a bit more leavening in order to rise.

### 7. Be a good role model for children
Set a good example for children by serving and eating whole grains every day with meals or as snacks.

### 8. Check the label for fiber
Use the Nutrition Facts label to check the fiber content of whole-grain foods. Good sources of fiber contain 10% to 19% of the Daily Value; excellent sources contain 20% or more.

### 9. Know what to look for on the ingredients list
Read the ingredients list and choose products that name a whole-grain ingredient **first** on the list. Look for “whole wheat,” “brown rice,” “bulgur,” “buckwheat,” “oatmeal,” “whole-grain cornmeal,” “whole oats,” “whole rye,” or “wild rice.”

### 10. Be a smart shopper
The color of a food is not an indication that it is a whole-grain food. Foods labeled as “multi-grain,” “stone-ground,” “100% wheat,” “cracked wheat,” “seven-grain,” or “bran” are usually not 100% whole-grain products, and may not contain any whole grain.

Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information.
got your dairy today?

**10 tips to help you eat and drink more fat-free or low-fat dairy foods**

The Dairy Group includes milk, yogurt, cheese, and fortified soymilk. They provide calcium, vitamin D, potassium, protein, and other nutrients needed for good health throughout life. Choices should be low-fat or fat-free—to cut calories and saturated fat. How much is needed? Older children, teens, and adults need 3 cups* a day, while children 4 to 8 years old need 2½ cups, and children 2 to 3 years old need 2 cups.

1. **“skim” the fat**
   Drink fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk. If you currently drink whole milk, gradually switch to lower fat versions. This change cuts calories but doesn’t reduce calcium or other essential nutrients.

2. **boost potassium and vitamin D, and cut sodium**
   Choose fat-free or low-fat milk or yogurt more often than cheese. Milk and yogurt have more potassium and less sodium than most cheeses. Also, almost all milk and many yogurts are fortified with vitamin D.

3. **top off your meals**
   Use fat-free or low-fat milk on cereal and oatmeal. Top fruit salads and baked potatoes with low-fat yogurt instead of higher fat toppings such as sour cream.

4. **choose cheeses with less fat**
   Many cheeses are high in saturated fat. Look for "reduced-fat" or "low-fat" on the label. Try different brands or types to find the one that you like.

5. **what about cream cheese?**
   Regular cream cheese, cream, and butter are not part of the dairy food group. They are high in saturated fat and have little or no calcium.

6. **ingredient switches**
   When recipes such as dips call for sour cream, substitute plain yogurt. Use fat-free evaporated milk instead of cream, and try ricotta cheese as a substitute for cream cheese.

7. **choose sweet dairy foods with care**
   Flavored milks, fruit yogurts, frozen yogurt, and puddings can contain a lot of added sugars. These added sugars are empty calories. You need the nutrients in dairy foods—not these empty calories.

8. **caffeinating?**
   If so, get your calcium along with your morning caffeine boost. Make or order coffee, a latte, or cappuccino with fat-free or low-fat milk.

9. **can’t drink milk?**
   If you are lactose intolerant, try lactose-free milk, drink smaller amounts of milk at a time, or try soymilk (soy beverage). Check the Nutrition Facts label to be sure your soymilk has about 300 mg of calcium. Calcium in some leafy greens is well absorbed, but eating several cups each day to meet calcium needs may be unrealistic.

10. **take care of yourself and your family**
    Parents who drink milk and eat dairy foods show their kids that it is important. Dairy foods are especially important to build the growing bones of kids and teens. Routinely include low-fat or fat-free dairy foods with meals and snacks—for everyone’s benefit.

* What counts as a cup in the Dairy Group? 1 cup of milk or yogurt, 1½ ounces of natural cheese, or 2 ounces of processed cheese.
with protein foods, variety is key

10 tips for choosing protein

Protein foods include both animal (meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs) and plant (beans, peas, soy products, nuts, and seeds) sources. We all need protein—but most Americans eat enough, and some eat more than they need. How much is enough? Most people, ages 9 and older, should eat 5 to 7 ounces* of protein foods each day.

1 vary your protein food choices
   Eat a variety of foods from the Protein Foods Group each week. Experiment with main dishes made with beans or peas, nuts, soy, and seafood.

2 choose seafood twice a week
   Eat seafood in place of meat or poultry twice a week. Select a variety of seafood—include some that are higher in oils and low in mercury, such as salmon, trout, and herring.

3 make meat and poultry lean or low fat
   Choose lean or low-fat cuts of meat like round or sirloin and ground beef that is at least 90% lean. Trim or drain fat from meat and remove poultry skin.

4 have an egg
   One egg a day, on average, doesn’t increase risk for heart disease, so make eggs part of your weekly choices. Only the egg yolk contains cholesterol and saturated fat, so have as many egg whites as you want.

5 eat plant protein foods more often
   Try beans and peas (kidney, pinto, black, or white beans; split peas; chickpeas; hummus), soy products (tofu, tempeh, veggie burgers), nuts, and seeds. They are naturally low in saturated fat and high in fiber.

6 nuts and seeds
   Choose unsalted nuts or seeds as a snack, on salads, or in main dishes to replace meat or poultry. Nuts and seeds are a concentrated source of calories, so eat small portions to keep calories in check.

7 keep it tasty and healthy
   Try grilling, broiling, roasting, or baking—they don’t add extra fat. Some lean meats need slow, moist cooking to be tender—try a slow cooker for them. Avoid breading meat or poultry, which adds calories.

8 make a healthy sandwich
   Choose turkey, roast beef, canned tuna or salmon, or peanut butter for sandwiches. Many deli meats, such as regular bologna or salami, are high in fat and sodium—make them occasional treats only.

9 think small when it comes to meat portions
   Get the flavor you crave but in a smaller portion. Make or order a smaller burger or a “petite” size steak.

10 check the sodium
   Check the Nutrition Facts label to limit sodium. Salt is added to many canned foods—including beans and meats. Many processed meats—such as ham, sausage, and hot dogs—are high in sodium. Some fresh chicken, turkey, and pork are brined in a salt solution for flavor and tenderness.

* What counts as an ounce of protein foods? 1 ounce lean meat, poultry, or seafood; 1 egg; ¼ cup cooked beans or peas; ½ ounce nuts or seeds; or 1 tablespoon peanut butter.

Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information.
A healthy meal starts with more vegetables and fruits and smaller portions of protein and grains. Think about how you can adjust the portions on your plate to get more of what you need without too many calories. And don’t forget dairy—make it the beverage with your meal or add fat-free or low-fat dairy products to your plate.

1. **Make half your plate veggies and fruits**  
Vegetables and fruits are full of nutrients and may help to promote good health. Choose red, orange, and dark-green vegetables such as tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli.

2. **Add lean protein**  
Choose protein foods, such as lean beef and pork, or chicken, turkey, beans, or tofu. Twice a week, make seafood the protein on your plate.

3. **Include whole grains**  
Aim to make at least half your grains whole grains. Look for the words “100% whole grain” or “100% whole wheat” on the food label. Whole grains provide more nutrients, like fiber, than refined grains.

4. **Don’t forget the dairy**  
Pair your meal with a cup of fat-free or low-fat milk. They provide the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but less fat and calories. Don’t drink milk? Try soymilk (soy beverage) as your beverage or include fat-free or low-fat yogurt in your meal.

5. **Avoid extra fat**  
Using heavy gravies or sauces will add fat and calories to otherwise healthy choices. For example, steamed broccoli is great, but avoid topping it with cheese sauce. Try other options, like a sprinkling of low-fat parmesan cheese or a squeeze of lemon.

6. **Take your time**  
Savor your food. Eat slowly, enjoy the taste and textures, and pay attention to how you feel. Be mindful. Eating very quickly may cause you to eat too much.

7. **Use a smaller plate**  
Use a smaller plate at meals to help with portion control. That way you can finish your entire plate and feel satisfied without overeating.

8. **Take control of your food**  
Eat at home more often so you know exactly what you are eating. If you eat out, check and compare the nutrition information. Choose healthier options such as baked instead of fried.

9. **Try new foods**  
Keep it interesting by picking out new foods you’ve never tried before, like mango, lentils, or kale. You may find a new favorite! Trade fun and tasty recipes with friends or find them online.

10. **Satisfy your sweet tooth in a healthy way**  
Indulge in a naturally sweet dessert dish—fruit! Serve a fresh fruit cocktail or a fruit parfait made with yogurt. For a hot dessert, bake apples and top with cinnamon.

Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information.
It is possible to fit vegetables and fruits into any budget. Making nutritious choices does not have to hurt your wallet. Getting enough of these foods promotes health and can reduce your risk of certain diseases. There are many low-cost ways to meet your fruit and vegetable needs.

1. Celebrate the season
   Use fresh vegetables and fruits that are in season. They are easy to get, have more flavor, and are usually less expensive. Your local farmer’s market is a great source of seasonal produce.

2. Why pay full price?
   Check the local newspaper, online, and at the store for sales, coupons, and specials that will cut food costs. Often, you can get more for less by visiting larger grocery stores (discount grocers if available).

3. Stick to your list
   Plan out your meals ahead of time and make a grocery list. You will save money by buying only what you need. Don’t shop when you’re hungry. Shopping after eating will make it easier to pass on the tempting snack foods. You’ll have more of your food budget for vegetables and fruits.

4. Try canned or frozen
   Compare the price and the number of servings from fresh, canned, and frozen forms of the same veggie or fruit. Canned and frozen items may be less expensive than fresh. For canned items, choose fruit canned in 100% fruit juice and vegetables with “low sodium” or “no salt added” on the label.

5. Buy small amounts frequently
   Some fresh vegetables and fruits don’t last long. Buy small amounts more often to ensure you can eat the foods without throwing any away.

6. Buy in bulk when items are on sale
   For fresh vegetables or fruits you use often, a large size bag is the better buy. Canned or frozen fruits or vegetables can be bought in large quantities when they are on sale, since they last much longer.

7. Store brands = savings
   Opt for store brands when possible. You will get the same or similar product for a cheaper price. If your grocery store has a membership card, sign up for even more savings.

8. Keep it simple
   Buy vegetables and fruits in their simplest form. Pre-cut, pre-washed, ready-to-eat, and processed foods are convenient, but often cost much more than when purchased in their basic forms.

9. Plant your own
   Start a garden—in the yard or a pot on the deck—for fresh, inexpensive, flavorful additions to meals. Herbs, cucumbers, peppers, or tomatoes are good options for beginners. Browse through a local library or online for more information on starting a garden.

10. Plan and cook smart
    Prepare and freeze vegetable soups, stews, or other dishes in advance. This saves time and money. Add leftover vegetables to casseroles or blend them to make soup. Overripe fruit is great for smoothies or baking.

Go to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information.
APPENDIX F: FOOD SAFETY RESOURCES

Resources for Food Pantry Staff and Volunteers

This list features a variety of food safety resources for training food pantry staff and volunteers. Hyperlinks are provided, or proper titles can be entered into a search engine for online access.

- **Food Storage Chart for Cupboard/Pantry, Refrigerator and Freezer** ([EC446, https://food.unl.edu/food-storage-chart-cupboardpantry-refrigerator-and-freezer](https://food.unl.edu/food-storage-chart-cupboardpantry-refrigerator-and-freezer)) This chart from University of Nebraska-Lincoln outlines storage periods and temperatures for retaining food quality.

- **Food Safety Tips** ([https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/nutrition-education/nutrition-education-materials/food-safety](https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/nutrition-education/nutrition-education-materials/food-safety)) – Find a wealth of information and resources to support food safety education efforts, including statistics; reports and research; materials targeted to children, seniors, and pregnant women; food safety concerns in emergencies; and food safety for food banks and pantries.


- **Food Safety Guidelines for Onsite Feeding Locations, Food Shelves and Food Banks** ([http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/food/fs/foodbanksafety.pdf](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/food/fs/foodbanksafety.pdf)) – In recent years, interest has increased in providing adequate amounts of safe, nutritious food to people who lack the means to acquire it themselves. These guidelines have been developed to provide a method of safely redirecting surplus supplies of food to those who need it, following consistent and uniform interpretation of health codes.


- **ServSafe** ([https://www.servsafe.com/home](https://www.servsafe.com/home)) – Learn basic food safety practices for preparing and serving food. Earn your food handler certificate from the National Restaurant Association.


- **Food Marketing Institute: The Voice of Food Retail** ([http://www.fmi.org/](http://www.fmi.org/)) – This website offers resources and education on a variety of topics, such as food safety, research, and nutrition.

- **Indiana’s Emergency Food Resource Network** ([https://www.purdue.edu/indianasefrnetwork/](https://www.purdue.edu/indianasefrnetwork/)) – This network provides relevant nutrition and food safety information for emergency food programs and the public, including a video series by Ken McKan, The Food Safety Man; a variety of posters and handouts; and newsletters that can be distributed to pantry personnel and clients. Examples of food safety topics covered include sorting donated food, dates on food packages, and identifying major defects in cans, boxes, and other containers.

Resources for Food Pantry Clients

Although the nutrition education curriculum provided in this toolkit has lessons on food safety, you may wish to provide additional information from the resources that follow.

- **Food Distribution** ([https://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/fd-food-safety](https://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/fd-food-safety)) – Food safety and security is an important aspect of the USDA nutrition assistance programs. The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Food Safety Unit coordinates food safety and security efforts for all these programs. FNS has made arrangements to allow users to self-register for email notifications for potential USDA Foods food safety events. If you suspect that a USDA food may be contaminated or harmful in some way, directions are provided for reporting the problem. Additional food safety links are also provided.

- **Fight BAC! The Partnership for Food Safety Education** ([http://www.fightbac.org/](http://www.fightbac.org/)) – This nonprofit brings together public and private sectors to support health and food safety educators by making their work more visible, collaborative, and effective. The partnership works with an active network of 14,000 health and food safety educators, providing them with tools they can use to educate people about protecting their health through safe food handling and hygiene.
• **Food Safety for Families Series** ([https://food.unl.edu/food-safety-families-fact-sheets-and-podcast](https://food.unl.edu/food-safety-families-fact-sheets-and-podcast)):
  - **Microwave Oven Safety** ([https://food.unl.edu/documents/microwave_safety_3.pdf](https://food.unl.edu/documents/microwave_safety_3.pdf)) – Although microwave ovens are convenient for preparing meals, they can cook foods unevenly, leaving “cold spots” in the food where harmful bacteria can grow and multiply. This site gives safety tips for using a microwave oven to prevent foodborne illness from striking your family.
  - **Leftover Food Safety** ([https://food.unl.edu/documents/Leftover%20Food%20Safety%20April%202011.pdf](https://food.unl.edu/documents/Leftover%20Food%20Safety%20April%202011.pdf)) – Leftovers can be a great late-night snack, next-day lunch, or quick meal for your hungry family. Take precautions with leftovers to make sure your family is eating safe food. Follow these leftover handling tips so your family can enjoy delicious and safe “planned-overs.”
  - **Holiday Food Safety** ([https://food.unl.edu/documents/HolidayFoodSafety.pdf](https://food.unl.edu/documents/HolidayFoodSafety.pdf)) – The holidays are fun and joyous occasions when family and friends get together for parties and food. The last thing you want to invite to your party is foodborne illness. Use these tips to keep your family and friends from becoming sick. Don’t let bacteria (germs) crash your holiday parties.
  - **Refrigerator Food Safety** ([https://food.unl.edu/ forgotten-fridge](https://food.unl.edu/ forgotten-fridge)) – What’s growing in your refrigerator? Cleaning the refrigerator is important to keep food safe for our families. Check out these tips to keep your refrigerator safe for storage.
  - **Clean** ([https://food.unl.edu/documents/Clean%20April%202011.pdf](https://food.unl.edu/documents/Clean%20April%202011.pdf)) – You can’t see, smell, or taste the microscopic bacteria and viruses that can contaminate food and cause life-threatening illness. Germs thrive in kitchens and can be spread easily between hands, utensils, cutting boards, sinks, food, and countertops. Safe food handling always starts with being clean.
  - **Pack Food Safety With Your Child's School Lunch** ([https://food.unl.edu/documents/Patton%20Pack%20school%20lunch-foodsafety.pdf](https://food.unl.edu/documents/Patton%20Pack%20school%20lunch-foodsafety.pdf)) – During the rush of a busy morning, packing a safe lunch for your child can be easily forgotten. Children are more likely than healthy adults to be victims of foodborne illness. Use these tips to pack a safe lunch.
  - **Chill** ([https://food.unl.edu/documents/Chill%20Newsletter%202011.pdf](https://food.unl.edu/documents/Chill%20Newsletter%202011.pdf)) – Keeping foods cold is very important to prevent harmful bacteria from growing. Learn how to store groceries when you return from the store. Discover how long you may leave certain foods out of the refrigerator.
  - **Egg Food Safety** ([https://food.unl.edu/documents/Egg%20Food%20Safety%202011.pdf](https://food.unl.edu/documents/Egg%20Food%20Safety%202011.pdf)) – If you’re planning an Easter egg hunt or cooking eggs for your Passover Seder, keep your family safe from foodborne illness. Prepare hard-cooked eggs with care.
  - **Cook** ([https://food.unl.edu/documents/Cook%20safely%202011.pdf](https://food.unl.edu/documents/Cook%20safely%202011.pdf)) – Cooking your food to the proper internal temperature is necessary to kill harmful bacteria that can cause foodborne illness.
  - **Safe Grocery Shopping** ([https://food.unl.edu/documents/Safe%20Grocery%20Shopping%20News%202011.pdf](https://food.unl.edu/documents/Safe%20Grocery%20Shopping%20News%202011.pdf)) – We think about food safety when cooking food, but it is also important when buying food. Follow these safe grocery-shopping tips.
  - **Produce Safety** ([https://food.unl.edu/documents/Produce%20Safety%2020April%202011.pdf](https://food.unl.edu/documents/Produce%20Safety%2020April%202011.pdf)) – Fruits and vegetables are an important part of a healthy diet. Local markets carry an amazing variety of nutritious and delicious fresh fruits and vegetables. Handle these products safely to reduce the risks of foodborne illness by following these safe handling tips.

• **Food Storage** ([http://extensionpublications.unl.edu/assets/pdf/ec446.pdf](http://extensionpublications.unl.edu/assets/pdf/ec446.pdf)) Nebraska-Lincoln Extension Circular Publication EC446 – This publication includes information on food spoilage, and refrigerated, cupboard or pantry, and freezer storage. It gives tips to solving refrigerator and freezer odor problems and includes a food storage chart.
APPENDIX G: MYCHOICE RECIPE TEMPLATE

Use this recipe template to create client handouts of recipes that incorporate foods that are stocked at the food pantry.

Recipe Name:

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<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Food group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purple</td>
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<td>Brown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Serving Size:

Yield:

Directions:

Nutrition information for each serving of ______________________

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<th>Cholesterol:</th>
<th>Dietary fiber:</th>
<th>Vitamin A:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Sugar:</td>
<td>Vitamin C:</td>
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<td>Calcium:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturated fat:</td>
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<td>Iron:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total fat:</td>
<td>Total carbohydrates:</td>
<td>Protein:</td>
<td>Calcium:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturated fat:</td>
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</tr>
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This project was supported by the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative Competitive Grant no. 2012-01823 from the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Sustainable Food Systems Program.

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APPENDIX H: VOICES FOR FOOD AMBASSADOR CERTIFICATE

The certificates printed on the following pages can be printed and presented to individuals who complete the Voices for Food ambassador training.

Certificate of Completion
This certificate is awarded to ________________________________
For successful completion of Voices for Food Ambassador Training

Signature  Date

Signature  Date

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APPENDIX I: SAFE AID: FOOD SAFETY TRAINING FOR FOOD PANTRY PROGRAMS

SAFE AID training covers important food-handling procedures and provides a solid foundation in food safety for food pantries. Six reproducible lessons follow.

Causes of Food Contamination

There are three ways that food may become contaminated in food programs:

1. Contaminated Products: Some bacteria are already present in the food that is taken into the food programs. Contamination may originate naturally in the raw materials or it may be introduced during processing.

2. Cross-contamination: This is the transfer of harmful organisms to food by other food, utensils, dishes, equipment, work surfaces, etc. One of the most common sources of bacterial contamination in any food establishment is poor worker hygiene.

3. Other Transport Mechanisms: Bacteria can also be transmitted to food by insects, rodents, airborne dust, and water.

Work Space Organization

- Visitors (e.g., clients, children, and other beings not essential to your food operation) to the kitchen area should be discouraged.
- No animals are allowed in the food operation.
- No smoking is allowed in the food operation.
- A separate area should also be designated for worker breaks and for storing personal items (e.g., coats, purses, employee food, etc.).

Garbage cans should be stored tightly covered and away from food handling and storage areas. (To minimize insects and rodents, empty garbage cans often.)

Cutting Boards

Cutting boards, wooden or plastic, can be an especially dangerous source of bacterial contamination. The tiny grooves made by knives hide food and water sources that are perfect for bacterial growth.

- Use separate cutting boards for different types of food (e.g., 1 for meat, 1 for bread products, 1 for fresh vegetables, etc.)
- Clean cutting boards after each use by:
  - scrubbing in hot, soapy water
  - rinsing
  - dipping in a sanitizer solution of 1 tsp. of bleach per gallon of water (50 ppm chlorine)
  - allowing the board to air-dry

Dishwashing Process

1. Scrape and pre-rinse dishes. Soak only if absolutely necessary.
2. Prepare all dishwashing sinks by washing, rinsing, and disinfecting them.
3. Wash dishes in hot, soapy water (110°F). Change the wash water when it is cold or dirty.
4. Rinse in clean hot water. Change rinse water when cold or dirty.
5. Sanitize dishes by immersion for at least 30 seconds in very hot water (171°F) or for 10 seconds.
SAFE AID: Food Safety Training for Food Pantry Programs
Sanitary Surroundings: Setting Up for Safe Food

Review and revision: Megan Erickson | SDSU Extension Nutrition Field Specialist
Original Publication: 2013 – Lavonne Meyer | SDSU Extension Food Safety Specialist

How you set up and maintain your food program determines how many routes bacteria have to invade and thrive.

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4. Rinse in clean hot water. Change rinse water when cold or dirty.
5. Sanitize dishes by immersion for at least 30 seconds in very hot water (171°F) or for 10 seconds
in lukewarm water (75°F) with 50ppm chlorine (1 tsp bleach per gallon of water).

6. Air-dry dishes, then store them in a clean area.

Note: Dishwashers may be used in place of steps 2 through 6 above. Commercial dishwashers are recommended and must reach recommended final rinse temperature. The final rinse temperature is usually 160°F on the surface of the dishes; the final rinse temperature varies by type of machine. If using a chemical sanitizer, follow manufacturer’s directions.

**Cleaning Methods**

Wash, rinse, and sanitize counters often. Sanitize sinks used for washing food or dishes between each use.

Store in-use cleaning rags in a bucket of sanitizer containing 1 tbsp of bleach per gallon of water. Never add soap to sanitizer, because it forms a film and blocks the disinfecting action of chlorine. Replace bleach solution in sanitizer buckets every 2 hours, or sooner if visibly dirty.

Disinfect floors with 3/4 cup of bleach per gallon of warm water. Empty water between each use and hang mop to dry.

Machine wash linens in hot water and disinfect with bleach. Begin each day with fresh dish cloths and towels and replace as needed.

**Sanitizers**

“Sanitizing” means reducing the number of bacteria on a surface by cleaning with a disinfectant such as bleach.

In general:

- To sanitize counters and appliances, use 100 ppm chlorine (1/2 tbsp bleach per gallon of water)

- To sanitize dishes, use 50 ppm (1 tsp bleach per gallon of water)

In correct concentrations, bleach evaporates leaving little residue. Too much chlorine residue on a dish or utensil can cause chemical poisoning.

Bleach in a bottle gradually loses strength as it ages. To correctly determine sanitizer concentration, use chlorine test strips. The strips turn different shades of gray at different concentrations.

Note: Bleach solution used in spray bottles should be mixed fresh every day. Surfaces cleaned with bleach must be air-dried to give the chlorine time to work and to prevent recontamination.

For more information, visit our [Food Safety site](#).

*Adapted from the Safe Aid Series, Montana State University Extension Service, 1996.*
TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE:
Sanitary Surroundings: Setting Up for Safe Food

1. Which statement about sanitizing is correct?
   a) One teaspoon of bleach per gallon of water is used to sanitize counters.
   b) Bleach and water solutions in spray bottles should be mixed fresh every day.
   c) Test strips can be used to determine how hot the water is.
   d) Bleach and soap together make an effective sanitizer.

2. Which is the proper sequence for washing dishes by hand?
   a) scrape dishes, wash, rinse, sanitize, towel dry
   b) scrape dishes, prepare sinks, wash, rinse, air-dry
   c) scrape dishes, prepare sinks, wash, rinse, sanitize, air-dry
   d) scrape dishes, prepare sinks, wash, sanitize, rinse, air-dry

3. Which is an example of cross-contamination?
   a) a carton of milk left on the counter for 2 hours
   b) the same knife is used to cut all the pumpkin pies
   c) a chicken thawing in the refrigerator drips onto a cheesecake
   d) the same cutting board is used to cut up carrots and broccoli for a stir-fry
Careful food handling limits the ability of bacteria to grow and reproduce in food and therefore to cause food-borne illness. Keep potentially hazardous foods (such as meat, dairy, and cooked foods) out of the temperature danger zone (40°F – 140°F). Refrigerator temperatures should be 40°F or less. Freezer temperatures should be 0°F or less.

### Temperature Control

#### Cooling

Cool foods quickly by:
- Placing food in shallow, partially covered pans.
- Organizing food in containers in refrigerators and freezers so air can circulate.
- Pre-cooling with ice baths before placing in refrigeration.
- Using an ice paddle to agitate foods in ice bath or refrigerator (to remove heat from the food).

#### Maintaining

Protect perishable food by:
- Picking up perishable donations last.
- Transporting perishable foods in an ice chest.
- Unloading and storing perishable foods first.

#### Thawing

Thaw frozen foods by:
- Storing in the refrigerator—allow 1 day for every 4–5 pounds.
- Thawing under running potable cold water.
- In the microwave only if the food will be cooked immediately.
- As part of the cooking process.

If frozen foods accidentally become thawed, special precautions will need to be taken depending upon the food item.
Cooking
Cook foods to a safe temperature to kill pathogenic microorganisms:
- Monitor temperatures with a food thermometer.
- Place in the thickest part of the food.
- Clean and sanitize thermometer before and after each use.

Food Preparation
Vegetables that may not be washed before consumption should be washed and agitated under cold water before distribution. If necessary, a brush may be used to dislodge dirt. Do not use any soap or detergent when cleaning fresh fruits and vegetables. Sinks should be cleaned and sanitized before being used to prepare any food items.

Bulk items, such as bagels, that are not individually wrapped should be protected from contamination by having a food bank worker dispense them with plastic gloves or tongs or by providing utensils or waxed-paper squares to food recipients.

Personnel Practices
Good worker hygiene is critical, as bacteria are easily transferred from workers to food.

Personal Hygiene
Workers should have:
- clean hair and bodies with nails clean and short
- long hair pulled back or covered
- clean clothes and aprons with pockets empty of items which could fall into food
- minimal jewelry
- clean disposable gloves over bandaged cuts
- clean disposable gloves whenever touching food that will not be washed or cooked before use

Worker Habits
- Keep hands away from face, hair, or clothing.
- Turn your face away from food and cover your mouth and nose with a tissue if you must sneeze or cough. After sneezing into a tissue, throw the tissue away, wash hands, and change gloves.
- Never eat, drink, chew gum, or smoke in food-preparation areas.
- Always wash hands under the following conditions:
  - when first entering the operation
  - before handling food
  - after handling trash containers
  - after using the toilet or changing diapers
  - after petting animals
  - after coughing, sneezing or nose blowing
  - after smoking
  - after handling any toxics or poisons
  - after handling contaminated food
  - after handling raw meat, poultry or eggs
  - after handling pencils, paper, money, etc.
  - after touching the face or body
  - after touching the floor or any contaminated surface

The best method for hand washing
- Remove all rings.
- Moisten hands and exposed forearms in running warm water.
- Apply soap.
- Lather every hand surface (including the area between fingers, backs of hands, wrists, and under fingernails) and rub vigorously for at least 20 seconds.
- Clean fingernails with a sanitized nail brush.
- Holding hands downward, rinse well.
- Dry hands with a paper towel.
- Turn off the faucet using the paper towel instead of bare hands.
Employee Illness

A food employee must report to the person in charge* if he or she is ill or experiencing the following symptoms:

- diarrhea, fever, vomiting, jaundice or sore throat with a fever
- a cut containing pus, such as a boil or infected wound that is draining and located on the hands, arms, wrist, or a body part that is not covered
- if the employee has been diagnosed with a foodborne illness or lives with someone that is diagnosed with a food-borne illness

* The manager will make the decision to send the employee home or restrict the job the individual performs that day.

For more information, visit our Food Safety site.

Adapted from the Safe Aid Series, Montana State University Extension Service, 1996.
TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE:
Safe Food Handling

1. Food can be chilled with several different methods. Which of the following is not a safe method of cooling leftover chili?
   a) Put the pot of chili in the refrigerator.
   b) Put the pot of chili into a sink of ice water.
   c) Put the chili into several small, shallow containers.
   d) Stir the chili with an ice paddle.

2. Which statement about hand-washing is not correct?
   a) Rub hands together with soap and warm water for 20 seconds.
   b) Wash your hands before and after handling raw meat.
   c) After washing your hands, turn the faucet off with a paper towel.
   d) Wash your hands before using the bathroom.

3. While working with food, personal hygiene is very important. Which of the following is an example of good personal hygiene?
   a) Taking a bath or shower every week.
   b) Wearing clean clothes to work.
   c) Wearing fake fingernails.
   d) Wearing several rings on your fingers.
SAFE AID: Food Safety Training for Food Pantry Programs
Risk Management

Review and revision: Megan Erickson | SDSU Extension Nutrition Field Specialist
Original Publication: 2013 – Lavonne Meyer | SDSU Extension Food Safety Specialist

Food packaging is designed to protect food. Contamination occurs when damaged or opened packages expose food to bacteria, viruses, molds, insects, rodent droppings and urine, cleaning products and other toxic substances, broken glass, contaminated water or sewage, and so on. Risk management deals with food safety, not food quality.

Quality standards should be set up in addition to safety standards. For example, moldy bread is not safe and should be discarded. Stale bread, however, is safe but may not taste good. Whether you keep stale bread or not will depend on the size of your bread supply and your clients’ demand for bread.

**General Risk Management Principles**

- Use your eyes and nose as first-round guides. If food looks or smells suspicious (if you have any doubts at all), throw it out.
- Contaminated food may be slimy, off-color, or moldy. Remember, however, that not all foods that cause food-borne illness will smell or look bad.
- Never taste a donated product to determine food safety! You can’t see the microorganisms that cause food-borne illness. The amount of Clostridium botulinum toxin that would fit on the head of a pin can kill you.
- Do not accept or distribute home-canned foods.

**Assessment Process**

First, discard the food in any obviously damaged packages in an appropriate manner. “Damaged packages” include:

- Packages with tears
- Bottles with popped safety seals
- Jars that have been opened
- Medicine containers without safety strips
- Leaking containers
- Packages with insect or rodent holes
- Stained paper and cardboard packages or packages that smell of a foreign material
- Products with missing or opened seals
- Any item that has been opened before it arrived at the food bank
- Products that are unlabeled or have illegible labels
- Cans with ends that are bulging or spring in and out when pressed
- Cans that are dented at the seams or have other sharp dents
- Cans which have pitted rust spots that cannot be buffed off with a soft cloth
Types Of Dates

- “Sell-By” date tells the store how long to display the product for sale.

- “Best if Used By (or Before)” date is recommended for best flavor or quality. It is not a purchase or safety date.

- “Use-By” date is the last date recommended for the use of the product while at peak quality. The date has been determined by the manufacturer of the product. Do not distribute infant formula, baby food, or supplements after their use-by date.

- “Closed or coded dates” are packing numbers for use by the manufacturer.

Mark the date received on all cases of products and on all undated individual items so that you can maintain product rotation and keep food for a recommended period of time.

If labels are damaged or dirty, re-label the product with the following information (using masking tape or self-adhesive labels and a permanent marker):

- Manufacturer
- Product
- Ingredients
- Weight
- Expiration date (If the product doesn’t have one, assign one of your own using recommended storage guidelines.)

Storage Times, General Information

Refer to storage guidelines for general recommendation on how long food can safely be stored at your food bank. If foods have been consistently stored at correct temperatures, they may be safe well after the “use by” date printed on the product.

Always be alert for mold, discoloration, slime and damaged packaged when determining how long to keep food. These are sure signs that the food should be discarded. Also be aware that the nutrient content of fresh or packaged food decreases over time.

For more information, visit our Food Safety site.

Adapted from the Safe Aid Series, Montana State University Extension Service, 1996.
TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE:
Risk Management

1. What sense(s) should you use to examine food?
   a) Taste
   b) Sound
   c) Smell
   d) Sight

2. Which of the following are signs that a product should be discarded?
   a) Mold
   b) Discoloration
   c) Slime
   d) All of the above

3. Which of the following bread conditions are safety concerns?
   a) Moldy
   b) Flattened
   c) Stale
   d) Crumbly

4. How long after its use-by date should baby formula be distributed?
   a) It must be distributed before its use-by date.
   b) 3 months
   c) 6 months
   d) 12 months

5. What is the first thing to do when receiving a food donation?
   a) Re-package it
   b) Inspect it
   c) Cook it
   d) Taste it
   e) Give it away
SAFE AID: Food Safety Training for Food Pantry Programs
Repackaging Bulk Foods

Review and revision: Megan Erickson | SDSU Extension Nutrition Field Specialist
Original Publication: 2013 – Lavonne Meyer | SDSU Extension Food Safety Specialist

Repackaging is considered a complex food preparation operation because it involves breaking quality control seals, physically handling the product (instead of just handling the package), and labeling information for product safety.

Repackaging Environment

Location: The facilities for any food preparation operation should be near a source of hot water (for hand washing, cleaning, and sanitizing) and should be separate from other activities. If physical separation (a separate room) is not possible, the activities should be separated by time.

Cleaning: Before beginning a re-packaging operation, all countertops should be sanitized with 100ppm chlorine (approximately 1 Tbsp of bleach per gallon of water). Equipment, utensils and containers should be washed, rinsed, sanitized with 50 ppm chlorine (1 tsp of bleach per gallon of water) and air-dried. These areas should be cleaned again immediately after use.

Containers

Containers should seal in order to protect the product. Use only food-grade containers.

Note: “Vacuum packaging” is not recommended for food bank repackaging efforts.

New Containers

- The easiest solution for many repackaging situations is to use plastic food-grade bags that can be sealed. Paper bags offer minimal protection and are not recommended.

- Never reuse plastic bags, aluminum foil, plastic wrap, or freezer wrap, because they cannot be easily cleaned, are not durable, and often are absorbent. (All of these qualities make it easy for the materials to collect bacteria.)

Sanitized, reused containers

- Containers for repackaged foods should be easily cleanable, non-absorbent, and smooth.

- All containers must be cleaned and sanitized properly.

- Examples of containers that may be reused are glass jars and heavy plastic tubs (butter containers or restaurant-grade containers such as those used for sour cream).

- Containers should be carefully examined for chips or cracks. Jar lids should be clean and free of rust. All defective containers should be discarded.

- Containers that have been used to store chemicals should not be used to store food.

Handling

Gloves should be worn when directly touching a food that may not be washed or cooked again before consumption. Utensils may also be used to avoid direct hand-to-food contact. Gloves and utensils are not a substitute for proper hand washing.

Use caution in repackaging any food that will be served to an “at-risk” population. Examples include powdered milk or formula used to serve the elderly or infants.
Use care in repackaging any food that was packaged under pressure, heat, or vacuum-sealed. Violation of this type of package decreases the shelf life and may require special measures such as refrigeration. (Note: most canned or bottled goods fall under this category.)

Use packaging that is appropriate for the food you are working with. Never pour hot liquids into ordinary glass jars; they are not tempered to withstand sudden heat changes and may break.

Food should never be kept out of temperature for more than 2 hours. This includes time spent in transportation, thawing, preparation, and distribution.

Dispose of unsafe food appropriately and quickly.

**Labeling**

Labeling is required by law on all food produced by manufacturers. In repackaging operations, food banks separate the label information from the food. Minimally, you should supply a replacement label with the product name and a list of ingredients.

A more complete label, however, would include:

- The common or usual name of the product
- The net weight
- A list of ingredients
- Applicable dates (such as the original “sell by” date, the date the food was repackaged, or the expiration date).

You could also include serving instructions on the label. For some foods, a recipe or serving instructions have been shown to dramatically increase the rate of use.

For more information, visit our [Food Safety site](#).

*Adapted from the Safe Aid Series, Montana State University Extension Service, 1996.*
TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE:
Repackaging Bulk Foods

1. Which of the following does not need to be on a food label?
   a) product name
   b) picture of product
   c) net weight
   d) ingredients

2. Equipment, utensils and containers should be washed, rinsed, sanitized, and air-dried. What concentration of chlorine can be used to effectively sanitize?
   a) 5ppm chlorine
   b) 50ppm chlorine
   c) 250ppm chlorine
   d) 500ppm chlorine

3. Containers for re-packaged foods should be________.
   a) easily cleaned
   b) non-absorbent
   c) durable
   d) smooth
   e) food-grade
   f) all of the above

4. Gloves should be worn or utensils used when handling which of these foods?
   a) a box of powdered milk
   b) cans of fruit
   c) bread or buns not in original packaging
   d) bag of potato chips
Providing safe food is as important as providing food itself. A hungry person is more likely to consume food they would not normally choose. If this food is unsafe, it can cause food-borne illness. Food-borne illness can lead to serious discomfort, life-threatening complications, and even death. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimated foodborne infections cause an estimated 1 in 6 Americans (or 48 million) get sick, 128,000 hospitalizations, and 3,000 deaths nationally each year (CDC, 2011). There were 5 outbreaks, 480 illnesses, 88 hospitalizations, and 0 deaths of food-related instances reported in South Dakota in the year 2017.

**Increased Risk**

High-risk populations include:

- Pregnant women
- People with compromised immune systems (e.g., people on medications or chemotherapy)
- Infants and young children
- Older adults

**Controlling Bacterial Growth**

- Provide a clean and sanitary environment for storing and processing food. Practice good worker hygiene.
- Separate foods and/or equipment to prevent the transfer of microorganisms from a contaminated food (or surface) to a clean food (or surface).
- Cook foods to at least their minimum safe internal temperature. Hold cooked foods at 140° F or above.
- Chill foods quickly to prevent bacterial growth. Thaw properly and keep cold foods at or below 40°F.
- In all food situations:
  - Inspect donations for contamination and determine how long food may be stored.
  - Use proper food handling and storage techniques.
  - Practice proper food preparation (specifically in re-packaging foods).

**Conditions**

Bacteria, the most common cause of food-borne illness, are everywhere. Bacteria grow and reproduce best in the following conditions:

- Temperature between 40°F and 140°F.
- Water is needed for microbial growth. This is measured as water activity, and a value of 0.85 or greater is best for growth.
- Food. Although bacteria can grow on any food, they especially like foods high in protein and carbohydrates, such as milk, meat, eggs, cooked rice, baked potatoes, and cut melons.
- Time. Bacteria can double every 20 minutes.
- Oxygen. Some bacteria require oxygen to grow, while others grow when there is no oxygen.
- Acidity. Bacteria grow best at a pH of 4.6 to 7.5.
References


For more information, visit our Food Safety site.

Adapted from the Safe Aid Series, Montana State University Extension Service, 1996.
TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE:
Food Programs and Food-Borne Illness

1. Which of the following people are not considered at high risk of becoming ill from a food-borne illness?
   a. a 16-year-old boy
   b. a pregnant woman
   c. children from the local preschool
   d. a person taking medication for a liver transplant
   e. your elderly grandma

2. Which food is least likely to become unsafe?
   a. baked potato
   b. deli meat
   c. a pot of chili
   d. saltine crackers
   e. milk

3. At what minimum temperatures should you hold hot foods?
   a. 100°F
   b. 120°F
   c. 140°F
   d. 165°F
   e. 200°F
SAFE AID: Food Safety Training for Food Pantry Programs
Test Your Knowledge: Answer Key

Review and revision: Megan Erickson | SDSU Extension Nutrition Field Specialist
Original Publication: 2013 – Lavonne Meyer | SDSU Extension Food Safety Specialist

Sanitary Surroundings – Setting Up for Safe Food
ANSWERS: 1 – b; 2 – c; 3 – c

Safe Food Handling
ANSWERS: 1 – a; 2 – d; 3 – b

Risk Management
ANSWERS: 1 – c & d; 2 – d; 3 – a; 4 – a; 5 – b

Repackaging Bulk Foods
ANSWERS: 1 – b; 2 – b; 3 – f; 4 – c

Food Programs and Food-Borne Illness
ANSWERS: 1 – a; 2 – d; 3 – c
Cleaning removes the things you can see, such as food or soil. Sanitizing attacks the things you cannot see, such as bacteria and other microorganisms. Household chlorine bleach is widely available and affordable. It can be used as a sanitizer, if used correctly. Effective sanitizing reduces the level of contamination to a safe level.

**Bleach Tips**

When using bleach to sanitize various surfaces, take into consideration the following:

- Never mix bleach with other household cleaners, especially those containing ammonia. A poisonous gas can form which can be deadly.

- Surfaces must be cleaned first. Soil, debris and detergents will tie up the free chlorine molecules in the bleach/water solution and render it ineffective.

- Chlorine bleach is most effective in water at room temperature.

- Chlorine bleach can become old and lose its effectiveness.

- Measurements in the following tables are for regular bleach (5.25% sodium hypochlorite). “Ultra” bleach is 6% sodium hypochlorite; however, the bleach/water proportions are very similar.

- Use test strips to determine concentration. The strips indicate ppm (parts per million).

- Make sure that 5.25% sodium hypochlorite is the only active ingredient.

- Scented bleach is fine for cleanup jobs, but do not use it to treat drinking water or on any food contact surface (such as dishes, counter tops, dining tables, food preparation equipment, sinks.)

- Do not use dry bleach or any bleach that does not contain chlorine.

- Be careful of fumes and wear rubber gloves.

- Do not use bleach on aluminum or linoleum.

*Adapted from* Repairing Your Flooded Home, American Red Cross.
Bleach Cheat Sheet
The tables below are to assist in effectively cleaning and/or sanitizing various surfaces. Mix the bleach and water together to make the cleaning solutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHILD CARE</th>
<th>BLEACH</th>
<th>WATER</th>
<th>PPM</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diaper Changing Surface</td>
<td>1 oz. (2 tablespoons)</td>
<td>1 quart</td>
<td>1600</td>
<td>Clean surface, then sanitize. 1 minute contact time. Mix in spray bottle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toys</td>
<td>0.5 oz. (1 tablespoon)</td>
<td>1 gallon</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>Prepare in bucket for dipping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dishes &amp; Kitchen Equipment</td>
<td>0.5 oz (1 tablespoon)</td>
<td>2 gallons</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Clean, rinse, then sanitize. 10 seconds contact time. Air dry.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SD Department of Social Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOOD SERVICE</th>
<th>BLEACH</th>
<th>WATER</th>
<th>PPM</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dishes</td>
<td>0.16 oz. (1 teaspoon)</td>
<td>1 gallon</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Clean, rinse, then sanitize by immersing in sanitizing solution for 10 seconds. Air dry. (10 seconds contact time is needed to be effective)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.25 oz. (1/2 tablespoons)</td>
<td>2 gallons</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.5 oz. (1 tablespoon)</td>
<td>4 gallons</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiping Cloth Bucket</td>
<td>0.5 oz. (1 Tablespoon)</td>
<td>2 gallons</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Clean, rinse, then sanitize. Change solution every 2 hours. Cleaning table tops and food contact surfaces reduces risk of cross contamination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Contact Surfaces</td>
<td>50 drops (1/2 teaspoon) (0.125 tablespoon)</td>
<td>1 quart</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Clean, rinse, then sanitize. Mix in spray bottle. Remain wet for 10 seconds.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SD Department of Health
### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS BLEACH WATER NOTES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BLEACH</th>
<th>WATER</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water Storage Containers</td>
<td>1 teaspoon</td>
<td>1 quart</td>
<td>Swish solution in bottle so it touches all surfaces – rinse with clean water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking Water (untreated)</td>
<td>1/8 teaspoon (~8 drops)</td>
<td>1 gallon</td>
<td>If cloudy, filter before treating with bleach. Let stand 30 minutes before using. Store in clean containers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Are You Ready? FEMA and SD Dept of Health

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### FLOOD CLEAN-UP BLEACH WATER NOTES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BLEACH</th>
<th>WATER</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water in Basement</td>
<td>1/2 cup</td>
<td>1 gallon</td>
<td>(1) Thoroughly clean walls, ceilings, floor. Rinse with water then disinfect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewage in Basement</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>1 gallon</td>
<td>Wear protective clothing (gloves, boots, goggles, etc.) Keep surface wet 10-15 minutes. (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercially Canned Foods</td>
<td>1 tablespoon</td>
<td>1 gallon</td>
<td>(1) Wash cans in strong detergent solution. 2. Immerse cans for 15 minutes in bleach solution. 3. Air-dry for at least 1 hour. (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pots, Pans, Dishes</td>
<td>1 tablespoon</td>
<td>1 gallon</td>
<td>Boil in clean water; immerse for 15 minutes. (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpets</td>
<td>2 tablespoons</td>
<td>1 gallon</td>
<td>Rinse backing of carpet. (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Textiles and Clothes</td>
<td>1/2 cup</td>
<td>1 gallon</td>
<td>or 1 cup bleach per wash load in washing machine. Dry with high heat. (non-colorfast items may fade)(1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources:

1. SDSU Extension
2. EDEN – First Steps to Recovery
3. Floods: Drying out. www.extension.org

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### MOLD, MILDEW BLEACH WATER NOTES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BLEACH</th>
<th>WATER</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hard Plastic, Glass, Metal</td>
<td>1/4 cup</td>
<td>1 gallon</td>
<td>Keep surface wet for 15 minutes, rinse with clean water and dry immediately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painted Interior Surfaces</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>1 gallon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painted Exterior Surfaces</td>
<td>1 quart</td>
<td>3 quarts</td>
<td>add 1/3 cup detergent (without ammonia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathrooms</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>1 gallon</td>
<td>add 1 tablespoon detergent (without ammonia)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Molds in Your Home. AE-1179 NDSU Extension Service

**Steps to Mold, Mildew Clean-up.**

1. Remove mold, mildew and clean surfaces (use non-ammonia cleaning products).
2. Disinfect using bleach/water mixtures given in table below.
3. Rinse and dry quickly.
Bleach – Water Solutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BLEACH</th>
<th>WATER</th>
<th>PPM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 ounce</td>
<td>4 gallons</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 ounce</td>
<td>8 gallons</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 ounce</td>
<td>4 gallons</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 ounce</td>
<td>2 gallons</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4 ounce</td>
<td>1 gallon</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Measurement Conversions
4 quarts = 1 gallon
1 ounce = 2 tablespoons
1/2 ounce = 1 tablespoon
1 tablespoon = 3 teaspoons

For more information refer to the following:
AnswerLine: 1-888-393-6336  http://www.extension.iastate.edu/answerline/
APPENDIX J: CULTURAL COMPETENCY TRAINING

The cultural competency activities in this appendix can be used to meet the specific cultural competency needs of your food pantry.

ACTIVITY: Golden Ticket

DESCRIPTION:
This activity defines privilege in the context of cultural diversity and asks participants to think about the access they have to various privileges based on group membership.

OBJECTIVES:
The participants will:
> Understand the definition of privilege.
> Understand the various privileges to which they do and do not have access.
> Understand how having access to many or few privileges can affect their experiences.
> Be aware of how they can acknowledge their privileges while choosing not to take advantage of them.

MATERIALS:
- “Golden Tickets” handout
- Cardstock (preferably gold colored)
- Plastic cups
- Marker
- “Privilege Statements” handout
- Large index cards
- Scissors

TIME:
45–60 minutes

SETTING:
An open space large enough to spread out cups with tickets and to allow participants to move around freely with a seating space for processing as a group

AUDIENCE:
Adult or peer mentors

PROCEDURE:
Before the activity:
1. Review the background information at the beginning of the “Cultural Competency” module and these activity directions.
2. From the “Privilege Statements” handout, select the privilege statements you will use for your group. Base your selection on the size and demographics of your group and the amount of time you have available. We recommend a minimum of 15 privilege statements for this exercise. With a marker, write each privilege statement on a large index card. Prepare an amount depending on the needs of your group. You may need to alter or eliminate some privilege statements if the group consists largely of peer mentors.
3. Scatter cups around the room, one cup for each privilege you chose. Place an index card containing a privilege statement in front of each cup.
4. Make up golden tickets for each privilege statement you use. Estimate the number of tickets based on the size and demographics of the group. You can either print out all of the “Golden Tickets” handout or you can cut out the tickets that match up to your privilege statements and copy as many as you think you will need. Print them out on cardstock, preferably gold. Cut them out. Match them up to the privilege statements and place into the appropriate cups for participants to pull from.
5. Preface the activity by explaining that the activity examines multiculturalism, a subject that can include sensitive topics. Create basic ground rules in advance and allow the participants to define their own rules for the conversation, such as “be respectful!” and “listen to others without judging their experiences.” Make sure participants understand that the training space is a “safe zone” free of judgment. In the rare case that a participant does not treat the training as a safe space, take care to deal with the disrespectful behavior in a calm manner. Often, asking a participant to explain a point of view in greater detail can provide a better insight into his or her perspective. You might consider asking participants to put themselves in the position of someone who might feel judged by their statements and ask them to consider how that might make them feel.
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During the activity:

1. Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

   We’ve often heard the phrase “I’ve got a golden ticket” meaning that an individual has an opportunity to be treated in a special way. Golden tickets often let us in to situations or events meant only for VIPs where we get a chance to experience things others will not. You might be familiar with the children’s book Charlie and the Chocolate Factory by Roald Dahl. In the book, Charlie finds a golden ticket in his candy bar giving him a chance to tour Willy Wonka’s mysterious candy factory. Today we’ll talk about another kind of golden ticket. These tickets come in the form of privileges granted to cultural groups based on their position in our society. When we think about privilege, how do you define it? Can we come up with a group definition of what privilege means to us?

Pause for responses. Ensure that the group’s definition includes the following:

Privilege is a special right, advantage or immunity granted or available only to one person or group of people. Often privilege is granted to members of a culture who belong to the dominant group.

If the group’s definition does not include parts of the previous definition, add the missing elements before continuing to read aloud or paraphrase the following:

In American culture, certain individuals are members of various dominant groups. For example, men have historically held more positions of power than women have and whites have had more rights and privileges than people of color have had based on the systems and institutions that upheld racism. Individuals who are part of privileged groups have access to rights or opportunities through the golden ticket of privilege that those outside of the group do not. People don’t earn privilege through hard work or good deeds; instead, some cultural groups simply receive better treatment because of who they are and how society views them.

Before we get started, let’s take a few minutes to talk about privilege. Can someone share an example of a privilege granted to one group that another group might not get?
Pause for examples.

Today, we’re going to ask you to consider your own privileges. Being asked to identify our own privileges compared to others can often be uncomfortable. It’s important to separate having privilege from knowingly taking advantage of privilege. Let’s use the example of male privilege. Women learn from childhood they should feel unsafe, particularly when alone at night and in the dark. The news contributes to this idea by sharing the real-life dangers associated with being a female. Many women have a plan to keep themselves safe in a deserted parking lot at night. Think about the women in your life, maybe yourself included. What are some examples of what women do when they encounter this situation?

Pause for responses. Make sure responses include some of the following:

A woman in this situation might place a cell phone call to a friend or family member, hold her keys like a weapon, carry pepper spray, or check the backseat and under the car to make sure no one is hiding there. When asked, many men say they’ve never had to think about how to keep themselves safe in this situation because they’re not only likely to be physically larger than a woman, but also because they haven’t been bombarded with messages about being afraid of what someone might do to them. Many men have had the privilege of not learning to be afraid and of not needing to be afraid for their own safety on a regular basis. Simply not learning to be afraid is far different from choosing to use that privilege to intimidate women or hurt them. Most men will never use their male privilege to their advantage; however, they can’t ignore the advantages of being men. As we talk about privilege, it’s important to understand that the purpose of this activity isn’t to make anyone feel guilty about privileges they have. Many privileges are next to impossible to give up and we didn’t really get the opportunity to choose them. The point of talking about privilege is to acknowledge that it exists and figure out how we can eventually move toward greater equality for all people. Without acknowledging that privilege exists, we’re less likely to identify how unequal access to rights and rewards affects our relationships with one another. Privilege based on cultural group membership is generally unearned and
not requested, but given anyway. People who have privileges based on group memberships are often so used to it, they find it difficult to recognize that they have privileges.

2. To transition to the action portion of the activity, read aloud or paraphrase the following: I’ve placed various statements pertaining to privilege around the room. Behind each statement is a cup that contains tickets with this same statement written on them. If that statement applies to you, take a ticket and keep it. If it doesn’t, move on to the next statement. As you make your way around the room, you should generally remain quiet. Also note if any statements created any strong feelings or memories for you, either of things that happened to you or to people you know. We’ll come together as a group after everyone has had a chance to read all the statements and gather tickets.

Once everyone returns to their seats, read aloud or paraphrase the following: We often assume based on the way someone looks that he or she has had a certain kind of life – either easy or difficult. Many privileges are hidden. Find a partner and share the tickets you picked up with him or her. Talk about what you have in common in terms of privileges and make note of where you find differences. I’ll give you about 15 minutes to talk to each other and then we’ll come back together as a group.

3. Once participants return, facilitate a conversation using the following questions as a guide:

• As you think about the various privilege statements scattered around the room, can you think of some categories they fell into such as class, race or ability?
• Had you considered some of these things to be privileges before? Why, or why not?
• What feelings and emotions did you experience during this exercise?
• Did any of the privileges stand out to you as especially surprising during this exercise? Did you see anything that you wouldn’t have necessarily considered a privilege?
• Did any of the statements evoke a strong memory or feeling within you?
• Were you confronted today with any privileges you might have that you were previously unaware of? If so, how did that make you feel?

• How do you feel about the number of tickets you have relative to the others in the room? How do you feel about where others are in relation to you?

• Did you get nervous about how many or how few tickets you had collected at any point in the activity? If so, did that affect your actions?

• What does the number of tickets you collected say about where you might stand in comparison to others in our culture?

• Do you think that your mentee would have collected more or fewer tickets than you did if they had been doing this activity? Why?

• Even if you really wanted to give one or more of your tickets away to someone else who had less than you, is that possible? Why, or why not?

• Are privileges something you can ask for or receive because of anything that you have done? Why, or why not?

4. Continue to read aloud or paraphrase the following:

**Unearned privilege** happens when the dominant culture’s group values, beliefs and ways of living become standardized as the normal way of living. By standardizing things as normal, we make them invisible. When things are invisible, we don’t question why they are the way they are. For instance, we assume nurses are all female. When there’s a nurse that’s not female, we often call him a “male nurse,” because we believe that all nurses are female. On the other hand, we feel the need to say “woman police officer,” because we assume only men are police officers. When we feel the need to clarify, it’s because we’ve made assumptions about what’s appropriate or normal. Can anyone think of any other examples of assumptions we have?

Pause for responses.

Depending on our place in society, each of us is privileged in some aspects and oppressed in others. We might have class privilege; heterosexual privilege; racial or ethnic privilege; gender privilege; physical, mental or emotional health privilege; age privilege – the list can go on. We can all find ourselves on one
side of the experience of privilege to build empathy for those who aren’t privileged in an area where we are. Part of addressing unearned privileges is trying to see things from the other side’s perspective. When benefits based on unearned privileges are taken away, those who originally had the privilege can experience feeling that something unfair has happened to them. As a result, they might become angry, defensive or territorial. This experience today of picking up your privilege tickets might have made you feel a little judged or defensive. Take some time to think about why. Did anyone feel that way during the exercise? If so, are you willing to talk a little about how you felt during the exercise?

Pause for responses. If no one is comfortable sharing, don’t pry.

Part of addressing privilege is acknowledging things need to change and acknowledging that change can be difficult and scary. Being aware of privilege – both in general as well as your own unique privileges – can help you build stronger relationships based on equality. Your mentee may come from a different cultural background than you do. What you consider “normal” might be totally outside what’s “normal” for your mentee. For example, consider the mentor who shares his concern with his case manager that his mentee is being abused or neglected. When pressed for details, the case manager might discover that he’s worried because the mentee and his siblings sleep on a mattress on the floor instead of in “proper” beds such as the ones he has purchased for his kids. The mentee’s parents are able to provide a home for their children and enough food, but maybe furniture isn’t high on their list of priorities. The mentor’s social class privileges color his idea of what’s normal and acceptable behavior. Differences in standards of living may not always mean abuse or neglect. On the other hand, your mentee may be leery of things you may take for granted. By taking the time to ask questions, you can get to know your mentee and better understand the circumstances from which he or she is coming.

Don’t try to change yourself to be someone you’re not. Young people are often able to see through that kind of behavior. Instead, be more aware of your own privileges and think through how those experiences might affect your mentoring relationship. For
instance, your mentee may find some activities, gifts or experiences you might offer extravagant by his or her family’s standards. This could potentially cause tension between you and the parents or guardians, make the youth uncomfortable or change how he or she sees you as a friend. View your actions or words from an alternate perspective to consider how people may perceive them. Of course, some extravagant opportunities have definite benefits in terms of educational or life experiences, but discussing such opportunities with your case manager and the young person’s parents or guardians ahead of time is best.

PROCESSING:

Guide participants through a discussion, using some or all of the questions and key points that follow. Be sure to give participants time to think about and respond to the questions.

Discussion questions:

- How has privilege affected you, your family and your community, in terms of opportunity and access?
- How are social class and privilege tied to prejudice?
- How can you start a conversation on this topic with your mentee?
- What is one thing that you have learned today that you would like to share?

Key points:

- Privilege is unasked for, unearned favor or power granted to someone for reasons beyond his or her control.
- You can’t eliminate privileges, but you can be more aware of and responsive to how you access those privileges at the expense of others.
- People with privilege are often so used to it, that they don’t even realize that it is a privilege.
- Privilege is not something you can give away, but privilege can be acknowledged and brought out into the open to bring about greater equality.
- Although privileges are unearned, when their benefits are removed, people often feel angry, defensive or territorial.
- Learning to see beyond the privileges means that we first must understand what privilege is and see where it is given.
- When talking about privilege, it is easy for people to become defensive or even worked up about topics. Remember that this is a learning environment and that we are not pointing fingers, but rather trying to explore a universal topic in healthy and constructive ways.
### GOLDEN TICKET HANDOUT: Golden Tickets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Golden Ticket</th>
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<td>When I was growing up, my family owned two or more “good” cars.</td>
<td>My family went on at least one vacation every year when I was a child.</td>
<td>I feel safe walking in my neighborhood after dark.</td>
<td>I can walk into an upscale store and not feel judged or uncomfortable.</td>
<td>I have never been a victim of profiling based on my skin tone.</td>
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<td>My parents paid for all or most of my college education.</td>
<td>As a child, I was never afraid of my parents losing their jobs.</td>
<td>I own a car, computer and cell phone.</td>
<td>I have never been without health insurance.</td>
<td>I can go shopping in a store and be reasonably sure security won’t follow, watch or harass me.</td>
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<td>I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race, gender or socio-economic group.</td>
<td>I can be reasonably sure that if I ask to speak to “the person in charge,” I will be facing a person of similar race and background.</td>
<td>I am reasonably confident I can find people willing to advise me on my next steps in my professional career.</td>
<td>I can be late to a meeting or appointment without people thinking it reflects on my race, gender or background.</td>
<td>I can easily find bandages in a “flesh” color that matches my skin tone.</td>
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<td>I feel welcomed and normal in the usual walks of life, both institutional and social.</td>
<td>I can turn on the television or open the newspaper and easily find images of people like me portrayed in a positive light.</td>
<td>I can fairly certain most people I meet will be pleasant or at least neutral toward me.</td>
<td>I can swear, dress sloppily or be in a bad mood without people attributing it to my race, gender or economic status.</td>
<td>I can be assured that people are not embarrassed to be seen with me because of my physical appearance in any way.</td>
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<td>I can talk about the size of my body and know that most people aren’t worried that someday their bodies might resemble mine.</td>
<td>I will not be accused of being emotionally troubled or psychologically in denial because of my choices.</td>
<td>I can be a part of meetings, classes or conversations and not feel excluded, fearful, attacked, isolated, outnumbered, unheard, stereotyped or held at a distance.</td>
<td>People won’t ask me why I won’t change something about my physical appearance, body weight or dress.</td>
<td>I can walk out in public with my significant other without people doing double takes or staring.</td>
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### GOLDEN TICKETS (CONTINUED)

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<td><strong>GOLDEN TICKET</strong>&lt;br&gt;When making a purchase by check or credit card, my appearance does not raise any questions.</td>
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<td><strong>GOLDEN TICKET</strong>&lt;br&gt;I can easily speak to my child’s college professor.</td>
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GOLDEN TICKET HANDOUT:

Privilege Statements

- When I was growing up, my family owned two or more “good” cars.
- My family went on at least one vacation every year when I was a child.
- I feel safe walking in my neighborhood after dark.
- I can walk into an upscale store and not feel judged or uncomfortable.
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- As a child, I always knew that when I came home I could expect warmth, food, comfort and the attention of someone who loved me.
ACTIVITY

Beyond the Tip of the Iceberg

DESCRIPTION:
Participants receive scenarios in which they see a person’s action but not what’s going on in that person’s life behind the scenes. They will explore empathizing with this person, seek the deeper issues and think of ways they can show compassion to individuals with life circumstances different from their own.

OBJECTIVES:
The participants will:
- Listen for the circumstances behind the story.
- Seek to understand individuals’ personal situations.
- Seek to understand instead of prejudging.
- Learn about showing caring, compassion and empathy.

MATERIALS:
- “Iceberg Drawing” handout (one for the facilitator)
- “Iceberg Scenario Cards” handout
- “Iceberg Scenario Answers” handout
- Flip chart paper
- Markers (one set per small group)
- Scissors

TIME:
25 minutes

SETTING:
Room for several small groups to work in private spaces without distracting one another

AUDIENCE:
Adult or peer mentors

Note: This activity works best in a quiet environment so the participants can reflect. Be sure to emphasize that we are seeking to understand, not to judge.

PROCEDURE:

Before the activity:
1. Review the background information at the beginning of the “Cultural Competency” module and these activity directions.
2. On flip chart paper, copy the definitions of “caring,” “empathy” and “compassion” as given in the “During the Activity” section, and post in the room.
3. Set up small group stations. Put flip chart paper and markers in each group station.
4. Post the “Iceberg Drawing” handout so participants can see it while listening to directions.
5. Print out the “Iceberg Scenario Cards” handout. Cut out each scenario card. Make sure you have one scenario card for each group station.
6. Print out one copy of the “Iceberg Scenario Answers” handout.

During the activity:
1. Refer to the posted definitions on flip chart paper as you read aloud or paraphrase the following:

   We can define “caring” as the unconditional concern for the needs of others.

   We can define “empathy” as the projecting of oneself into another person’s situation or position to sincerely identify with him or her.

   We can define “compassion” as deep sympathy for others with a desire to help.

   In today’s society, we often admire people who are viewed by others as being ruthlessly efficient, invulnerable and always in control. However, real heroes know the value of caring, empathy and compassion.

   Most people desire to show caring, empathy and compassion toward others. We intend to be caring, but we don’t always act in a caring manner. Often, this is
because we tend to judge ourselves by our intentions and others by their actions.

Imagine you’re shopping in the grocery store. You pass a young mother pushing a baby in a shopping cart and a preschool-aged boy walking beside her. As the baby starts to cry, the boy starts begging his mom to buy him a toy. His emotions begin to intensify as his mom tells him no. The child throws himself on the ground, kicking and screaming. He knocks over a display of cans. The young mother tries to remain calm and ignore his behavior. Other customers start to exchange exasperated glances with each other and stare pointedly at the mom who’s clearly not doing enough to control her naughty kids.

The young mother checks her grocery list while others around her think, “What an awful mom! Why won’t she take control of her children? Someone should do something about this!”

Pause to take in reactions and to ask participants what they think about this situation and what they would do if they were in the woman’s place. Continue to read aloud or paraphrase the following:

Finally fed up, one man turns to the woman and says, “Ma’am, would you please do something about your child? He’s out of control and behaving terribly!”

The woman looks up with tears in her eyes and says apologetically, “I’m so sorry. My husband just passed away a few months ago, and today I lost my job. I’m not sure how I will support my kids, but I don’t have the heart to tell my son that I can’t buy him a toy right now.”

2. Pause so participants can momentarily reflect on the story, then continue to read aloud or paraphrase the following:

Perspective changes everything. We see only a small portion of people’s lives at any given moment. We can’t see the rest of the story. Peoples’ lives are complex. You are the only person who knows your feelings, the victories and defeats you experienced the day before, and the hopes, dreams, challenges and problems you currently face. The same is true for others.

We often project our own feelings on others. If our lives run smoothly, we may bounce happily through the day and not be aware of the suffering of others.
People are like icebergs.

At this point, call participants’ attention to the “Iceberg Drawing” handout, which you posted before the activity began. Continue to read aloud or paraphrase the following:

At the water’s surface, we see only the tip of the iceberg. The major portion of the mass of a floating iceberg lies unseen below the water’s surface. With people, what we see above the surface is only the tip of the iceberg compared to what we can’t see. People may smile but the smile may be hiding problems underneath.

Today, we’ll work in small groups to practice communication based on empathy, caring and compassion with people who may be struggling with problems beneath the surface.

3. Divide participants into groups of three to five. Give each group one scenario card, a blank sheet of flip chart paper and a set of markers. Have each group choose one person to draw an ice-berg on the paper, making sure the portion above the waterline is only about one tenth of the size compared to the portion under the waterline. Show them the “Iceberg Drawing” handout as an example.

4. Have them put the name of the person in their scenario at the top of the flip chart paper and mark down in the top portion of the iceberg the “above water” actions that are visible to everyone. Around the outside of the iceberg, mark down assumptions that others might be making about the person in the scenario. For instance, in the story we heard earlier, the man in the gro-cery store might have passed judgment on the young mother and assumed that she was a lazy parent.

5. After they have completed this, have the participants move on to thinking about what might be going on underneath the surface. Encourage them to consider many options and try to put them-selves in the other person’s position as much as possible. Have them write their thoughts below the waterline, leaving some room for more writing later.

6. Once everyone has completed filling in under their icebergs, have each group briefly describe the assigned scenario to the larger group, give assumptions that could be made about the person based on surface information and hypothesize what might be going on underneath the surface.

7. As each group finishes its presentation, from the “Iceberg Scenario Answers” handout, read aloud the reasons for the behavior of the person from the assigned scenario.
8. Move on in this manner until all the groups have presented.

9. Have the groups return to the iceberg drawings. In the space below the surface, they should write ways in which they can show compassion to this person. What actions could they take to support this individual? How can they show them that someone out there cares for them?

**PROCESSING:**

Guide participants through a discussion, using some or all of the questions and key points that follow. Be sure to give participants time to think about and respond to the questions.

**Discussion questions:**

- How did your scenario relate to your own life?
- Have you ever passed judgment on someone and realized you were hasty in your assumption?
- How does an individual’s perception affect the way he or she addresses a problem?
- Are there certain steps you may take to help the individual and not offend him or her?
- How would you want someone to address an issue you have?

**Key points:**

- Every individual has a story to tell. Take the time to listen to someone before passing judgment.
- Let people you want to help know that you are acting out of concern and not trying to interrogate them.
- Show respect for people and their circumstances. Do not pursue an answer or an explanation in an aggressive manner.
- Be honest about the impact of the person’s actions on you and others.
- Do not make assumptions regarding people or their circumstances.
- Be respectful and use discretion if the individual decides to open up to you.
BEYOND THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG HANDOUT:

Iceberg Drawing
### Iceberg Scenario Cards

<p>| Mrs. Kirby (46 years old) is a teacher at your school. Your friends told you she was a great teacher, but she seems like a complete grouch to you. She loads your class down with homework, snaps at people for simple things, and sometimes arrives late for first period. She’s always looks tired and distracted. Last week, when you tried to point out a mistake she made on your test, she was completely irrational and sent you to the principal’s office for being disrespectful. You could write her off as an awful teacher, but something else may be going on in her life. |
| Sarah (15 years old) is your chemistry lab partner and though she’s a nice girl, you’ve noticed that since Christmas break she has started to smell and often has greasy hair. She’s an outsider and doesn’t have many friends at school. You want to suggest that she shower more often and maybe take a little more time with her personal appearance, so that maybe she could get a few more friends, but you’re not sure if you should say anything. |
| Josh (17 years old) goes to your school and walks around with a giant chip on his shoulder. He has a terrible attitude, takes everything people say to him the wrong way and always gets into fights. You’ve heard he sometimes makes kids give him their money, and last week you noticed that he stole a bag of chips and a candy bar from another student’s desk. You could dismiss him as selfish and a bully, but you know that his little sister is the nicest kid ever and she seems to be crazy about him. Is it possible that there are some hidden depths to this guy? |
| Daniel Sutton (35 years old with two kids) is your supervisor at work. Usually he’s a decent, easygoing guy, always joking with people. Lately, he’s acted distracted and cranky. Pushing to get more done at work, he’s been on everyone’s case for the simplest things. Today, he issued a verbal warning to one of your co-workers for being just 10 minutes late. This doesn’t seem to be typical for him. What’s up with him lately? |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Helen (16 years old) is a loner. She always wears dark shirts with long sleeves even in the summer, hides behind her long hair and keeps to herself most of the time. You tried to engage her in conversation the other day to be nice, but she wouldn’t even make eye contact with you, seeming in a big rush to get away. Do you write her off as just another “goth” or “emo” kid, or do you try to reach out to her again?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ms. Jenkins (30 years old with three kids) is your favorite teacher who usually smiles at you. Today, she looks at you with an angry frown. She seems to avoid you during class and never once called on you when you raised your hand. When you turned in your homework, she didn’t even look up. Do you assume she’s angry at you or just having an “off day”? What actions can you take to find the root of the problem?</td>
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<td>Jack (22 years old) works the night shift and you work the day shift at a local store. He does all the cleaning, leaving you to only make the coffee and set out the donuts when you open the store in the morning. The last couple of mornings, you’ve come in and the place is a mess. You talk with Jack and ask if there is a reason he has not been cleaning. He offers a lot of excuses and promises to do better. The first day, the store looks cleaner, but after that, it’s still a mess. This goes on for several days despite your leaving notes reminding him to do his job. You find you are getting behind with your own job duties because you have to clean each morning. Today, your boss meets you as you come to work and shares with you that several customers have complained that the coffee is never ready in the morning when the store first opens. How do you respond to your boss’ concerns while acknowledging that maybe Jack isn’t telling you the whole story?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Will (18 years old) is your best friend at school. Usually, he’s a class clown and always has time to hang out with you. However, the last couple of weeks he’s been blowing you off and hasn’t really looked you in the eye or even smiled at you when you say “hi.” Today, you hear from another friend that someone saw Will at the movies hugging a girl you were hoping to ask out. You’re confused because you’ve told Will you were interested in this person and up until a few weeks ago, you would have said Will would never go behind your back like that. What do you do?</td>
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BEYOND THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG HANDOUT:

Iceberg Scenario Answers

Mrs. Kirby (46 years old) has been having a rough year. Her husband of 25 years was diagnosed with stage 4 pancreatic cancer over the summer. Since then she’s been dealing with his illness, trying to manage their growing medical bills and doing her best to take care of him. She’s taken on a second job to cover some of the ever-growing medical bills. The combination of stress, depression, overwork and lack of sleep has affected her this semester. She feels alone and that no one cares what’s she is going through. She doesn’t have the patience and emotional reserves to deal with the typical teenage behavior and classroom shenanigans. Mrs. Kirby (46 years old) was sent to prison. His mom and their home has been a complete wreck since then. He’s ashamed so he hasn’t wanted anyone to come over to his house – even his best friend. He feels as if nobody knows what he’s going through or even cares. After all, people only want him around for a laugh and right now, he doesn’t feel like making them happy. The other day at the movies, a girl from school asked him how he was doing and he broke down crying. She gave him a hug and they went out for ice cream afterward to talk. He appreciated talking to someone who cared. He wants to talk to his best friend and share what’s been going on, but he’s not sure how to start the conversation.

Sarah (15 years old) lives in a low-income situation. She had to move in with her dad and his girlfriend at Christmas time. They live in a trailer with no hot water or access to a washer and dryer. Because of that, personal hygiene has been harder and harder to manage for her. Additionally, the pipes in the trailer froze because of the harsh winter and now she doesn’t even have access to running water. She’s been doing her best to clean up in the restrooms in school, but she still feels like people are laughing at her behind her back. She feels alone, isolated and completely humiliated by her situation.

Josh (17 years old) has grown up with an alcoholic dad. He’s learned that in order to survive in his home, he has to never show fear or weakness around his father. Often food is scarce in the home. To take care of his little sister, he sometimes takes food or bullies kids at school whom he thinks can afford to give him cash. He just hates how hungry his sister always looks. He knows if he doesn’t protect her and look out for her, no one else will.

Daniel Sutton (35 years old with two kids) has two major things going on in his life. First, the bosses above him have been pushing him to either increase production or fire workers that aren’t performing. He’s been doing his best to make everyone under him pick up the slack and work harder so no one gets fired, but he’s still not sure if his efforts will be enough. In addition, he’s in the middle of a nasty divorce right now. His wife has left him and he hasn’t seen his kids in 3 weeks. He’s worried about the impact of the situation on the kids. He feels helpless because he can’t be there for them. He feels as if lately life has been one disaster after another. He’s not entirely sure if it isn’t his fault for not being a good enough supervisor, husband and father.

Helen (16 years old) comes from an abusive home. She wears long sleeves to cover the bruises on her body and often uses heavy makeup and her long hair to hide the marks on her face. When you approached her the other day, she had a black eye the makeup couldn’t quite cover. She really wanted to talk with you, but was ashamed so she tried to end the conversation as soon as possible. She wonders if she blew her only chance of having friends at this school and doesn’t know what to do now.

Ms. Jenkins (30 years old with three kids) is a single mom who does not receive any child support from her ex-husband. Today, she’s consumed with thoughts about her approaching meeting this afternoon with the principal and the human resources director. Since the school district is threatening to lay off teachers, she is nervous about how to continue paying her mortgage and car payment every month.

Jack (22 years old) works the night shift because he works another job during the day. His ex-girlfriend was arrested a few nights ago and he’s been taking care of her baby. The sitter charges extra for late-night care, so Jack has been leaving work as fast as he can to pick up the child. Jack has already had a few warnings at his other job because his other boss noticed him coming to work late after dropping off the baby with the sitter. Jack is tired of being told the baby isn’t his so she’s not his problem. He doesn’t want to have to deal with the same kinds of comments at his night job that he gets all day from his co-workers at his day job, so he doesn’t talk about his problems. He tries his best to clean up, but he can’t be late to pick up the baby. He’s at the end of his rope, he’s not sleeping much and the last thing he wants to do is try to explain to another potentially judgmental person why he’s taking care of a baby that’s not his. He knows he needs help, but he won’t ask.

Will (18 years old) is at a total loss right now. His dad was sent to prison. His mom and their home has been a complete wreck since then. He’s ashamed so he hasn’t wanted anyone to come over to his house – even his best friend. He feels as if nobody knows what he’s going through or even cares. After all, people only want him around for a laugh and right now, he doesn’t feel like making them happy. The other day at the movies, a girl from school asked him how he was doing and he broke down crying. She gave him a hug and they went out for ice cream afterward to talk. He appreciated talking to someone who cared. He wants to talk to his best friend and share what’s been going on, but he’s not sure how to start the conversation.
ACTIVITY:

Meet My Generation

DESCRIPTION:
Participants will explore their own generation and learn about different generations from others in the group through creating a drawing and participating in discussion.

OBJECTIVES:
The participants will:
- Be able to identify the various generations.
- Learn about the shared experiences of generations.
- Identify commonalities among generations.
- Effectively communicate their generational tendencies and preferences.
- Ask and respond to questions regarding age and generation.

MATERIALS:
- Flip chart paper (1 to 2 sheets per group and 1 for the ground rules)
- Tape
- Large permanent markers in multiple colors
- “Generational Differences Overview” handout
- “Meet My Generation Poster Directions” handout

TIME:
1–2 hours, depending on the size of the group and the length of the discussion

SETTING:
Large room with tables and chairs arranged for easy conversation with walls to post flip chart drawings

AUDIENCE:
Adult mentors from multiple generations

PROCEDURE:

Before the activity:
1. Review the background information at the beginning of the “Cultural Competency” module and these activity directions.
2. Review the “Generational Differences Overview” handout.
3. If possible, arrange tables to create large group workspaces.
4. Print one copy of the “Generational Differences Overview” handout and the “Meet My Generation Poster Directions” handout for each participant.
5. Optional: Prepare drawings of each generation to share in case a particular generation is not represented within the group.

During the activity:
1. Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

   In mentoring relationships, a mentor and a mentee often come from different generations. We interact daily with individuals from generations different from our own. Sometimes, issues arise or tension stems from seeing and processing the world in different ways. People may see the world differently because of their generational views. Clear differences exist between generations: differences in how we work, play and communicate (Owram, 1997).

   We can define a “generation” as a cohort of individuals born and living around the same time. Generational differences develop during the formative years of a person’s life. Shared experiences through historical events and similarities in upbringing in childhood influence generational differences (Owram, 1997). About 15 to 20 years usually separate a generation, from the time a new wave of young people is born until they enter the workforce and build families beyond their own family of origin.

   The generations possess defining characteristics that separate them from one another. These differences include a cohort’s common history, view of communication and technology, motivation, and priority and balance of work and personal life. Today, we’ll explore the differences between generations and we’ll examine how these differences influence how we work, play and communicate.
Because most people in a generation share historical events and similarities in upbringing, many individuals within a generation share certain traits or ways of interpreting the world. Of course, individuals vary and no one individual will possess each of the traits associated with his or her generation. These generalizations help us understand the motivations and actions of people within a certain generation; however, significant variations will exist between individuals within large groups.

Once we understand our own generation, we can then look at the current generation of young people. When we know about the experiences that shape a generation, we can better appreciate and find ways to navigate our differences.

Before we get started, it’s important to establish some ground rules that help us make sure that we avoid generation bashing and treat everyone with equal respect.

2. Ask the group for suggestions for ground rules and write them on flip chart paper. Post in a space that will remain visible for the entire session. The following are examples of helpful guidelines related to issues of generational difference:
   - Be respectful.
   - Listen carefully to each other.
   - Remain open and nonjudgmental.

3. Give each participant one copy of the “Generational Differences Overview” handout. Introduce the generational titles by going through the handout. Explain that each generation is comprised of all of the individuals born within a certain span of time marked by significant changes in the world. Using the handout, provide a brief overview of each of the following generations:
   - Silent Generation: 1925–1945
   - Baby Boomers: 1946–1964
   - Generation X: 1965–1980

Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

Now we’ll explore each generation. The best way to learn about a generation is to hear from those within that generation. For this activity, you will all become teachers. Please divide into groups by generations.

4. Take some time to allow groups to divide into generations. You may want to establish a table ahead of time for each generation and then direct them to that section. Working in groups of three to seven people is ideal for this activity. If you have a large number of people in one generation, you may need to divide it into smaller groups.
5. Give each participant a “Meet My Generation Poster Directions” handout.

6. Give each group one sheet of flip chart paper and a few markers, ensuring multiple colors for each group.

7. Read aloud or paraphrase the following:
   Each group will make a poster to help the rest of us understand your generation. Your poster can include pictures and words. Use the examples in the “Generational Differences Overview” handout and the directions in the “Meet My Generation Poster Directions” handout to guide you. You will have 20 to 30 minutes to create your posters.

8. Move around the room often to ensure that all groups are following directions. If a group is not, pose questions or thoughtful discussion points to encourage discussion.

9. After 20 to 30 minutes, bring the groups back together. Read aloud or paraphrase the following:
   Remember that while some of the things presented on your posters may not fit everyone within the generation, these things are what others perceive overall from each generation. Please choose one member of your group to present the poster to the larger group.

10. After the groups choose a representative, allow at least 5 to 10 minutes to discuss each poster. Invite people from other groups to ask questions and offer observations about the generation. Have the group members add these suggestions to the poster if that generation agrees. Keep in mind that a generation may think that their way of doing things is the “right” way and remind the group that, though they may be teasing, generation bashing is not acceptable.

**PROCESSING:**

Guide participants through a discussion, using some or all of the questions and key points that follow. Be sure to give participants time to think about and respond to the questions.

**Discussion questions:**

- What different work ethics do we see within different generations? Can you see how these different work ethics could affect the workplace?
- How do values differ for each generation?
- Sometimes we discredit the validity of others’ values because they differ from ours. Are there similarities in the values we see that could bridge that gap?
How has the evolution of technology affected each generation?

Each generation shares at least one significant historical event. How do these events affect the generation as a whole?

**Key points:**
- Recognize similarities between generations.
- Remind participants that often each individual may not fulfill the generalizations made. Typically, people like to discuss how they differ from the norm. Baby boomers often may be exceptionally vocal about their individuality. Remind participants to stay on track and focus on generalities rather than personal distinctions.
- Watch the group dynamics in working to create a poster and point it out to participants. Each generation will work in a unique way consistent with their generational characteristics. For example, Millennials usually like to let everyone contribute freely and check in with the group to make sure what they drew was acceptable; Boomers typically first discuss what to include on their poster and then designate one person to do most of the drawing.
- “Cuspers” are people born within two to three years of a generational divide. They may favor and display characteristics from the past, next or even both generations. Cuspers rarely feel fully comfortable identifying with one generation. However, because they can identify with characteristics from two generations, they are often excellent mediators. They are adept at helping translate the behaviors and language of one generation to another. Cuspers can also be skilled at teaching new technologies to older generations. They are the folks that cement generations together.
- Some people “jump” generations: for instance, traditional Millennials or technologically savvy members of the Silent Generation may seem to display characteristics from generations not their own. Use generation as only one of the ways to categorize and understand an individual. Similarly, never use generational characteristics as an excuse for behavior considered inappropriate in a professional or mentoring relationship. Each of us possesses the capability to grow and adapt to new environments. By discussing generational difference as one factor that makes up an individual, we can better cross the gap and move toward greater understanding and communication between generations.

**REFERENCES:**
# Generational Differences Overview

The following is a guideline of characteristics each generation personifies, capturing a broad number of people within the same generation. Of course, individuals vary and no one individual will possess each of the traits associated with his or her generation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major Life Events</strong></td>
<td>World War II, Great Depression</td>
<td>Korean and Vietnam Wars</td>
<td>Watergate and the Nixon scandal</td>
<td>9/11, Columbine and other school shootings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Telephone in homes becomes common</td>
<td>Fight for Civil and Women’s Rights</td>
<td>Explosion of the Challenger</td>
<td>Rise of technology including the Internet and cell phones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Famous Representatives</strong></td>
<td>Marilyn Monroe, Martin Luther King, Jr., Elvis Presley</td>
<td>Bill Clinton, Madonna, Al Sharpton</td>
<td>Tiger Woods, Kurt Cobain, Drew Barrymore</td>
<td>Maria Sharapova, Justin Bieber, Mark Zuckerberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Characteristics</strong></td>
<td>Respect authority, Grew up in traditional households, Value civic duty</td>
<td>“Me” generation: focused on self-improvement and personal fulfillment, Grew up amid economic growth and population climb, Known for “burning the midnight oil” at work</td>
<td>Distrust authority and the political structure, Grew up as “latch-key kids” and, as a result, independent</td>
<td>Known as the trophy generation who got accolades just for participating, Were told as young people that they could do anything they dreamed of, Value civic duty and multiculturalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work Style</strong></td>
<td>Hard workers who play by the rules, Extremely loyal workers, Nonrisk takers, conformers, Pioneers of the team approach</td>
<td>Separation of personal and professional life (Determined to not mix business with pleasure by focusing on work while there and keeping personal activities and family issues private), Tech-friendly note takers; prefer to take in information at their own pace and on their own terms</td>
<td>Are technology friendly; personal computer highly influenced work style and capabilities, Prefer to work alone, Are entrepreneurial, Only want to learn what will benefit them</td>
<td>Prefer to multi-task, Stay always connected, Believe individuals are defined by entirety; do not compartmentalize, Tend to intermix personal and professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication Preference</strong></td>
<td>Prudent, private, patient communicators, Excellent critics, Formal communicators</td>
<td>Prefer face-to-face time, Enjoy team work, such as work groups, task forces, committees, Adjust to new technologies and communication mediums on a person-by-person basis</td>
<td>Need continuous feedback, Dislike being mentored, Are first generation marked by use of computers</td>
<td>Multi-media, Instantaneous contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Motivation</strong></td>
<td>Public and formal recognition, honors from peers or employers, Incentives that help them plan for the future</td>
<td>Prefer to develop new ideas without constraint from authority due to distrust of authority, Work toward personal growth and experience</td>
<td>Seek to balance career and personal lives, Value free time, self-directed schedules, Value independence, ability to make choices, Are problem solvers</td>
<td>Are socially driven, Seek recognition and rewards, Seek development of self, Possess strong inclination toward influencers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Point of view</strong></td>
<td>Weary of ideologies and politics, Realistic</td>
<td>Realistic</td>
<td>Distrust of authority figures, Individualistic</td>
<td>Idealistic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Design a poster that will help members of other generations better understand your generation. Consider pictures, words and phrases when designing your poster. Remember, while individuals will vary, your poster should portray the average person from your generation. Please use the topics and questions listed here to guide your discussion and add in other items that you think will help others better understand your generation.

### Significant Events
- What major national and global events occurred during your childhood and teenage years?
- What do you remember about these events?
- Do you think that your generation was molded in some way by these events? How?

### Values
- How did significant events influence your generation’s values?
- What types of intrinsic and extrinsic things seem to motivate the majority of the people in your generation?
- Do you have any ideas about why your generation might be motivated by these things?

### Work Ethic
- How would you describe your generation’s work ethic?
- Where does work fall in the list of priorities?
- Describe your work situation. For instance, is it tied to a specific location? What tools does it require?

### Technology
- What was “high tech” or new when you were a child or adolescent?
- How comfortable are you with technology?
APPENDIX K: CHANGE TALK

Change Talk is a way of communicating with others that can be incorporated into any training in this toolkit.

- Change Talk is simply open-ended questioning combined with reflective, empathetic listening.
- Change Talk involves active listening, guiding and encouraging; it is never judgmental or critical.
- The goal of Change Talk is to increase clients’ internal motivation and confidence to make a change.
- Change Talk is associated with successful behavior change of clients.
- Having knowledge of the correct behavior is not enough; clients need internal motivation to change.
- Use displays or food items (see figs. 6-1 and 6-2) to introduce a topic and help clients express how they feel about an issue (for example, eating more whole grains), and more importantly, whether they have any concerns about it.

A variety of open-ended questions and conversation starters follow.

- How do you feel about __________________________ ?
- What are some of the good things about ____________ ?
- What do you like about __________________________ ?
- What concerns do you have about ________________ ?
- You were saying that you were trying to decide whether to try this item.
- Are you considering or planning? What will you do about this in the next one or two days?
- Ask about a typical day. Then follow up with a question. (For example, “How could whole grains be incorporated into your meal for that occasion?”)
- Do the pros of changing outweigh the cons? Tell me how they would do that.
- Share the benefits of healthy eating and ask the client: What benefits would you like to see for yourself and your family?
- Share a reasonable goal and the benefits of achieving it. (For example, research shows that whole grains protect health and fight disease. How easy or hard would it be to make half of the grains you eat whole grains?)
- On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being 100 percent ready to take action, how ready are you to ___?
Table 6-1. Examples of Closed and Open-Ended Questions and Statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DON’T USE (closed questions or statements)</th>
<th>DO USE (Open-ended questions or statements)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you agree that it would be a good idea for you to eat more whole grains?</td>
<td>What do you think about the possibility of including more whole grains in your meals and snacks?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many vegetables do you eat each day?</td>
<td>Tell me about your use of vegetables in a typical week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you like vegetables?</td>
<td>What are some things you like about vegetables?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When do you plan to start eating half of your grains as whole?</td>
<td>What do you think about incorporating more whole grains?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it a problem to incorporate more vegetables into your meals and snacks?</td>
<td>What things make you think that it may be a problem to incorporate more vegetables into your meals and snacks?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you worried about your family’s diet?</td>
<td>What concerns you about choosing more vegetables?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So, you’re not going to include vegetables in your meals?</td>
<td>What do you think will happen if you don’t choose to include vegetables in your family meals and snacks?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t you think you should take more whole grains?</td>
<td>What are some reasons you may need to make a change?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you worried about taking fresh vegetables?</td>
<td>What worries you about taking fresh vegetables?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You’ve got to stop doing that.</td>
<td>What have you tried that’s different from your previous eating habits?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You need to start eating healthier.</td>
<td>What kinds of things have you done in the past to change your eating habits?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think this change will make you healthier?</td>
<td>What are your hopes for the future if you are able to become healthier?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Positive conversation closers include the following. (See Table 6-1 for examples of closed and open-ended questions and statements.)

- Show appreciation for sharing their thoughts.
- Emphasize freedom of choice and your willingness to provide further support.
- Affirm any positive behaviors noted; accentuate the positive, acknowledge their strengths and efforts.
- Express confidence in the individual and in the merits of the goal he or she has set.
- Be optimistic about change and have confidence the client is going to make the change.
- Comment on the success you see in the client’s future. Doing so helps the client picture success.
APPENDIX L: MYCHOICE SHOPPING LIST

**Food Pantry Request Form:**
The following items are currently available in the food pantry inventory. We want to make sure that the foods you receive include items that your family will enjoy. In order to help you make nutritious choices, we have divided the items into the basic food groups. Please make choices based upon your household (HH) size. Additional donated items may be included in your box that you receive today.

### Grains
*HH 1-4 limit 4, HH 5+ limit 6*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount Requested</th>
<th>Product</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pasta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dry Cereal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crackers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oatmeal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Vegetables
*HH 1-4 limit 4, HH 5+ limit 6*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount Requested</th>
<th>Product</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can Green Beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diced Tomatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mashed Potatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spaghetti Sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tomato Soup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FRESH Potatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FRESH Butternut Squash</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Fruit
*HH 1-4 limit 3, HH 5+ limit 5*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount Requested</th>
<th>Product</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cranberry Juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fruit Juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Applesauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dried Cranberries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Raisins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cranberry Sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FRESH Apples</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Miscellaneous
*HH 1-4 limit 3, HH 5+ limit 4*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount Requested</th>
<th>Product</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Granola Bars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cookies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tortilla Chips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fruit Snacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jelly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Syrup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frozen Fruit Bars</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Combination
*HH 1-4 limit 4, HH 5+ limit 6*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount Requested</th>
<th>Product</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Macaroni and Cheese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canned Soup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beef Stew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Baking Mix (limit 1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Protein
*HH 1-4 limit 4, HH 5+ limit 6*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount Requested</th>
<th>Product</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assorted Pork (limit 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assorted Frozen Foods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peanut Butter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pizza (limit 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shredded Cheese</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Baby Food**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
REFERENCES


