

Comparing interventions

Federal food and nutrition assistance / Emergency food programs

What do these have in common?

How are they different?

Emergency food programs / Community food security (CFS) movement

What do these have in common?

How are they different?

Federal food and nutrition assistance / CFS movement

What do these have in common?

How are they different?

Household food security: survey

The following survey is adapted from: USDA. *U.S. Household Food Security Survey Module: Six-Item Short Form*. 2008. Available at: www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/FoodSecurity/surveytools/.

Instructions

Read the following instructions aloud:

These questions are about the food eaten in your household in the last 12 months, and whether you were able to afford the food you need. I'm going to read you five statements that people have made about their food situation.

1. The first statement is, "The food that we bought just didn't last, and we didn't have money to get more." In the last 12 months:
 - If this was never true, remain standing where you are;
 - If this was ever true, take one step forward.
2. The second statement is, "We couldn't afford to eat balanced meals." In the last 12 months:
 - If this was never true, remain standing where you are;
 - If this was ever true, take one step forward.
3. "We cut the size of meals, or had to skip meals, because there wasn't enough money for food." In the last 12 months:
 - If this was never true, remain standing where you are;
 - If this was ever true, take one step forward;
 - If this was true in more than two months, take an additional step forward.
4. "I ate less than I felt I should because we didn't have enough money for food." In the last 12 months:
 - If this was never true, remain standing where you are;
 - If this was ever true, take two steps forward.
5. "I was hungry but didn't eat because we didn't have enough money for food." In the last 12 months:
 - If this was never true, remain standing where you are;
 - If this was ever true, take two steps forward.

Thank you for participating. Please remain standing while we tally the results.

Household food security: interpreting results

The following is adapted from: USDA. *U.S. Household Food Security Survey Module: Six-Item Short Form*. 2008. Available at: www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/FoodSecurity/surveytools/.

Instructions

After the survey is complete:

1. Count the number of people who stayed in place, the number who took one step, the number who took two steps, and so on. Tally these results on the board.
2. Categorize each household as follows:
 - 0-1 steps forward: Food secure
 - 2-4 steps forward: Low food security
 - 5-6 steps forward: Very low food security
3. Calculate the number and percentage of households that fall under each category. Remember that each student represents roughly 6 million households.
4. Write these results on the board. Explain that the results reflect the actual state of U.S. food security in 2010.

Household food security: response cards

Cut along the dotted lines. Each card represents roughly 6 million U.S. households. If there are more cards than students, distribute the top five cards first; the extra cards can be placed on the ground, in line with the standing students, to represent the remaining households.

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Project: food policy council

You will form a mock food policy council to represent your community.

The goal of the council is to examine your local or regional food system, identify areas for improvement and recommend a course of action. If food insecurity exists in your community, addressing food insecurity should be the primary goal of your council.

Instructions

1. Identify at least three people in your community who have particular skills, knowledge or influence relevant to your food system. These people could include policymakers, researchers, educators or workers in the food service industry.
2. Write a brief letter to each person inviting them to participate in the mock food policy council. Explain why you chose to invite them. Explain the goal(s) of the council.
3. Prepare a series of 3-5 questions for each council member who agrees to participate. Your questions should relate to the goals of the council.
4. Interview the council members, individually or as a group. Take thorough notes.
5. Write a paper about the council's findings. Your paper should include:
 - A one paragraph summary;
 - Background information about your community, the goals of the council and your rationale for selecting each member;
 - A summary of your interview results, including key quotes from council members;
 - A discussion of the council's recommendations, including your own ideas on how to proceed.

Project: SNAP challenge (page 1 of 2)

In 2011, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provided an average of \$134 each month for each participant, or roughly \$4 per day. After paying for housing, energy and health care expenses, many low-income households rely almost entirely on SNAP benefits to buy food.

To experience what life can be like for millions of low-income Americans, many Congresspersons, religious and community leaders, filmmakers and other citizens have chosen to live on the average “food stamp budget” for a week or more. The “Food Stamp Challenge” was the subject of a recent documentary (www.foodstamped.com).

For the first part of this project, you’ll catalog what you eat in a day, then determine what you would have to give up—and how your nutrient intake would be affected—if you had only \$4 per day to spend on food.

For the second part of this project, you’ll attempt to design a healthy meal plan from scratch, again keeping your food budget below \$4.

Instructions

Complete the following tasks, record your data in tables (an example is given on the following page), and respond to the questions at the end of each section. Submit all of your data and responses in a report. Include a brief introduction describing this project and your reasons for pursuing it.

Part 1

1. Catalog everything you eat in a day. If you are working as a group, assign one member of your group to catalog what they eat in a day.
2. Log how much each food item costs, and calculate the total cost for the day. Average prices of some foods are available at: www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/fruit-and-vegetable-prices.aspx. For other foods you may need to check the price tag, keep track of receipts or ask the person who buys food for your household. When recording prices, be sure to account for the amounts consumed (number of cups, ounces, slices, etc.).
3. Log some basic nutrition information for each food, and calculate totals for the day. Include amounts of calories, fat (percent daily value), salt (percent daily value), sugar, and servings of fruits and vegetables. Use an online nutrient database, such as caloriecount.about.com or ndb.nal.usda.gov/ndb/foods/list.
4. Log the nutrient density of each food, where data are available. Remember that nutrient density measures the amount of key nutrients (usually vitamins and minerals) in a food relative to the amount of calories.

Although nutritionists generally recommend nutrient-dense foods, there is no agreed upon method of measuring nutrient density. For the purposes of this project, you will use a measure of nutrient density called the ANDI score. ANDI scores of some foods are available at: <http://wholefoodsmarket.com/stores/birmingham/files/2012/01/ANDI-scores-guide.pdf>.

5. Imagine you rely on federal food and nutrition assistance, with only \$4 dollars to spend on food and beverages each day. Revise the list of foods you ate so the total cost is below \$4 dollars.
6. Calculate the nutrition information for this revised list. How did the nutritional quality of your diet change?

Project: SNAP challenge (page 2 of 2)

Part 2

7. Design a meal plan for a day, keeping the cost under \$4. Design your meals to be as healthy as possible, using nutrient density and USDA dietary recommendations as rough guides. Choose foods that you would actually be willing to eat.
8. Calculate the nutrient content for your meal plan and compare it to USDA recommendations.
9. Do you think it is possible to follow a healthy diet on a food stamp budget? Why or why not?
10. If you were limited to a food stamp budget, what would be your biggest nutritional concerns?
11. Were there aspects of the project that were particularly surprising, challenging or informative?
12. What are some of the strengths and limitations of SNAP? Do you have any recommendations on how to improve SNAP?

Sample table

Food	Price	KCal	Fat DV	Salt DV	Sugar	F & V	ANDI
1 egg (scrambled)	\$0.25	102	11%	7%	1g		27
12 oz. cola	\$1.00	136	0%	1%	33g		1
2 cups cantaloupe	\$1.28	120	1%	2%	28g	4	100
1.75 oz. corn chips	\$0.80	257	21%	13%	1g		6
2 slices wheat bread	\$0.33	138	3%	11%	3g		25
2 Tbsp peanut butter	\$0.17	188	25%	6%	3g		26
1 Tbsp grape jelly	\$0.45	50	0%	0%	13g		1
1 whole apple	\$0.35	95	0%	0%	19g	1	72
6 Oreo cookies	\$1.25	320	11%	8%	28g		
6 oz. baked potato	\$0.25	161	1%	1%	2g		43
1 cup cooked kale	\$0.50	36	1%	1%	1g	2	1,000
3 oz. plain hamburger	\$0.75	251	29%	3%	0g		20
8 oz. fat-free milk	\$0.20	86	1%	5%	13g		36
1 Snickers bar	\$1.25	217	22%	6%	29g		
Totals	\$8.83	2,157	126%	64%	174g	7	