Hunger Advocacy

Activity 1: Community Garden

Description: For this activity, students create a garden with informational posters. Through this project, students learn that hunger is a problem found everywhere, including in the United States. Also through this activity, the students will learn how to get involved in helping reduce the problem of hunger.

Objectives:

• To increase awareness of hunger related problems.

• To engage youth in an activity that will help them retain the important facts about hunger and make them aware that it is an ongoing problem.

• To help youth realize that although hunger seems like such a big problem, there are ways to help.

Materials:

• Poster board
• Construction paper
• Markers
• Glue
• Scissors
• Lamination or clear contact paper for completed posters
• Hunger facts or a list of hunger education websites
• Pots
• Seeds or seedlings of herbs, vegetables, and flowers.
• Soil
• Water
• Wooden sticks or hangers
Activity Directions

• Pass out a list of websites and have students look up facts about the hunger problem in your state or worldwide. The following websites offer information about global and domestic hunger:

America’s Second Harvest of the Big Bend
www.fightinghunger.org

Food Research and Action Center
www.frac.org

Feeding America
feedingamerica.org

Oxfam America
www.oxfamamerica.org

World Hunger Education Service Hunger Notes
www.worldhunger.org

Bread for the World
www.bread.org

Hunger Task Force
www.hungertaskforce.org

United Nations World Food Programme
www.wfp.org

• Have students discuss the facts they learned from the websites and write these facts on a board for all to see.

• After a variety of facts have been written, the group will discuss the facts and decide which ones they think are most important to put in the garden.

• Pass out construction paper or poster board and have students cut out shapes that will serve as the signs they will place in the garden or hang around the garden. If you are using pots to plant the garden or creating an indoor garden, smaller signs to go in the pots can be cut out.

• Ask each student or groups of students to write one fact on each of their signs.

• To make sure the facts last for a while in the garden, it may be necessary to get them laminated or covered in clear contact paper.

• Next glue or tape a wooden stick or hanger to the fact so it can be put in the garden.
• Now it is time to plant the garden. Pass out seeds or seedlings to the students so they can plant them. These will be their plants to take care of for the year (or some specified period of time).

• After the plants have grown, they can be sold to parents and other members of the community. The money raised can be donated to the World Food Programme or some other group working to end hunger. See the Community Service project section of the guidebook for more information about the plant sale part of the project.
Activity 2: Food Drive at the Fair

The following are suggestions for conducting a food drive at your county or state fair from the International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE), which is a trade association representing county and state fairs. These include a step-by-step guide for a food drive at your local fair.

In addition, food banks associated with Feeding America can provide current statistics, as well as fresh approaches to conducting such a food drive. You can find Feeding America food banks in your state at http://feedingamerica.org/foodbank-results.aspx. Other area food banks may also be able to help with data and suggestions.

A Step-by-Step Guide for a Food Drive at your Fair

Based on the experiences of several fairs across the International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE) that have implemented successful food drives, the following steps provide an outline for developing one at your fair. The guide is designed for a food drive held during your fair, but could be used for doing food drives at other events or as a community service project by the fair and partnering organizations at any time during the year.

1. Find a Food Bank (or other charity providing food to the hungry) in your community.
   - Feeding America is the largest hunger relief organization in the world. They have 200 member food banks with service to every county in the United States. (www.feedingamerica.org)
   - Food Banks Canada (http://www.foodbankscanada.ca/) represents the food bank community across that country.
   - If there is more than one provider in community, see if all will work together for this promotion.
   - Learn more about their operations, who they serve, critical needs, etc.
   - Find out more about which local organizations and businesses regularly partner with or support their activities.
     - Hint: One of your fair sponsors may already be involved. There could be opportunities to do more with that sponsor, to create a greater event with their assistance.
     - Discuss your ideas for a food drive at the fair, explain the global IAFE project, and come to an agreement on a plan to work together.
     - Create a list of food items needed and accepted or preferred condition (for example, must be non-perishable and unopened).
Tips from IAFE Member Fairs

• The Cabarrus County Fair (N.C.) has several pantries. They all worked together at the gates to collect the goods, then took them to the largest pantry for food to be weighed for total then separated according individual pantry needs.

• When in doubt, host a peanut butter drive. It is an excellent protein source. (Puyallup Fair)

• Insure that the food bank serves everyone, not just the members of a particular group (Puyallup Fair).

• The Ozarks Food Harvest (food bank serving Southwest Missouri, home of the IAFE) suggests an early meeting or brainstorming session with your local “Sara” (she’s the in-house food drive coordinator here at OFH in Springfield). Most Feeding America members will have such a coordinator.

2. Identify potential partnering organizations in your community

• Corporate sponsorship (perhaps a new sponsor or a way to enhance the visibility of an existing sponsor — see above).

• Cooperating organizations to assist in logistics, operations, and promotions (4-H, FFA, Scouts, etc.) see more in 2a — Volunteer organization.

• Grocery stores, food manufacturers, and distributors are partner possibilities.

Tips from IAFE Member Fairs

• Puyallup (Wash.) Fair stresses that media can be one of the most valuable partners as they will dedicate promotional time for the project. Also, DJs or on-air personalities endorsing the drive will help spur participation. Ask if they will also distribute flyers about your drive at any remotes or events they participate in before the fair.

• Cabarrus County Fair (N.C.), Delaware State Fair, and North Carolina State Fair all partner with a regional grocery chain, Food Lion. The sponsorship/partnership agreements may vary, but the grocery chain promotes the drive in-store and may also provide volunteers.

• A local food manufacturer might be willing to “hold” their regular donation to the food bank so that the total is counted for the fair’s drive and may also inspire other food manufacturers to donate (Puyallup Fair).

• Ask the food service purveyor(s) supplying the vendors for your fair to get involved. (Puyallup Fair).

• The Pima County Fair (Ariz.) worked with a local grocer that matched the fair’s collection and got food brands to participate as well.

• Organize a Canstruction® competition or exhibit as part of your fair (Nebraska State Fair, Indiana State Fair, Missouri State Fair). www.canstruction.org
2a. Volunteer Organization

- This type of activity requires a large number of volunteers for collection day. In addition to volunteers from partnering or sponsoring organizations or the food bank or pantry, look outside your existing volunteer base for the help you need.

Tips from IAFE Member Fairs

- Cabarrus County Fair requires participating pantries to provide volunteers, but also works with an internal county employee organization that not only creates awareness with other county employees, but provides 12 volunteers on the day of the event.

- A number of fairs suggested the Boy Scouts as potential source volunteers.

- The Arizona State Fair suggests using veterans groups.

- Some high schools require seniors to complete some community service (Puyallup Fair).

- Rally the troops! The Cabarrus County Fair convenes a meeting of volunteers and partners about 2 weeks before the fair in order to review logistics and get volunteer input (gives volunteers “ownership” and motivation).

- Plan on extending hospitality to volunteers! The LA County Fair (Calif.) provides tickets for volunteers to return to the fair as well as providing refreshments during the collection day.

3. Determine incentive to be offered at fair for fair guests bringing food to the drive.

- Examples include free admission, buy one/get one, $x discount, etc.

Tips from IAFE Member Fairs

- Pick the slowest weeknight to do the promotion — what do you have to lose? (Volusia County Fair)

- Cabarrus County Fair offers free admission for the first 2 hours opening day with four canned food items per adult, two per child.

- Volusia County Fair’s deal was two food items for half-priced admission on Monday evening.

- Be prepared to offer the discount in exchange for a cash donation to the food bank. Be prepared — have a receipt book and minimum donation amount set (San Mateo County Fair, Calif.).

- Avoid using negative language — “only one can per person per discount” — as it may discourage giving. Use positive language — “one discount per person” instead (San Mateo County Fair, Calif.).

- Pima County Fair promotion was free admission with two cans of food per person from noon to 3 p.m. on a Thursday.
• Consider other types of goods such as toothpaste, socks, water, bus cards, etc., especially if teaming with a group other than a food bank — they have diverse needs. (Arizona State Fair)

• Missouri State Fair’s deal is one can equals $1, with maximum discount to half-off admission ($8 regular admission).

• A number of fairs suggested willingness to accept donations in exchange for the discount at other times during the fair. This situation should be discussed in advance and make a decision so all your personnel understand what to do.

4. Marketing and Promotion Plan

• Identify all areas of existing marketing plan in which the food drive can be promoted. Be sure all departments, volunteers, and staff are aware and include it in all channels for promotion.

• Brainstorm new ways to promote that might be unique to the food drive
  • Messaging channels of the sponsor(s) or partner(s)
  • Social media campaign
  • Grocery store POP displays

• Be sure day-of and post-event publicity plans are in place.

Tips from IAFE Member Fairs

• Involve the media before, during and after — as partnering organization (Puyallup), with remotes (San Mateo County Fair).

• Food bank or receiving organization should be promoting this through all their own channels — supporters, press releases, website, newsletters, etc. (Arizona State Fair).

• Toot your own horn — be sure to promote in press releases in advance and after the fact with information about the amount raised.

• Ask your town to declare it “Food Donation Day at the Fair” and promote it through their channels. (Puyallup Fair)

• Send a fair staffer and food bank staffer around to local civic clubs. It not only promotes the drive but the awareness of hunger in the community (Puyallup Fair).

• Get groups to compete to raise the most food (i.e. high schools).

• Develop quarter-page or half-page flyers to distribute everywhere — churches, youth groups, partnering organizations, bag stuffers at local retailers, civic and service clubs (Puyallup Fair).

• The Volusia County Fair drive is named in honor of a much beloved fair board director who had passed away.
• Incorporate facts about hunger in your community. Your food bank or participating agencies can provide information.

• Tie in with a major event or activity. Feeding America has some sort of national promotion underway almost every month (Do a “Souper Bowl” promotion if your fair occurs around Super Bowl time; March fairs could tie in with National Scouting for Food Month; May is time for the national Postal Carriers food drive, and September is the organization’s “Hunger Action Month”). *Information suggested by Ozarks Food Harvest.*

5. Logistics and Operations

• Equipment needs for collection points at gates (i.e. barrels, large boxes, carts, pallets, fork lifts, trucks, etc.)

• Signage necessary for collection points at gates

• Volunteers necessary to assist at collection points at gates

• Volunteers, place, equipment, and supplies for sorting and packing food

• Line control for all collection points

• Method of counting items

• Transportation of items to food bank or recipient organization

• Photographer(s) to capture images of the event throughout the day(s)

• Refreshments for volunteers

• Canopies, tents, etc. to shelter against weather

**Tips from IAFE Member Fairs**

• Determine your redemption process well in advance. At the San Mateo County Fair the guest takes the canned goods to a table to exchange for a voucher, which in turn is presented to box office personnel. Outline all steps necessary for proper accounting.

• Numerous fairs stressed that the containers will be heavy. Be prepared with sturdy containers (the food bank may be able to provide special equipment they already are used to handling), pallets, forklifts (and the room to maneuver), trucks for hauling.

• Find a high-visibility location to place trucks from the food bank — provides great visual backdrop and additional promotion (Puyallup Fair).

• Ensure arrangements are in place to get the food to the food bank or secured storage at a time when it is after hours for many food bank operations.

• Many food banks have scales and other equipment to calculate weight, numbers, etc. It is important to get an accurate count as soon as possible in order to take advantage of post-event publicity (and to submit to IAFE).

• Incorporate signage that creates awareness of hunger in your community.
6. DREAM BIG!

- With all your plans and partners in place, have a great day!
- Be sure top fair officials (board, director/CEO, senior staff, etc.) are visible and engaging with fair guests at gates.

7. Post-Event

- Complete the on-line report form (http://bit.ly/RUPqaf) so the Dream Big 2013 “can counter” is up-to-date and your fair entered into the monthly drawing for prizes from Etix.
- Follow post-event publicity plan
  - Work with a local food bank to get statement on need, number/pounds collected, number of meals this will provide, etc.
- De-brief with staff, volunteers, sponsors and partners
  - Celebrate success and recognize key players
  - While it is fresh, think about how the event could be improved.
- Thank you’s

Tips from IAFE Member Fairs

- The Arizona State Fair handles the food drive as it does with any other sponsor, with a complete debrief and recap. They take photos of the charity staffing the event, guests enjoying free admission, loading the food into the trucks, etc.
- Be sure to put information on your website and on any social media channels used such as Facebook and Twitter.
- If it is a first-time program, mention plans or increased goal for next year (San Mateo County Fair).
Activity 3: Starving Artists Dinner

This set of activities engages youth with the community and permits both awareness raising and the collection of canned goods and money to help fight hunger. The activity involves inviting parents and other community members to a “Starving Artists Dinner” at a school or community location where soup can be prepared and served. Pieces of art created by students and their art teachers can be auctioned off. Students can share facts about local and global hunger with those attending the dinner. In addition, students can share their ideas for ways the community can help reduce hunger.

Objectives:

- To raise awareness about global and local hunger within the community.
- To provide youth with leadership roles in the education and fundraising aspects of fighting hunger. (Canned goods and money raised will be donated to local food banks; money also can be sent to the World Food Programme or other national or international organizations that fight hunger.)

Pre-event activities:

- Creation of artwork in the form of sketches, paintings, sculpture and other media to reflect students’ understanding of what poverty and hunger look like. These art pieces can be created by students alone or in cooperation with art teachers and other adults. Students and teachers can decide which pieces will be auctioned off during the “Starving Artists Dinner.” Other pieces not for auction can simply be displayed. A silent auction, a live auction, or both can be held.

- Purchase disposable soup bowls, plastic spoons, soup ingredients (e.g., ingredients for a vegetable or bean soup), bread, and cups for water. Have students determine how much soup they will need to make for the number of people attending. Extra help from parents in the soup preparation process is a good idea.
Activity Directions

• Friday after school, students will meet in the cafeteria of their school to set up for the dinner. Tickets will be taken at the door. Before dinner, a presentation will be given in order to educate attendees on the facts surrounding hunger. Following the presentation, teachers or other volunteers will serve dinner. The dinner will consist of a bowl of soup and a slice of bread.

• After the meal, the silent and/or live auction can be held.

  • **Silent Auction:** Bid sheets are placed with each item and people attending the event have a period of time (about an hour) to view the art pieces and write down a bid on the bid sheet. During the silent auction period, participants can write increasingly higher bids on the sheets until the specified period for the silent auction is over.

  • **Live Auction:** Pieces are auctioned off using an auctioneer. The audience members are given bid signs to use that contain a unique number for each bidder. The highest bid gets the art piece. At each table there will be a set of evaluation forms for the attendees to complete, in order to assess what was learned.

Evaluative Questions for Members

• How much money was raised?

• What programs benefited from the proceeds collected from the dinner?

• Do you think the parents and attendees learned much from this project?

Evaluative Questions for Recipients

• Do you feel that this benefit dinner was helpful in learning about the war on hunger?

• Do you have any suggestions to make this project better?

• After listening to the presentation, what do you feel is your part in helping fight hunger?
Activity 4: Canned Food Scavenger Hunt

Planning and Setup

• Read this sheet and decide on the best date and time for your activity.

• Plan for a space to store your food until you can deliver it to food banks or similar facilities in your area during business hours.

• Organize the following:
  • Maps of safe neighborhoods to gather food donations within an area around a central meeting site. Mark the various territories on it so you know where everyone is.
  • Two sturdy medium-sized containers per team.
  • A car or van and a responsible adult driver for each team.
  • Team Tally sheet for each team (attached).
  • Name tags for participants with first names only.
  • A team leader who stays at the meeting site with a stopwatch and records the time and tally totals for each group on the Team Tally Summary sheet (attached).
  • If desired, appropriate prizes for winners and all participants.

Orientation/Preparation

• Tell participants that collected food items will be donated to the local food bank. Share some statistics from the food bank information sheet.

• Organize participants into teams, depending on how many adults and youth you have; two to four adults or or four to six kids with an adult driver is a workable team. (They can split up on location with two or three on each side of the street.)

• Determine which neighborhoods each team will work and designate locations on maps. These should be safe neighborhoods and as close to your meeting site as possible.

• Determine a time limit for the activity and write it on the Team Tally sheet. Instruct participants that points will be deducted for every 5 minutes they are late.

• Drivers should be reminded to be cautious, extremely responsible, and not exceed the speed limit. Groups traveling to the farthest location depart first, and so on in order. All groups must return within a specific time limit (one hour is good).

• Each group should have a sturdy box and a Team Tally sheet.
Into the Streets

• Safety first — then see how much you can collect in the allotted time!

• Once in their assigned neighborhood, team members can stay together or split up to cover both sides of the road. One person carries the box, another carries the score sheet, and another carries the introduction/information cards.

• Team members knock or ring the doorbell, greeting the resident politely. Youth introduce themselves; for example, “Hello! We are from (name of your organization). We are collecting food items for the local food bank. Do you have any non-perishable food you wish to donate? Our youth group is doing this activity as a scavenger hunt with certain food items worth more points than others. You are free to donate any pantry items you wish! But this list might give you an idea of what items the food bank really needs.” (Most folks will like the theme and purpose of this activity and will want to see how many items on your list they can provide.)

• Use the attached tally sheet to keep track of the food the teams gather, but don’t take time to count while you’re out. Do that later, after you get back.

• Remind team members that when they approach a home, they should remain at the entrance where the adult driver can see them. They should never go into another part of the house without making sure the driver gives an obvious signal of approval.

• The driver cruises slowly between the two teams to monitor them at all times. If the food boxes become too heavy to carry, unload food items in the trunk of the vehicle and continue.

And to a Thrilling Finish!

• All teams must return by the agreed-upon time or they will be penalized. Mark the time on each Team Tally sheet.

• When all teams have returned, they should unpack their collected goods, tally them on the food bank Team Tally sheet, and report their total to the group leader.

• Give appropriate awards to each winning team, as desired, but be sure to recognize the contribution of the group as a whole. You’re fantastic!!
**Tally Sheet for Scavenger Hunt**

Thank you for participating in our canned food scavenger hunt! We will gladly take any non-perishable food items you offer us. Our list of foods and their point values are listed below. Please note there are some items with higher point values than others. These are items the food pantry has indicated are a high need. You can refer us to your neighbors and friends as well! Thank you for taking the time to participate. Not only are you giving to others who are in need, you are also giving our young people the opportunity to have fun while serving others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canned meat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuna fish</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salmon</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canned ham</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spam</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other canned meat</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canned vegetables</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole kernel corn</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cream style corn</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green beans (any)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other canned beans</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peas</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet potatoes</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potatoes</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other vegetable</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canned fruit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pears</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peaches</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applesauce 50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit cocktail</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other canned fruits</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macaroni and cheese</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dried pasta (spaghetti, etc.)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ravioli, spaghettiios, etc.</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other pasta items</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beverages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kool aid mix</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit juice</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemonade</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powdered milk</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast items</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cereal</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Granola/breakfast bar</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oatmeal</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popcarts</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syrup</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soup/sauce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canned soup</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dried soup mix</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravy jar/can</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravy dry mix</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spaghetti sauce</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salad dressing</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chili</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dessert items</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cake mix</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frosting</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pudding (ready to eat)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jello (ready to eat)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pudding dry mix</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jello dry mix</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous items</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peanut butter</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jelly</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beanie weenies</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuffing</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashed potatoes</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby food</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any nonperishable item not listed</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 5: Food Packaging Event

Many organizations work to make pre-packaged meals to give to families who need them. Included are links to sites that can help you organize a packaging event.

Kids Against Hunger
http://www.kidsagainsthunger.org/

Stop Hunger Now
http://www.stophungernow.org/site/PageServer

If organizing a packaging event is too large for your intended audience, organize a smaller event with supplies donated by families, from a canned food scavenger hunt, community garden, or provided by local businesses. Prepare boxes of food that will last for a few days and then donate those boxes to the local food bank or distribute them to families that need them.

Have members create an assembly line process where they work together to package as many meals as they can in a specified amount of time. Then re-group after you have finished packaging and discuss the impact that was made on the local community fight against hunger.
**Activity 6: Backpack Program**

The backpack program is similar to the food packaging program, only these items will go directly to kids that need them the most. If possible, buy new bookbags for the students to take home and put in food items they can use for the weekends. These items can vary, but make sure the items are easy to open and can be easily transported.

Items that could be put in bookbag:

- Peanut butter (12-ounce jar) and a sleeve of crackers
- Beans and franks (pop-top can)
- Beef jerky (1 ounce)
- Granola bars
- Cereal (1-ounce bowl or box)
- Fruit cups (peaches, applesauce, etc.)
- Raisins (snack-size boxes)
- Pudding cups
- Juice boxes (apple, orange, or other juice)
- Milk (aseptic pack boxes that do not require refrigeration)

Work with the local school to assess the needs of students, figure out a distribution solution, and how to ensure students get the right supplies.
Activity 7: Hunger Obstacle Course

*Adapted from an Auburn University/Alabama Cooperative Extension Service program

Description: The Hunger Obstacle Course has participants engage in creative problem solving through a time-limited process of generating solutions to different hunger-related problems. Small groups of students circulate around the room and write down solutions to each of the hunger obstacles. Each group uses a unique colored pencil or marker. One catch, they cannot write down a solution for an obstacle that a previous group has already provided. When all groups have had a chance to study each obstacle, the number of total responses that each group has generated is tallied.

Groups discuss which solutions stand out as most creative or helpful and acknowledge the groups who contributed these solutions. Finally, it is noted that the full set of solutions generated across the entire group demonstrates the many ways people can make a difference in addressing hunger.

Objectives:

- To increase youth awareness of hunger-related problems
- To help youth generate multiple solutions for addressing hunger-related problems
- To facilitate a team effort for generating effective solutions
- To encourage youth to think about solutions to both global and domestic hunger

Materials:

- Giant Post-Its
- Hunger obstacle cards
- Hunger solutions deck
- Markers of different colors
- Whistle or bell
- Definition of food insecurity:
  - **Food Insecurity**: uncertain or limited access to enough food
Activity Directions

- For this activity there are up to eight obstacles that can be addressed. Place giant post-it sheets* around the room and tape to the top of each post-it one of the hunger obstacle cards. It works best to have as many obstacles as you have groups (e.g., if you have five groups, select five obstacles for this activity).

- Divide the participants into groups of four to six people each.

- Give each group a different color marker.

- Have each group stand in front of one of the obstacle cards.

- Tell each group they have 2 minutes to think of as many solutions as they can for dealing with the obstacle. They are to write their solutions below the obstacle on the post it, with the first group writing its solutions immediately below the obstacle card.

- Use the whistle or bell to start and stop the 2-minute process.

- When 2 minutes are up, have the groups rotate clockwise to the next obstacle. Tell them they cannot repeat any of the solutions that have already been written under the obstacle — they need to come up with new solutions. Let them know this will get harder as more groups write solutions for that obstacle. Give each group time to read the prior groups’ solutions. Start the 2-minute solution generation process again.

- Repeat the process until all groups have had a chance to respond to each obstacle.

- When all groups have completed the obstacle course, count up how many solutions each group has generated across all the obstacles. Congratulate the top scoring group, but also congratulate all groups for the many solutions they each have generated.

- Next, have the groups look at the solutions generated for one of the obstacles and discuss what they think are some of the best solutions for addressing the obstacle. Have them consider how combining two or more of the solutions will increase the likelihood that the problem the obstacle represents will be solved.

- *If it is not feasible to place Post-It sheets around the room, stations can be formed by having four to eight students make circles with their desks. Each circle represents a station that receives a large sheet of paper with one of the obstacles written at the top. The student groups (each using a different color pencil or marker) can circulate to each of the stations and write down their solutions on the sheets.

- Repeat this process for the other obstacles. If time does not permit review of all the obstacles and solutions, have the participants select the obstacles they would most like to discuss.
**Alternative Directions for Younger Groups**

- Divide the students into three groups and assign them each a color that is associated with a colored marker (e.g., a red group, a green group, and a blue group).

- Select three obstacles for the students to address.

- Starting with obstacle 1, have the red group think of as many solutions as they can within a 1- to 2-minute period (the teacher writes their solutions down using the red marker).

- Next have the other color groups each take a turn generating solutions for obstacle 1. After doing obstacle 1, go to obstacle 2, but this time, start with the green group. Finally repeat the process for obstacle 3, starting with the blue group.

- Once all three obstacles are addressed, see how many responses each group generated, and discuss the value of the different types of ideas they listed.
Obstacle 1

There are families in your community where the adults and children often miss meals because of food insecurity.

Obstacle 2

Your class learns that there are poor children in Kenya who would like to communicate with children in the U.S. but do not know how.

Obstacle 3

Many children in your school do not know very much about the problem of hunger and do not seem to care.
Obstacle 4

There are poor children living in rural developing countries who could receive food at school if more donations were made. It takes 19 cents to feed a school child for one day ($34 for one year).

Obstacle 5

There are some elderly people in your community who live alone and often don’t have healthy meals to eat, and little social contact.

Obstacle 6

There are families living in a U.S community in simple houses with no electricity, who are experiencing hunger because of a serious unemployment or other issues.
Obstacle 7

A new family has moved to your community and the two kids in the family attend your school. Some other kids are making fun of them because they have bad teeth due to malnutrition.

Obstacle 8

You find out that some of the kids at your school are experiencing food insecurity (going hungry several days per week).
Activity 8: Hunger: What Can We Do?

Overview: This activity shows how others may feel when they are not treated in the same manner. Participants will assess the situation and discuss reactions and how they felt. The second part of the activity shows how these situations can be handled differently and how helping others can promote societal growth.

Staging Inequality

Objectives:
The students will:

- Build conceptions of what it means for a person to be victimized by inequality and remain victimized even after the issue has come to the attention of others.
- Be able to define systemic inequality.
- Understand and (be able to identify a few) systemic consequences.
- Know how to frame the issue of hunger in terms of injustice and not merely charity.

Materials:

- The students
- Open space

Time: 1 hour
Activity Directions

- Identify five young adults and take the young adults away from the other young adults. Away from the rest of the group, teach them the skit and explain the importance of fully acting out their parts. For the actual play, sit one of the young adults in front of the classroom before the rest of the class. This student actor will be roped to a chair before the other students enter so the students do not have a conception of how the student actor became roped. After the class is settled, have the other student actors enter one by one. Each will dramatically pass before the roped up student and perform the appropriate action. These actions are listed below in order:

1. First person comes by and gives him a dollar.
2. Second person comes by and gives him food.
3. Third person comes by and says, “God bless you.”
4. Fourth person comes by and mumbles “Get a job.”

- End the play. Allow the young adults to process it through individual writing or small groups. A brief lecture on the systemic causes of hunger should follow. Leader can then lead a class debate or a class discussion on the implications and reality of the situation. If no student asks the question, “How did the young adult actor get tied up?,” use this as an opportunity to explore why they didn't ask that question and why citizens have an obligation to explore that question. Together, as a class, have the students engage this topic critically.

- Read aloud the definition of systemic inequality. (Consider having the students research the definition independently.) After explaining how the definition applies to the current situation of the student tied up, have students come up with other examples of systemic inequality.

  - **Definition of Systemic Inequality:** Systemic inequalities are those that are reliably reproduced over time along the lines of social group differences even in the absence of patterns of overt or intentional discrimination on the part of identifiable social agents.

Discussion Questions

- What have you learned about inequality?
- What is systemic inequality?
- What might be some examples?
- What are some consequences of systemic inequality?
- Why is helping stop hunger not just an issue of charity but also an issue of justice?
Activity 9: Action Tree

Overview: It is often difficult to understand how one single person or even a small group of people can make a difference for society as a whole. This activity uses the image of a tree to help students understand the problem of hunger that may seem overwhelming and impossible to change at first. This Action Tree activity helps youth think through this problem and helps them understand what it looks like and why it occurs. They also think together about actions that can be taken to help reduce the problem of hunger. Reading and discussing the story, The Family Under the Bridge is another way students can understand that helping others is part of one’s civic duty and is good for society as a whole.

Objectives:

- The students will be able to describe the problem of hunger and how it affects individuals and society today.
- The students will recognize some of the root causes of hunger.
- The students will think of creative ways for themselves and other students to serve their community and help reduce the problem of hunger.
- The students will be able to understand how the story The Family Under the Bridge relates to the Action Tree activity and taking action to help others who are in need.

Materials:

- A large sheet of butcher paper or a giant Post-It for drawing the outline of a tree that will be placed on the wall.
- Markers or colored pencils
- Construction paper (for leaves and fruit)
- Scissors
- Action Graph (one per student group of three to four students)
- Action Tree Guide (for facilitator)
Activity Directions

• Pass out the Action Graph and have students work in groups of three to four people to fill out the graphs (20 to 30 minutes).
  
  • First have the students brainstorm ways that hunger affects individuals and society. For example, hunger affects adults and children by making it harder for them to recover from illness. It also makes it hard for children to do well in school (not enough energy to focus on school work). When people cannot get their basic needs met (such as enough nutrition), this affects the quality of their society (fewer people in the community are able to get their educations, maintain employment, effectively support their children and this results in a community that cannot thrive.

• Have students come up and write these examples on the TRUNK of the tree.

• Next have students generate ideas on their action graphs about what causes hunger (see examples in the Action Tree Guide for the facilitator).

• Have students come up and write the causes among the ROOTS of the action tree.

  • Have students generate ideas on their action graphs about the actions that could be taken to reduce hunger (for example, have a canned food drive, have events that increase awareness of the community about hunger, put information in the newspaper about hunger in the local area . . .)

• Make a list on the board of possible actions. Have each group of students choose some of the actions that they will put on leaves or fruit. Have the groups create the leaves or fruit with the actions written on them. Once these are created, have students place their LEAVES and FRUIT among the branches of the Action Tree.
Discussion Questions

- Which actions do we think, as young people, that we could do to help reduce hunger in our community (or more broadly)?

- Whose help might we need to ensure we are successful in our efforts to help reduce hunger?

- Where should we hang our Action Tree so others can learn about hunger and how to help stop it by seeing the tree we created?

Summary

*The Family Under the Bridge* begins with Armand, a hobo, making his way through Paris. He is convinced that something wonderful is going to happen and it makes him happy. He even finds a scrap of holly to adorn his coat to make him look handsome. He meets a gypsy on his walk and she tells him that he is in for adventure and to be careful or someone will see his heart and what a kind man he is and that is just what happens. Armand has a bridge that he usually sleeps under and when he arrives he finds three children have made it their new home. Their mother is out working but since their father died they don't have enough money to rent a place. Armand cares for them during the day and helps them stay happy in spite of the sad circumstances. He takes them to see Father Christmas (the Santa Claus of France) and they ask him for a house. One day, two women pass by and notice the children alone and say that they are going to get someone to help them. The children are scared because they don't want to be taken away from their mother but Armand takes them to a gypsy camp where they are given good food and a warm place to sleep. Armand, though resistant, welcomes them into his heart and in the end gets a job, becomes part of the family, and most of all finds them a house.
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<tr>
<th>Descriptions of hunger</th>
<th>Root causes of the problem</th>
<th>Actions to alleviate the problem</th>
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<tr>
<td>Not enough energy for children to do well in school</td>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>Have a canned food drive</td>
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**Action Tree Guide**

Among the branches, have students make and place leaves and pieces of fruit (e.g., apples, oranges...) that show the kinds of actions that can be taken to reduce poverty.

Have students add pictures and words describing hunger on the trees trunk.

Have students write the above root causes of hunger on the tree; add others that students think of.