ADDRESSING HUNGER: USING MIXED METHODS TO IDENTIFY HIDDEN BARRIERS AND OPPORTUNITIES
Collaborative Process
Strengths Based
Mixed Methods
Research to Practice
Evidence Informed Policy
Backpack Program Evaluation

Balancing Household Needs

Assessing Food Security in Decatur

Out of School Feeding Programs Evaluation
31% of Hillsborough County children above 185% of the poverty line and likely ineligible for SNAP, NSLP, etc.
SAFETY NET

Below 185% Poverty
- SNAP
- NSLP & NSBP
- CACFP
- WIC

Above 185% Poverty
- Food Pantry
- Soup Kitchen
- Weekend Feeding Programs
- School Pantries
- Does providing elementary school children with a backpack of food over the weekend have an appreciable effect on school attendance?

- How is the food used?

- What accounts for food security above and beyond income?
EFFECT ON ATTENDANCE

** p < .01

I use it all the time [for family meals] because milk’s expensive and to keep up with the milk we go through you know I wouldn’t have to worry about Oh my God are we out of milk because I would um got the stash of milk you know.

It helped out a lot; it really did. I noticed that I wasn’t having to buy as much side items to go along with the meals.
## UNOBSERVED FACTORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
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<th>(3)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Household head is black</td>
<td>-0.670</td>
<td>-0.318</td>
<td>-0.933*</td>
<td>-0.596</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(-1.439, 0.098)</td>
<td>(-1.117, 0.482)</td>
<td>(-1.737, -0.129)</td>
<td>(-1.428, 0.237)</td>
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<td>Household head has less than a high school degree</td>
<td>1.406*</td>
<td>1.117</td>
<td>1.062</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(0.082, 2.730)</td>
<td>(-0.128, 2.361)</td>
<td>(-0.236, 2.361)</td>
<td>(-0.300, 2.194)</td>
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<td>Household head is not married</td>
<td>-0.031</td>
<td>0.282</td>
<td>-0.047</td>
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<td>(-0.923, 0.861)</td>
<td>(-0.721, 1.284)</td>
<td>(-1.031, 0.938)</td>
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<td>Household head is employed</td>
<td>0.495</td>
<td>0.286</td>
<td>0.316</td>
<td>0.217</td>
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<td>(-0.186, 1.177)</td>
<td>(-0.413, 0.985)</td>
<td>(-0.376, 1.008)</td>
<td>(-0.474, 0.909)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Household income ($1,000s per month)</td>
<td>-0.377*</td>
<td>-0.328*</td>
<td>-0.407*</td>
<td>-0.346*</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(-0.676, -0.079)</td>
<td>(-0.637, -0.018)</td>
<td>(-0.737, -0.078)</td>
<td>(-0.674, -0.018)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Household size</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>0.101</td>
<td>0.058</td>
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<td>(-0.111, 0.274)</td>
<td>(-0.155, 0.233)</td>
<td>(-0.109, 0.312)</td>
<td>(-0.150, 0.265)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chaos measure</td>
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<td>0.189**</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.152**</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.098, 0.281)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.055, 0.248)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mealtime planning</td>
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<td>-0.243**</td>
<td>-0.160*</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(-0.375, -0.111)</td>
<td>(-0.298, -0.021)</td>
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<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.719</td>
<td>3.858**</td>
<td>4.378**</td>
<td>5.642**</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(-0.707, 2.144)</td>
<td>(1.655, 6.061)</td>
<td>(1.656, 7.100)</td>
<td>(2.986, 8.298)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of observations</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>484</td>
<td>478</td>
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</table>
Environmental chaos linked to poor outcomes in low income neighborhoods.

You can’t hear yourself think in our home.

We are usually able to stay on top of things. (reverse scored)
Mealtime Planning

Family Chaos

BALANCING HOUSEHOLD NEEDS
Food Pantry Client Interview:
Participants over age 18, head of a household, and had at least one child under age of 18

“I don’t want to be smelling. Toothbrush, I’ve got to brush my teeth so I can have fresh breath”

“I have a problem smelling. I don’t like to do that. I’m keeping those to the end, girl”

“Diapers are an absolute must”
“We can only do laundry once a month”

“And to do dishes, you’ll have to sit there and use shampoo sometimes.”

“When I have the money to get it, I’ll buy extra.”
“...overwhelmed and then I get depressed. I start crying and sometimes I have anxiety attacks because I’m so nervous and stuff.”

“and people knowing – people knowing that we don’t have things – like having to bum them, that’s degrading”

“Sometimes people can turn you in for things like that”
ASSESSING FOOD INSECURITY IN DECATUR, IL
## Stakeholder Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency Type</th>
<th>Relation to Food Insecurity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Pantry/Soup Kitchen</td>
<td>Direct client support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Profit Agencies</td>
<td>Provide non-food support (e.g. clothing, shelter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Work directly with children or in job training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare Organizations</td>
<td>Major employers, administer federal support programs (e.g. WIC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philanthropic Organizations</td>
<td>Provide funding for CIB/food drives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Core Constructs</td>
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<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Background Questions</td>
<td>Priority of Addressing Hunger for Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trends in Need</td>
<td>Perceived Trend in Food Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Food</td>
<td>Barriers to Accessing Food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is in Need</td>
<td>Trends in Who Seeks Food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinating Efforts</td>
<td>Major Players and Coordination of Charity Food Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Services</td>
<td>Services in Addition to Food that Clients May Need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forecasting Future</td>
<td>Challenges and Opportunities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“So I would say it’s the working population that perhaps could use the assistance but just can’t get to us, and I don’t know”

WHO IS NOT BEING SERVED?
- Elderly
- Those with transportation challenges
- Mentally Ill population
- Hispanic
- Single mothers with young children
- Working poor
“and then you have now the people who have never had to do that before, who are seeking help”

“well-dressed, well-educated having to ask for the first time”

“it’s maybe more drifting up into the middle class more than it ever used to”

“a lot of seniors”
Summer Food Service Program

CACFP At-risk Afterschool

YMCA of the USA

National League of Cities

Texas Hunger Initiative
- Grantee Interviews
- Sponsors
  - Administrative Data
  - Interview Key Sponsor Staff
  - SFSP Site Coordinator Survey
  - CACFP Site Coordinator Survey
  - Site Visits
- GIS Mapping Census Tract
  FI for Sponsor Service Area
Program Evaluation Framework

1. Capacity Assessment and Buy-in
2. Capacity Building and Team Evaluations
3. Technical Assistance and Supervision
4. Future planning and needs assessment

Tseng & Seidman 2007
HIDDEN BARRIERS
“Just jumping through hoops to get to food pantries because I didn’t have a vehicle at the time.” (parent, BPP)

“how do you get it home? It’s a giant basket. If you don’t have a car, you’ve got to cart that on the bus with your baby and a toddler. It’s not going to be easy” (pantry client)

And then you got kids even if they’re in a mobile home park, if mom and dad says, “You don’t leave this house while we’re gone at work.” Then they are stuck in the house. They can’t come over and get something to eat and then go run back to their house because mom and dad say they got to stay in the house. Even across from where they’re living.” (SFSP site coordinator)
“We’re not a bus route. We worked with and tried to get us to be on the bus route”
“But I work the hours that the food pantry is open, I can’t get there” (pantry client)

“You can literally have a sign out front, ‘Open to any and everyone,’ but if they know it's a camp there, they assume it's free meals for the camp. And is it still hard for people to come and—you're almost admitting that you need that.” (SFSP sponsor)

“There is a lot of overlap. So, you could probably get the same service at three different places, it just depends on which one you want to use rather than one place really making a huge impact.” (funder)

“We’re currently trying to expand [for after school]. Again it’s been kind of difficult because teachers aren’t even back yet.” (CACFP sponsor)
OTHER BARRIERS

- **Shame and Stigma**
- **Burden of Care (young children, disability)**
  - Reduced mobility
  - Increased expenses
  - Added strain and stress
  - Need for care in order to access services
- **Chaos**
  - Household instability
  - Unpredictable income
  - Inability to predict need
- **Perceptions**
  - Who needs services
  - Where services located
HIDDEN OPPORTUNITIES
Think broadly about partnerships

Formal and informal food assistance partnerships

Provide support for partnerships to develop and continue

Adopt best practices for partnerships

Who is not at the table?
“This is just a thing we’re gonna send home, you know if you’re interested in it send it out.” So families that we kinda had an idea, we didn’t put it out like oh we’ve chosen you. We put out, “Hey, we’re sending this home. If you’re interested fill it out.” It made it sound like it kinda went to a lot of people. You know, so that way, they’re not feeling like they’re targeting us, they’re watching us. You know, this is just something that’s being offered, and I could sign up for it. And that way I think parents were a little more comfortable doing it.” (school personnel)
National and State Level
- Protect and expand food programs
- Streamline food assistance programs
- Remove administrative barriers

Community Level
- Who is in need
- What resources are available

Agency and Organization Level
- Provide training to staff on food insecurity/hunger
THANK YOU

- Funders (Christopher Family Foundation, Feeding America, Howard G. Buffett Foundation, Morgan Stanley, Walmart Foundation)
- Dr. Barbara H. Fiese, PhD & Dr. Craig Gundersen, PhD
- Graduate Students
- Undergraduate Students
- Family Resiliency Center Staff
- Food Banks
- Community Organizations
- SFSP Sponsoring Organizations
- Families and Individuals