

Minneapolis Healthy Food Shelf Network

Facilitated by the Minneapolis Health Department

Thursday, March 20, 2014

10:00 – 11:30am

Location: Waite House

2323 11th Ave S, Minneapolis



EVERYBODY NEEDS
HEALTHY FOOD

Participants

Meeting Notes

Spotlight on Salvation Army – Temple Food Shelf

Tracy Privratsky and Jessica Hering presented on the food shelf's current operations and activities to promote healthy foods:

- The Salvation Army - Temple location serves parts of South Minneapolis (about 150 households per month). They distribute about 15-20lbs of food per person, once per month, although they may give out extra produce or milk if available. Up to 25% of clients are from the Latino community, while the majority of clients are Caucasian or African American, with some Native American or multi-racial clients.
- They are a client-choice food shelf, but do not have a walk-through space (clients fill out a form indicating what items they'd like to receive, then a staff person packs the bags for each client).
- They are trying to get more healthy options, but are sometimes challenged by their limited refrigeration capacity. They often receive fresh produce from EFN and Second Harvest, including 2 pallets of produce (from Second Harvest) that was distributed to about 50 households last month. They also participate in food rescue with Lunds, Byerlys, and Rainbow approximately 2x/week (social services staff pick up the donations and bring them to the food shelf).
- The food shelf is staffed by 2 people plus limited volunteers. Because of that, most food shelf clients are served by appointment instead of walk-in assistance. Visits and services are tracked using a database that is linked to other Salvation Army offices across the city.
- This location offers other types of services including assistance with utility bills, transportation, and rent payment; referrals to SNAP and the furniture program; seasonal programs like Coats for Kids; and a daily lunch program during the summer (run through Loaves and Fishes).

Updates/Announcements

- Food shelf directory and map
 - Sent out directory (Excel file) and Google [map](#) via email on May 1st
 - Phase 2 will include updating location of gardens, farmers markets, CSAs, meal programs, etc (summer 2014)
- Healthy foods policies
 - Planning a second workshop on June 24th (more details to follow via email invite to food shelves) and a recorded webinar of the March workshop
 - Success story: Waite House has formed a healthy foods policy workgroup which includes key staff from various parts of their organization. The workgroup is

meeting to start documenting what they are currently doing to increase and promote healthy food options; identify short-term changes they can make to prioritize healthy foods; and discuss long-term goals for healthy food procurement and donation. Great job, Waite House staff! If your food shelf is interested in exploring a healthy foods policy, forming a team or workgroup is a great place to start.

- Plant an Extra Row
 - 65 gardeners have registered to participate so far this year, along with 17 food shelves and 2 meal programs in Minneapolis. There's still time to sign up if you are interested in receiving fresh produce donations from local gardeners.
 - Food shelves at the meeting received a supply of tote bags to distribute to first-time donors as well as instructions for completing a monthly evaluation of the program. This information will also be sent out via email to all food shelves that have registered.
 - A suggestion was made to ask gardeners to submit recipes along with their donations to help food shelf clients know how to prepare fresh produce they receive. Additional recipe resources are available through Second Harvest and EFN.
- Technical Assistance for Enhancements
 - MHD is selecting up to 10 food shelves to receive enhancements to make healthy options more visible and attractive to clients. Each participating food shelf will receive a merchandising package worth \$275 plus 10 hours of consultation with MHD staff and a retail expert. **Apply today by completing this short online [survey](#). This technical assistance is available on a first come, first serve basis.**

Donor Communications

- Network members have expressed on multiple occasions that it is important to have standard messages for different donor audiences so that food shelves are collectively conveying the same idea about healthy foods.
- We've developed some messages and materials already, including:
 - Tri-fold brochure (How to Support Food Shelves)
 - Donate Healthy Food poster
 - Donor letter template
 - Public website – www.healthyfoodshelves.org
 - Plant An Extra Row materials
 - Flyer
 - talking points
 - newsletter briefs
 - social media posts
- In 2014-2015, the group agreed that they would like to focus on getting the word out in a more coordinated way by conducting a communications campaign. Ideas included:
 - Potential communications channels

- MPR
- Star Tribune (food writers or others who aren't necessarily focused on poverty, but may have an interest in hunger issues)
- Social media seems relatively easy, low-cost and an up-to-date way to reach people quickly
- Announcements in church bulletins
- In-person meetings with church leaders, missions teams, or food drive coordinators
- MN Food Share mailer (January 2015) prior to March campaign
- Potential communications materials
 - Wish list poster (modifiable template that food shelves can complete with their desired food items)
 - Current tri-fold brochure (or similar 1/3 insert to put in a mailer)
- Potential target audiences
 - Churches or places of worship (they often have running food donations and are usually interested in hosting food drives)
 - Retail stores (co-ops, grocery stores – many of these currently run programs to help food shelves, but could do more in terms of promoting cash donations and healthy items, fewer bakery items)
 - Food banks could support messaging to retail stores since they often have relationships or contracts with them for food rescue/donation
 - Could revisit previous Healthy Food Shelf Network effort to do donation gift cards and posters within stores (attempted unsuccessfully in 2012-13)
 - Current donors
 - New donors (anyone who is interested in broader issues like food justice, nutrition, health, hunger)
- Potential opportunities to leverage
 - March Campaign (March)
 - Post Office food drive (May?)
 - Boy Scouts food drive (April?)
 - Thanksgiving/Christmas holiday time when many groups and individuals are thinking about donating
- Potential key messages
 - Tell donors what has been done with their previous donation then request specific items or cash in the future
 - Promote donations of fresh produce that is more shelf-stable or that doesn't require refrigeration
- Next steps: Network members are invited to join a workgroup to develop a specific plan and strategies before the next Network meeting. Suzanne Shatila (MN FoodShare) and Diane Anastos (Waite House) volunteered to participate. Others are welcome!

Healthy food recommendations for food banks

- The group discussed ideas for recommendations they'd like to make to food banks regarding policies and practices that can support food shelves' efforts to increase healthy food items and decrease unhealthy items.
- Potential recommendations include:
 - **Allow food shelves to share produce and other donated items received from food banks.** This would help food banks distribute more fresh produce, reduce waste, and assist smaller food shelves in benefiting from bulk/pallet donations that typically go to larger food shelves only.
 - **Make produce more consistently available and high quality.** Food shelves would benefit from food banks putting more financial and staffing resources toward maintaining and distributing a consistent supply of high quality, fresh produce.
 - **Make fewer unhealthy food purchases.** Food banks, like food shelves, have a budget to purchase food and can prioritize purchasing healthy foods including fresh produce, whole grains, and low-fat, low-sodium, and low-sugar items instead of unhealthy foods like soda, chips, or baked goods. Food shelves are committed to buying these types of foods if they are consistently available from food banks.
 - **Request healthy food donations/Discontinue unhealthy food donations. Food banks have relationships with large corporate donors and could support food shelves by requesting specific types of healthy foods, cash donations, and/or discontinuing acceptance of unhealthy items.**
- Network members are interested in joining other food shelves and meal programs across the metro to collectively ask food banks to consider these recommendations and adjust their policies and practices to better support healthy food options.
- In addition, food shelves are interested in demonstrating 1) demand for healthy items and 2) lack of demand for healthy items, so that food banks are encouraged to adjust their own ordering and donations. A number of food shelves would like to work together to develop a brief proposal for a produce-sharing pilot project. Food shelves would also like to work on collectively stopping orders of soda (or another unhealthy item) in order to show decrease demand for these types of products. Additional discussion around these recommendations and ideas will be carried out at future Network meetings or by smaller workgroups of interested participants.

Tour of Salvation Army Temple food shelf