

Minneapolis Healthy Food Shelf Network

Facilitated by the Minneapolis Health Department



Thursday, September 18, 2014

10:00 – 11:30am

**Location: Good Works food shelf
(697 13th Ave NE, Minneapolis)**

Meeting Notes

Spotlight on the Good Works food shelf

- Bunmi Adekunle gave an overview of the Good Work food shelf operations and how they are trying to increase their healthy food options for clients.
 - Good Works has been in operation for approximately 4 years and currently serves 40-50 individuals per day (about 500 households per month). They are located in Northeast Minneapolis but are open to anyone (no geographic restrictions) one time per month. They have a client choice model, but clients do not “shop” the food shelf (they write down their choices on a shopping list and a volunteer gathers the food for them).
 - Good Works participates in bulk produce drops from Second Harvest as well as retail food rescue with Lunds & Byerly’s. In order to be a healthy food shelf, they have stopped distributing Ramen noodles and hamburger mixes; they try to regularly purchase healthy staples like whole grains and eggs. Clients are allowed to shop freely off of the produce tables set up in the main waiting area and can come to get produce as often as they want. Good Works does produce distributions during their weekly meal so that clients can eat and receive food to take home at the same time.

Announcements and updates

- Plant an Extra Row
 - 348.3 lbs total donated by gardens to 8 food shelves; please continue to submit tracking forms to Nora.Gordon@minneapolismn.gov
- Staple Foods ordinance
 - The City of Minneapolis is exploring amendments to the current staple foods ordinance to require licensed grocery stores to stock a broader array of healthy food items. A public hearing on the proposed changes will be held Monday, Oct 20th at 1:30pm in City Hall Room 317. See attached overview for more details.
- Salvation Army North Open House on Wednesday, October 1st from 9am – 12pm (2024 Lyndale Ave N). Please join them for a light healthy breakfast, networking and a tour!
- Emergency Food Shelf Network changed their name to The Food Group! Check out their new website: <http://thefoodgroupmn.org/>.

- Salvation Army Coats for Kids – The 2014 coat drive will be Oct. 6 – 19. Donated items will be distributed at our Salvation Army centers at the end of October. They are especially in need of coats for teens. Check out their website for more details: www.givecoats.org.
- Second Harvest Heartland's Fall Food Shelf Gathering – Sept 29th from 9:30am – 3pm
- Second Harvest Produce Distributions – If food shelves are interested in doing a one-time bulk produce drop this fall, please contact Second Harvest (Lisa Boyd) as they have large amounts of produce to give away. There is a 5 pallet minimum per distribution, and each produce drop could possibly include a few different types of items.

Promising Practices for Creating a Healthy Food Shelf

- Promising practices have been gathered through various conversations with food shelves and other stakeholders, but more input is needed. The goal is to be able to recommend the top 5 'most impactful' strategies that food shelves should adapt to create a healthier environment within their space. There is currently no evidence-base for what is 'most impactful' so the group discussed what would be needed to position the recommendations as credible and worthwhile, from the perspective of food shelf managers and organizational leaders. Ideas included:
 - Feedback from clients that changes are having an impact on their ability to get healthy foods and consume healthy foods. Could be anecdotes, success stories, survey results, etc.
 - Could look at food bank data to identify changes in inventory, ordering, etc at a food shelf specific level
 - Anecdotes from other food shelves that have implemented Promising Practices and have had positive results

Donor Communications

- The group reviewed an updated one-pager about a coordinated communications campaign to promote healthy food donations and offered feedback on the following questions:
 - Q: What is the preferred timing of any communications activities?
A: *Spring and summer (to help off-set the lack of school meals for kids). If materials are adaptable, the food shelves could use them year-round, but do a targeted push in the spring/summer.*
 - Q: How can food shelves leverage their Networks and connections to help push out messages in a low-cost, effective way?
A: *Salvation Army has a communications team that might be able to help push messages out through their established channels. We could also tag on to MN Foodshare's March campaign if we can have materials ready to send out in January.*
 - Q: How do food shelves currently communicate with donors?
A: *Food shelves use social media (3), mass mailings (1), and newsletters (2)*
 - Q: Do any food shelves have relationships with MPR, WCCO, or other media outlets that might provide earned media attention?

A: Taylor (Salvation Army CCO) has a relationship with Susie Jones at WCCO Radio

- The communications workgroup (MHD staff, Suzanne Shatila, Diane Anastos, and Jessica Hering) will continue to work on a plan for developing materials and a timeline for promoting key messages, based on the feedback provided by partners.

Merchandising Healthy Foods in Your Food Shelf (hands-on training)

- Nora Gordon, Minneapolis Health Department, taught meeting participants tips and tricks for merchandising healthy foods within their food shelves. The key ideas to consider are:
 - Make a good first impression and take inspiration from grocery stores
 - Place healthy items front and center in organized categories so that they are easy to find
 - Use signage to highlight healthy options (especially anything perishable that is covered by an opaque cooler/freezer door)
 - Always get buy-in and suggestions from your volunteers and staff since they know the food shelf system best and it's hard to make sustainable changes without their support
 - Try modifying your shopping list to highlight healthy options if you don't have a client choice/shopping model
 - The health department is offering free technical assistance to food shelves that would like to learn how best to merchandise healthy foods in their space. Free merchandising materials (display baskets, signage, recipe cards, etc) are available along with individual consultations. Currently 5 food shelves have signed up to receive assistance, and there is capacity to help an additional 5.

