



# Healthy Eating: It Starts with Food Security

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# Goals

- Increase knowledge and understanding of food security
- Gain insight into food security programs and initiatives happening in VCH and around the province
- Overall goal is to be better equipped to address food security/insecurity in your practice



# Definition of Food Security

“Community food security exists when all citizens obtain a safe, personally acceptable, nutritious diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes healthy choices, community self-reliance and equal access for everyone.”

(Adapted from Bellows and Hamm 2003 by Community Nutritionists Council of BC)



# Individual or Household Food Insecurity

- Looks at the level of the people – do they have the funds and the physical access to enough food that is nutritious and meets their dietary needs and food preferences?
- The largest impact on individual food security is poverty.

# A few Stats

- 8.8% (2.7 million) Canadians live in households that experience food insecurity
- BC has a higher rate of food insecurity than most other provinces – 10.4%
- Populations experiencing the highest rate of food insecurity include: low-income, off-reserve Aboriginal people, single parent households especially if single parent is female. (others at risk include new immigrants and refugees and the elderly).

(Data from CCHS 2.2)





VS.



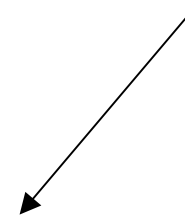
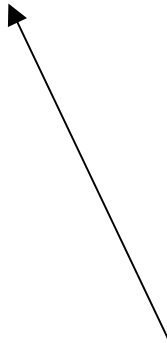
# Community Food Security

- Adds to the previous definition by including a sustainable food system. Parts of the food system include:
  - Production
  - Processing
  - Distribution
  - Marketing
  - Acquisition
  - Consumption
  - Disposal





# A Sustainable Food System



Windermere High  
School, Vancouver



# How Does Food Insecurity Affect Health?

- Research shows that food insecurity plays a role in obesity, child health, mental health and may be a risk factor for Type II diabetes.
- Diet quality is relational to socio-economic status
- Decreased intake of fruits and vegetables in food insecure adults
- Increased intake in calorically dense and nutritionally poor foods
- Adolescents, adults and elderly from food insecure households show higher rates of nutrient inadequacy.

# Addressing Food Security

## Food Security Continuum



Stage 1  
Short term relief  
(efficiency)

Stage 2  
Capacity Building  
(participation/transition)

Stage 3  
Redesign

**Individual  
Emergency/  
Charitable Food  
Programs**

- Food Banks
- Soup Kitchens
- Food Vouchers

**Community**

- Community kitchens
- Community gardens
- Good Food Box
- Farmer's Markets
- Community-shared ag.
- Community BF groups
- Buy local programs

**Society & Gov't**

- Federal/Provincial policy
- Local food policy councils
- Municipal/City food policy Councils
- School Food Policy
- Workplace food policy
- Advocacy for changes to policies affecting poverty

# What Can you Do?



In the work place

At home

In your community



# Resources

- Dietitians of Canada
  - “Nurturing and Supporting Food Insecure Clients”  
[http://www.dietitians.ca/members\\_only/resourceinventory\\_searchform.asp](http://www.dietitians.ca/members_only/resourceinventory_searchform.asp)
  - 2 Food Security Position Papers
    - Look under position papers
- Vancouver Coastal Health – Food Security
  - <http://www.vch.ca/population/food.htm>