

Childhood Nutrition Collaborative (CNC)

funded by

Community Foundation
of Tompkins County

Urgency for Good Child Nutrition in Tompkins

- Same poverty shown in Cradle to Career - zoomed in on just the food system
- 40% students qualify for free & reduced lunch across the county; up to 55% *rural* students.
- About 20% of children are food insecure.
- 28% are not at healthy weight (Mostly food-induced).
- Big academic performance gaps (poverty & systemic racism are huge barriers)

- NYS Government promotes eating basic healthy breakfast:
 - Better academic performance, test scores, Improved nutrition, Healthier weight, Better memory.
- But fewer than half Tompkins County's low-income eligible students actually eat school breakfast.
- Students request appealing, nutritious, tasty food and are willing to learn about healthy diets (Park)

- What if every child - from a developing fetus into a young adult – had basic nutritious food and felt well and could think perfectly as possible? Then what would the playing field look like?

Childhood Nutrition Collaborative (CNC)

CNC's shared vision is that every young person (ages pre-birth to 24) will be able to comfortably access nourishing food that they like, every day.

CNC Steering Group includes *four* sectors:

Tompkins County Health Dept; TC Youth Services Dept; GreenStar Community Projects; Food Bank of S. Tier; Food & Health Network; Youth Farm Project; Cradle to Career Initiative; Building Bridges Initiative; Cornell Public Health; Cooperative Extension; Ithaca School District; GreenStar Co-op. [There are also affiliates]

CNC meets twice/month to advance:

- Shared Work Plan w/ Shared measures
- Updates on short & long term progress
- Backbone (the supporting engine)



Some members of CNC Steering Committee

How do young folk get food during each stage of childhood?

Food Access is complex for families and youth:

- Involves stages, knowledge, capacity, family resources, time of year, time of day:

- Pre-Birth (babies in development) totally depend on mother's health & safety
- 3-5 year olds depend on parent/caregiver (relatives, friends, agencies), pre-K
- K-12th graders typically depend on:
 - Parent/caregivers (+ relatives, friends; Agencies) for majority of each year (185 days/year + all 365 dinners/year + school absences)
 - Public school food for 180 days/year if never absent - Only breakfast + lunch
 - Community (eg. Afterschool, Summer Camps, Food pantry, Religion, etc)
 - Teen jobs that provide some food and/or means to get it.
- Young adults (18 – 24 years)
 - Parent/Caregivers and Friends; Food pantries; College (if financial aid or budget)
 - Young adult jobs that provide food and/or the means to get it.

Data used by CNC

Participants use CNC to measure their own organizational impact AND to measure our combined success at increasing nutritious food access

Quantitative Data (uploaded onto Cradle to Career's "Community Platform"):

- Census data/The American Community Survey
- Tompkins County Youth Services & TC Health Department data
- NYS Education data; ICSD Equity Report Card data; ICSD Food Program data
- Park Foundation Child Nutrition Report data for Tompkins County

Qualitative Data: Community Café "harvests" (Groton, Newfield, Dryden)

- CCE food pantry line surveys; GSCP Community Meals report-outs

CNC increased *services* that improve healthy food access:

- Ithaca School District (ICSD) piloting Universal Free meals in 2 elementary schools: BJM and Enfield.
- CNC lobbying to extend Universal Free Meals to all schools

Improvements! (Anecdotal, but growing alignment):

- ICSD Salad bars in every school (locally sourced when poss). Cool School Food in ICSD classrooms; New after-school cooking classes in some schools
- TC Health Dept launching eWIC (debit card to purchase WIC approved food)
- Summer meals expanded to Dryden; Kid Farmers Market in Groton
- GSCP & CCE & CFCU create Ithaca food pantry gardens run w/hungry youth

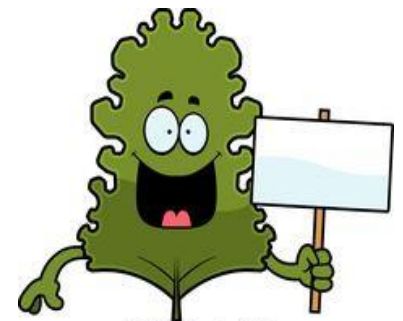
Ithaca High School's **RAINBOW**KALE SALAD

Made with kale grown by IHS students



Vitamin K is essential for blood clotting.

**Kale is one of the vegetables with the
HIGHEST Vitamin K content.**



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Ithaca School District + Non-Profits (Fresh Snack Program, Cool School Food, Cooperative Ext (CCE). Kids learn nutrition, grow & cook affordable, healthy food they like, from many cultures





#Food Is Free

Downtown youth & food pantry gardens manifesting Ithaca's City Ordinance



CNC Updates

CNC Backbone Function strengthened

- Cradle to Career is supporting CNC Backbone Function with 2 paid grad students
- Food Bank supporting CNC Backbone Function with paid staff support

Setting up Advocacy and New Leadership

- Tompkins County Hunger Tour linked with food pantries
- Food Bank bringing Participatory Leadership Training
- and Speakers Bureau training in Groton (for 2019)

Story telling with Shared Data - CNC populates food page on Community Platform

- Community-driven participatory mapping workshop/tutorial - CCE “Community Café” info ‘harvests’ can tell visual stories w/Groton, Newfield, Dryden (engagement);
 - Then map poverty layer; Use 211 data to add services (eg. bus routes, grocery stores, farmers’ mkts, food pantries, comm’y gardens)
 - Who is doing what? Who’s missing?




Engagement across sectors:

- Changes in Personal stories
- System wide shift

2018 Networking Event about Hunger in America



BIG
HUNGER
THE UNHOLY ALLIANCE
BETWEEN
CORPORATE AMERICA
AND ANTI-HUNGER
GROUPS

ANDREW FISHER
FOREWORD BY SARU JAYARAMAN

CNC Work Plan: County-wide Coordination

Cross-sector work in the County:

- TC Health Dept developing social determinants of health & health equity
Next TC Community Health Assessment (for 2019-14) uses nutrition data

Strengthening each others' food security campaigns:

- CNC advocated for No Student Hungry at Lifton's Town Hall. No Kid Hungry passed (expands access to school meals & local produce)!
- CNC lobbying ICSD to extend Universal Free Meals to *all* schools in Ithaca District
- CNC met with Lifton at Youth Farm to discuss Farm to School work

Bringing in resources to magnify impact

- Sept 2018: Highly coordinated NYS Farm to School grant proposal, coordinated easily through CNC



Farm
to
School
to
Local
Government



How to get involved in CNC

Everyone eats. This is our shared county and it's our shared food system. If you are interested, you are a match for it, too! Here are some ways to engage:

Volunteer time is fundamental!

- Teach kids to grow, prep, taste fresh food (Cool School Food, Youth Farm, GSCP)
- Mentor a student who wants to tell their food story (Hot Potato Press)
- Re-distribute excess food to kids (Friendship Donations Network, Loaves & Fish)
- Join Food Policy Council, work with City of Ithaca to implement its Ordinance - which says *"Every resident shall be food secure... and have the opportunity to grow their own food"*)

Money is fundamental Cross-sector funding for systemic change is uncommon.

It takes a visionary foundation to make this happen.

We can build a local food culture that is fair and sustainable through all political climates!

for more info, contact Holly Payne [**holly@greenstar.coop**](mailto:holly@greenstar.coop)