



Teen Food Literacy Curriculum

Facilitator's Materials

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Developed as a part of the Portland, Oregon, pilot Teen Food Program

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Introduction

This document provides detailed discussion guides and instructions for facilitating a 13-session course intended to teach leadership skills to teens through the lens of food literacy¹ and advocacy. The goal of the Teen Food Literacy Program (TFLP) and curriculum is to help develop teen mentors and leaders that are equipped to support their peers around issues related to food equity and security. This course asks teens to grapple with concepts of identity and intersectionality, food justice, and food literacy by engaging in empowerment activities that can guide them in their personal and group goals.

The course was developed as part of the Portland, Oregon, pilot Teen Food Program, which engaged teens, service providers, and researchers to design and then pilot a program to improve young people's access to food. The Urban Institute report *Exploring Teen Food Insecurity in Portland, Oregon: Designing a Pilot Teen Food Program* (Galvez et al. 2017) describes the Portland effort and how the TFLP curriculum was developed and tested with a group of 11 teens in 2016.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Facilitators and Facilitation

This guide is intended for adult facilitators who will lead discussion sessions with small cohorts of teens (roughly 8 to 15). The course could be embedded in a variety of organizations. Some examples include food banks, public housing services and school programming. Adult facilitators need not be embedded in any specific organization as long as they have the necessary skills and local connections.

Facilitation does not require a background in teaching, but it does require someone who has experience with (1) low-income teens and leadership development; (2) food system, food justice,² or food security issues; and (3) local-level nonprofits, community organizations, schools, government entities, and the like that work with teens or food issues. The facilitator is essential to establishing a safe and inclusive space, and it is important for them to be an active listener adept at managing group dynamics and able to relate well to teens.

In addition to financial compensation for the adult facilitator, there are some additional costs associated with this curriculum. Make sure that there is a budget for the materials noted at the beginning of each session, including paper, markers, and other supplies. During the pilot program in Portland, we also provided teens with \$20 stipends and a meal for each session they attended.

Before the course begins, it is important for facilitators to read through the entire curriculum and get an understanding of the big picture goals and how they relate to individual session objectives, as well as what materials will be needed for each session. Before each session, the facilitator should revise the curriculum

based on some of the recommendations below in both the Course and Session Structure and Modifications for Each Community sections.

The TFLP should not resemble typical classroom learning, in which the teacher does most of the talking and participants are expected to mainly listen. Instead, the goal of this course is to get teens as engaged as possible in the leadership of the course. Based on the initial pilot in Portland, Oregon, some tips for facilitation include the following:

- Challenge teens to lead and share their voice. Guide the discussions and encourage participation, keeping objectives in mind and avoiding lecturing.
- Adjust the curriculum to better fit the community or group dynamics.
- Remember the importance of diversity and inclusion, and have ground rules for ensuring equity in participation. If conflicts arise during the course, acknowledge and address them using principles of positivity, courtesy, nonconfrontation, and understanding rather than using punishment or singling out.
- If discussions on sensitive topics trigger something or reveal crises in teens' lives, refer them to the appropriate support and resources to address individual needs. It might be helpful for the facilitator to develop a resource card in advance listing hotlines and local organizations that can be handed to all teens in the program if triggering conversations occur.

Course and Session Structure

This course consists of 13 sessions and each is structured for two-hour meetings. If the course runs in concurrence with the school calendar, it could take a semester to complete if sessions are held weekly. Weekly sessions can also help keep the engagement and information fresh in teens' minds. In the pilot of this course, however, teens voted on when they would meet, deciding to skip weeks they were on school break or when many members had scheduling conflicts.

The first portion of each session has facilitator notes that include objectives of the session, materials required, and glossary terms. Each part of the sessions has associated time limits, which are modifiable depending on how long the group needs to complete activities. During the welcome portion of each session, the facilitator should provide an overview of the objectives and definitions of the glossary terms. The check-in time is a way to welcome teens to their space and signal a break from the rest of their day. This check-in could include inviting the teens to get up and stretch before settling into their seats, or having the teens share about their day. The icebreaker is meant to build a sense of community between teens who may not have previously known each other as well as set the precedent that all teens are encouraged to speak up. The facilitator can also allow teens to lead their own icebreaker to begin to develop leadership. Each session has room for an icebreaker, but this segment can be combined with the check-in as the facilitator sees fit.

After the introduction and welcome, the sessions are constructed around activities that are meant to address the objectives of the session. Activities are designed to be hands-on and interactive. Sessions 1 through 3 focus on building food literacy knowledge, Sessions 4 through 8 focus on building an understanding of food justice and identity, and Sessions 9 through 12 focus on creating action plans and community engagement projects. The curriculum should be adapted as needed to ensure that the sessions are not overly structured and that teens have ample opportunity for organic, teen-led discussion.

Each session will conclude by going over the “pluses and deltas” of the group and a “solidarity clap.” The pluses-and-deltas reflection is an opportunity for the facilitator to listen to teen thoughts about the session and tailor future sessions to better fit group needs. The solidarity clap provides a physical and auditory transition out of the space and helps to build a sense of community.

Modifications for Each Community

This curriculum was written for youth ages 12 to 18. Given the large age range, it is recommended that each iteration of this course narrow the age range of participants and revise the materials based on the literacy levels of the group, considering potential language barriers.

In addition to literacy level, all sessions will need to be revised to contextualize the material within individual communities. This step is important because it helps teens to connect to the material in a more tangible way and builds toward the final sessions when teens will engage in a food-related project in the community. Sessions will have prompts for facilitators to add in place-based detail. Testing the curriculum with a couple of teens or consulting with educators familiar with the population could be useful to ensure the content is appropriate.

This course should be modified to fit the needs of the teens by considering identity-related sensitivities. For example, one session discusses diet-related disease and impacts on a person’s health, but not all teens in the room may realize that diabetes can be a result of poor nutrition, and some teens’ lives may be affected by diabetes. Another example is discussing healthy food and understanding that not all teens may have the resources to acquire healthier foods, and promoting healthy food as “good” and unhealthy food as “bad” could be perceived as placing value judgments on teens and their families.

Finally, as mentioned above, the curriculum should be adjusted so that the teens can take ownership over this program and each of the sessions. Teens should be allowed to contribute to the purpose statement for the TFLP and to add their own vocabulary. Participants should also have a say in defining the outcomes and goals of their work. The specific goals of each iteration of this curriculum may vary depending on the makeup of the teens, current events in the community, and varied dedication of partner organizations. Part of including teens in the ownership over this program allowing them to participate in all decisionmaking

processes, including decisions between organizations and helping to set and understand expectations from all teens and partners.

AFTER THE PROGRAM IS COMPLETED

After the 13 sessions are completed, it is assumed that teens will still set time aside to complete their community engagement project. Each iteration of this curriculum will involve a different level of phasing out formal facilitation and passing the baton to the teens to lead their community engagement project. In some cases, especially if the youth cohort is younger, the facilitator may want to explore attending these community engagement sessions after the teens complete the 13-week course.

In Portland, once youth have completed the 13-week course, they are invited to participate in future iterations of the project as cofacilitators. This allows alumni to stay connected and provides positive role models for TFLP participants. If using teen cofacilitators, the adult cofacilitator should meet with the cofacilitators often to discuss expectations at each session, the difference between teaching and facilitation, and what to do if problems arise.

If you are planning to use or have already used the course, we encourage you to reach out to the Urban Institute with questions, clarification, or feedback. If you'd like additional resources or glossary terms, please ask the authors for additional materials. Requests can be made to media@urban.org.

NOTES

1. We apply Vidgen and Gallegos's (2014, 54) definition of food literacy as "the scaffolding that empowers individuals, households, communities or nations to protect diet quality through change and strengthen dietary resilience over time. It is composed of a collection of inter-related knowledge, skills and behaviors required to plan, manage, select, prepare and eat food to meet needs and determine intake."
2. We apply Holt-Giménez and Wang's (2011, 88) definition of food justice (who refer to Gottlieb and Joshi 2010) is as a social movement with "'multiple layers...of producers, processors, workers, eaters, or communities,' for whom race, ethnicity, class, and gender issues are at the forefront of an agenda that includes a mix of 'producing food, local preference, environment, economic development, health food for all, preparing, cooking and eating, and public health and nutrition.'"

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- Gavlez, Martha, 2017. Exploring Teen Food Insecurity in Portland, Oregon: Designing a Pilot Teen Food Program. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.
- Gottlieb, Robert, and Anupama Joshi. 2010. Food Justice. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Holt-Giménez, and Yi Wang. 2011. "Reform or Transformation? The Pivotal Role of Food Justice in the US Food Movement." *Race/Ethnicity: Multidisciplinary Global Contexts* 5 (1): 83–102.
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Session 1

Defining Our Space

Objectives: During this session, teens will start developing a common purpose for engaging in their community and in the program as a team. Teens will also begin to set norms for the group, ensuring inclusive spaces for reflection, learning, and understanding. At the end of the session, participants will be able to

- express their purpose and goals for joining the program, as well as the purpose of the program;
- develop the norms of the space; and
- begin to understand team dynamics.

Materials: Grocery items, utensils, and some kitchen supplies, large paper (ideally butcher paper), markers and other art supplies, dot stickers

Session terms: Safe space, community guidelines, food justice

WELCOME AND CHECK-IN (10 MINUTES)

Check-in Circle

Ask the youth to sit in a circle. Going around, give each teen the opportunity to check in to the space and introduce themselves.

Model what this looks like: “I’m feeling stressed today, because my dog threw up just as I was leaving for work, causing me to be late. I’ve spent a lot of my day trying to catch up.”

This is a good way to debrief from the day and frame the start of each session. You could combine the check-in with a stretch, a chant, a candle or other smell etc. This provides teens with a way to leave their day behind and become present in the space.

Review Agenda

Introduce program purpose, basic logistics, and overarching expectations. Spend time discussing the curriculum objectives, and make sure the teens know why they are there and what they will learn.

Suggested phrasing: “The Teen Food Literacy Program (TFLP) is a 13-session course where you will gain skills and experiences in empowerment, self-efficacy, and food literacy. It will end with you all engaging in a

community-based project that you will design and execute yourselves. You will use what you learn during the TFLP sessions to build your community-based project. But, before we get started, we should all learn about each other.”

Over the next 13 sessions, you all are here to develop leadership skills; gain a stronger understanding of the food system; recognize how food plays an important role in peoples’ social, economic, political, and physical well-being; and start understanding how to take action to address issues within the food system.”

Icebreaker

One good icebreaker is a name game. Have the participants say their names and a food that they like that starts with the same letter as their name. Then have them repeat the name and food of all the people before them. For example, “Hi Mashed Potato Max, Apple Alex, Donut Desiree. I’m Sandwich Sammy.”

Some additional ice breaker ideas include the following:

- If you could be a fruit or vegetable, what would you be and why?
- What is a meal your family makes that you like?
- What would be your favorite ingredient to add to a meal?
- Invite everyone to sit in a circle. Count off in fours. Each number one is an apple, number two a pear, number three an orange, and number four is a banana. As a facilitator, call out the fruits. When an apple is called, every apple has to get up and run through the middle and switch with another apple. Each round, remove a chair. The person left standing in the middle is out. The last teen standing wins.
- Name a food you would like to try that you haven’t yet.
- If you could be a utensil or kitchen appliance, what would you be and why?
- Bring a fruit salad or veggie platter to the meeting. Have teens get up and take turns choosing an item of produce to eat. For each type of produce they choose, assign a question. For example, when a teen picks a carrot they give their favorite color. When they pick an apple slice, they give their favorite holiday.

ACTIVITY ONE: STORY OF SELF (25 MINUTES)

Participants will explore why they want to be a part of TFLP and what they hope to gain from the experience. They will learn what brought everyone to the space and start to find a common purpose around food in their community.

Suggested phrasing: *“We’re all going to put in a lot of work over the next few weeks. We’re going to learn from each other, work with each other, and engage change in our community together. To get to know each*

other a little bit better we're going to share our stories of self. Stories of self help us better understand where we come from and what our role is as leaders in this group. We'll also be able to get to know each other a little bit better.

We are all standing in this room for different reasons. No two of us share the same support system, the same influences, motivations, skills, or experiences. Our reasons for being here are different, and there is a lot of power in those differences and in our diversity.

I want you each to take a few minutes and think about why you want to learn more about food in your community."

Possible prompt: If a friend told you about this group, that's great. But think deeper, why did you say yes? Was there a moment in your life that made you reflect and realize this was an important issue to get involved in? Think about what brought you to that choice, your motivations, your life experiences, the moment that activated your desire to effect change in your community.

Have students pair up with the person next to them to talk about their answers and then share back with the larger group. Remind the teens that this is a supportive and intentional safe space. A part of creating a safe space is acknowledging where everyone comes from, without judgement. Reiterate that everyone's lives are different and that diversity is a big part of where strength comes from.

The facilitator should post large pieces of paper around the room, each with one of the probing questions below (pick just a few to use in the session). The facilitator should then tell the students to walk around the room and write their responses to the probing questions on the pieces of paper. This portion of the activity should take 15 minutes.

The following are some probing questions to think about:

- Who are you?
- Where are you from?
- What are three important facts about you?
- Where is home?
- Why did you join this program?
- What do you hope to gain?
- What do you hope to contribute?
- Draw your favorite family dinner.
- What do you want to change about food for your family? Why?
- What types of foods do you eat and where do you get them from? Is it the food you want to be eating?

Thank everyone for their honesty and trust. Repeat that everyone's differences make us stronger, and the only way we can effect change is by drawing from *all* of our collective tools and experiences. No one person has enough to create change on their own.

Hand each student dot stickers and do a "gallery walk," having them go around the room and put stickers next to responses that resonate with them.

Ask the teens to return to their seats, turn to a partner and share their thoughts on the dot gallery walk. What surprised them? What had the most dots? Why might that be? What had the fewest dots? Why might that be? How are the experiences on the wall similar or different?

Then, come back together as a group and brainstorm values that you share, common threads that unite the group, and differences that provide strength.

ACTIVITY TWO: FOOD JUSTICE MURAL (20 MINUTES)

Now that the group knows a little more about each other, explain that you're going to create a "mural of us" around food justice.

Post this definition on the wall:

"Food justice is communities exercising their right to grow, sell, and eat healthy food. Healthy food is fresh, nutritious, affordable, culturally appropriate, and grown locally with care for the well-being of the land, workers, and animals. People practicing food justice leads to a strong local food system, self-reliant communities, and a healthy environment."
-justfood.org

Ask one of the teens to read the definition aloud. Ask the group if the definition works or if there are parts to change or add to make it work for their community.

Once you have an agreed upon definition, ask the teens to pick parts of the definition that resonate with them (e.g., "affordable" or "healthy environment"). When you have a list of these components, ask each teen to think of one of these concepts and write and/or illustrate it on a part of one large paper. Multiple teens can choose the same component. Encourage teens to include pieces from their story of self, and connections to food justice. Encourage teens to contribute poems, stories, quotes, pictures, and/or lyrics to the mural using markers, finger paints, pencils, or whatever is available to translate their reflections in the form that makes the most sense to them. Then, tape this sheet on the wall as a mural and reminder of what the group stands for and where they've come from.

After they finish creating this food justice mural, ask the teens to pair up with someone new and each explain their favorite part of the mural and say one thing about the mural that they're excited to work on or learn more about as part of TFLP.

ACTIVITY THREE: COMMUNITY GUIDELINES (10 MINUTES)

Here, participants will set the norms for the teen space. This exercise is their opportunity to define the rules of engagement to ensure the space is safe and conducive for everyone's needs. Take notes during this activity to reference as a set of guidelines throughout the program.

Pose the following questions:

- While we are working together, what are some rules or guidelines we should follow?
Some options for guidelines:
 - » Step up, step back. Encourage those who speak often to step back and listen, and encourage those who do not speak often to step up and contribute.
 - » Use "I" statements when possible. Do not speak for others.
 - » Be aware of our language.
 - » Check your "swag" and be vulnerable.
 - » Show up on time or let the facilitator know if I'll be late.
 - » Keep phones away.
 - » Leave the space how we found it.
- How should we support each other?
- How should we work through disagreements and mistakes?
- How should we make decisions?

The resulting list of guidelines should be recorded on a large piece of paper that can be taped up in the teen space and referred to as needed. At any time during the course, guidelines can be added if the whole group agrees they are needed.

ACTIVITY FOUR: TEEN IRON CHEF SNACK BUILDER (45 MINUTES)

Set Up

Divide the participants into groups of three or four each. Try to split up participants sitting next to each other.

Give each group an identical bag of groceries. The food provided should be food that the teens have access to at least some of the time. The following are some examples of food that the facilitator could add to each bag of groceries:

- Fruits and vegetables (sweet and savory), such as lemons, sweet potatoes, apples, and broccoli (If there is no sink, make sure the produce is washed in advance. If the teens cannot use knives, make sure that any large produce is cut in advance.)
- Staple pantry items that don't require cooking (e.g., canned chickpeas, dried fruit, raw nuts, peanut butter, crackers, bread, salt, pepper, and other dried and fresh spices if possible)
- Items that can cook in a short period of time
- Dairy items, such as milk and cheese (if there is access to a refrigerator)
- One or two mystery ingredients (e.g., curry paste, coconut milk, Worcestershire sauce, or an unfamiliar fruit or vegetable)

Provide some kitchen materials for the teens to use:

- Bowl, plate, toothpicks, utensils (both to eat with and to cook with)
- Cutting board
- Paring knife if possible
- Can opener if needed
- Rag or paper towel
- Soap and water so the teens can wash up before cooking and help clean up

Plan and Create

Tell the teens that, using only the materials provided, they will have 20 minutes to create a snack that represents their group.

Explain that they will have 5 minutes to orient themselves with the materials and plan a recipe and 20 minutes to make the snack. They will not be allowed to look up recipes but are encouraged to be as creative as possible. Include pens and paper for this planning stage.

During the planning stage, reiterate to the teens that they all came from different families and may have cooked food in different ways growing up. Instruct the teens to share a way that their family prepares food with the rest of their group. It may be new to the other team members. The goal of this activity is for each group to create a snack that represents the background and food experiences of all the group members. It should probe students to think about how different food can look in each family.

After the initial 5 minutes, each group will go to a separate workstation to make their snack.

- Encourage the groups to change their dynamics. If there are teens who usually take charge in group activities, suggest they step back and listen to their other team members. If there are teens who usually sit back and listen, suggest they try contributing ideas to the team.
- Remind groups about the community guidelines they created and be sure to enforce them.

After the 20 minutes are up, ask each group to bring their snack to the middle of the room. Let them explain how the snack represents its team members.

Clean Up and Debrief

Bring everyone back together and pose the following questions for the group to discuss while they eat their snacks. Have the teens eat and prompt them to notice differences in how each group prepared and plated the food.

- Do the dishes from each group look or taste differently? What are the similarities?
- How did you decide what to cook? Were these decisions influenced by the ingredients available? By the food traditions and different cultures of members on your team? By the time constraints?
- Have you eaten all of the ingredients before? If not, which ones were new and what did you think about them?
- What was the most challenging thing about this activity?
- Were there miscommunications? How could they have been avoided?
- How did people show leadership throughout this activity?
- If you could do this activity again, what would you do differently?
- What tips would you give a friend who was going to make the same dish?

Suggested phrasing: “Instead of starting from scratch, we are able to learn from all of the lived experiences of every member of this group. Maybe you had never eaten one of the ingredients provided today, but your team member’s family had cooked it often. Seeing and making connections, whether with people, cultures, or ideas, is a hallmark of social justice workers. As we continue to meet, let’s think about ways we can continue building off each other’s life experiences, learning from those who came before us, and sharing our work with younger members who will come after us.”

CLOSE OUT (10 MINUTES)

Pluses and Deltas

This activity allows session participants to share what they enjoyed about the session (pluses) and what they would change to improve the session next time (deltas). Try to frame deltas with feeling statements instead of cons, for example, “I felt uncomfortable with the cooking challenge because I rarely make food with my family,” instead of, “I didn’t like the cooking challenge”.

Origin of the Solidarity Clap (5 minutes)

Suggested phrasing: *“The solidarity clap was developed in the 1960s out of the United Farm Workers Movement in California. This movement was powered by individuals from Mexico and the Philippines and led by Cesar Chavez and Larry Itliong.*

In the fields in the 1960s, it was common for farmworkers to speak only their native language. Since workers on one farm often grew up in many different places, language barriers left little room for verbal communication between workers. But workers found a way to stand in solidarity with one another as they struggled collectively for recognition and rights.

Across barriers of language, culture, and tall cornfields, every night to signal the end of the workday a farmworker would start the solidarity clap. The clap was started by one worker at the sound of her/his heartbeat. (The facilitator should start clapping slowly on their chest at the sound of their heartbeat). As more and more farmworkers heard the clap, they would join in. As the clap spread across the field, workers would drop their tools and join in, gaining momentum as the clap got faster and faster rumbling across the farm. (Encourage participants to join in, clapping faster and faster in unison like a “slow clap”).

After the noise had spread across the fields and everyone had a chance to join in, there would be a pause. (Give the signal for a pause). Then there was one last, loud clap in unison. (Reach your arms out wide signaling the teens to do the same and then lead one last loud, powerful clap). This last clap represents the solidarity that we have with our allies and the strength of collective action. The solidarity clap is a way to show the power in diversity, the power of working together even though we come from different places, and the power to address any barriers that stand in our way. “

Session 2a

Food and Our Body Part One

Objectives: During this session, teens will understand what is in their food and how to think critically about the food they eat. At the end of the session, participants will be able to

- recognize how much sugar is in soda;
- understand how too much sugar affects our body;
- recognize how much fat is in fast food; and
- understand how too much fat affects our bodies.

Materials (assuming three groups for each activity): One 20-ounce bottle of dark soda and one 20-ounce bottle of light soda, eight drinking glasses (six empty, one containing 15.5 teaspoons of sugar for dark soda, one containing 18.5 teaspoons for light soda), a bag of white sugar, three measuring teaspoons, clear plastic beads, red food dye, fruit juice, corn syrup, and six empty soda or water bottles of any size, pictures of decomposing food

Notes: This session could arouse defensive feelings among teens around eating practices and what their family eats on a regular basis. Take extra precautions while facilitating to ensure all teens are comfortable.

Session terms: healthy versus unhealthy foods, added sugar, natural sugar, fat

WELCOME AND CHECK-IN (5 MINUTES)

Check-in Circle

Review Agenda

Because this session talks through food choice and consequences on a personal level, this is a good time to revisit the community guidelines teens created during session 1. After reviewing the guidelines, proceed with the warm-up and allow several minutes of feedback and discussion. It is important not to single out any participants during any of the following questions or activities.

Icebreaker

ACTIVITY ONE: SNACK BREAKDOWN (10 MINUTES)

Prompt the teens with the following questions.

What is your favorite healthy snack? What is your favorite unhealthy snack? (Remember that different people define “healthy” and “unhealthy” in different ways and it is important to respect those definitions.) Going around the room, have each participant use two words to describe how

they feel after they eat an unhealthy snack and two words to describe how they feel after they eat a healthy snack.

Have each participant then answer the following questions. In your family, what types of health issues are common? Do you think food or diet is related to any of these health issues?

ACTIVITY TWO: WHAT IS HIDING IN YOUR SODA? (35 MINUTES)

Split the teens into groups of two or three, giving each group one of the empty glasses. Have each group measure the amount of sugar they think is in dark soda by scooping sugar into an empty glass using the teaspoon measure and bag of sugar. Keep the 20-ounce dark soda bottle at the front of the room for comparison. Record the estimated amounts the groups have agreed upon.

Repeat this process for the clear soda.

When the teens are done adding sugar into the empty bottles and have agreed on the amount of sugar they believe is in dark soda and clear soda, pull out the premeasured glasses to represent the actual amount of sugar in the sodas. One glass should have 15.5 teaspoons sugar for dark soda. The other should have 18.5 teaspoons for clear soda. Pass the premeasured glasses around so teens can compare them with the glasses they filled.

Inform teens that the amount of sugar in a 20-ounce soda bottle (an average of 16 teaspoons) is already more than 3 times the recommended amount that teens and children should consume each day. Explain the difference between added sugar and natural sugar.

Suggested phrasing: "Added sugar, like what is in soda, can be a problem. Natural sugar, like what is in a fresh apple, can be essential and good in recommended amounts. Added sugar rushes through your body all at once, which shocks your system. That's when you get a sugar rush, and then when it leaves your body, you crash."

Debrief

Engage in a conversation with teens, asking the following questions:

- What is it like to see how much sugar comes in soda drinks?
- Did it surprise you that the soda contained this much sugar?
- What would happen if you had one 20-ounce soda each day?
- What else about soda is unhealthy?

- What are some healthier drinks you could have instead of soda?
 - » Are these options easy to find around here?
 - » Are these options as affordable, or even cheaper, than soda?

ACTIVITY THREE: SUGAR IN OUR BODY (35 MINUTES)

Do a brain drain of what the teens know about natural sugar and added sugar and how it impacts our bodies.

Then, split the teens into groups of two or three (try to switch up the groups from the previous exercise)

Pour a few drops of red food dye in a 20-ounce clear bottle full of 100 percent fruit juice. Add a few plastic beads. Explain that the beads represent red blood cells, which carry oxygen to our brain and we need to live. Turn the bottle upside down and right side up a few times, ask the teens to notice how quickly the beads can move from one end of the bottle to the other. Pass the bottle around so that the teens can try it themselves. Explain that this is how quickly oxygen can reach different parts of our body, helping us to think, breathe, and move. Shaking the bottle is what our heart does to pump the blood to different parts of our body. This is what our veins look like with the right amount of natural sugar. *You may have to explain what a vein is depending on the level of science knowledge in the room.*

Now, take another identical 20-ounce bottle, fill it with a few drops of red food dye and the same number of beads. Only fill it up halfway with juice this time. Explain that we are going to add corn syrup to show what happens when we eat or drink things with added sugar. Pass around the bottle and have each youth pour in about five tablespoons of corn syrup. (You want the bottle to be half full of corn syrup by the end of the exercise so you may have to adjust how much youth pour in depending on the size of the bottle). Pause after each addition to explain the changes. When there is just a little corn syrup, but the beads can still move, explain that this is what sugar in moderation looks like. This is what happens when we eat natural sugar and some sweet treats. Our body works a little bit harder, but the blood cells can still move easily. We're still healthy. Oxygen can still get to our brain.

After there is a lot of corn syrup (by the time it is half full of juice and half full of corn syrup), show how hard it is to have the beads move. Note how hard our heart has to pump now to move the blood through our body. This is what happens when we drink or eat too much added sugar.

Now have the youth compare how fast the beads move through the bottle that is half corn syrup compared to the bottle that is all juice. The beads move slower through the corn syrup, just

like our red blood cells move slower when there is too much added sugar in our body. This makes it harder for oxygen to get to our brain and makes our hearts tired. When our bodies have to work harder, this can lead to diseases like diabetes and heart disease.

Natural sugar works differently than added sugar inside of our bodies. For example, when we eat an apple, which has natural sugar, the sugar is slowly released in our body, and the fiber in the apple helps to push the sugar through our blood and out. So when we eat a candy bar, it's like we're dumping corn syrup in our body all at once. But when we eat an apple, because an apple has so many other good things in it, like fiber, which a chocolate bar doesn't have, our body responds differently. With an apple, it's like we're releasing one drop of corn syrup at a time and constantly cleaning out the bottle and adding fresh water. That won't stop the beads the same way as a lot of candy bars.

Debrief

Engage in a conversation (5–10 minutes) asking the following questions:

- How does seeing this difference make you feel?
- What are some examples of foods with added sugar?
- What are some examples of foods with natural sugar?
- Do you have any questions about the way that sugar works in our bodies?

Be prepared to explain the addictive power of sugar; the differences between added refined sugar and sugar substitutes, like stevia; and how natural sugar works to give our bodies energy. Depending on the scientific background of the students, feel free to explain as little or as much of the science behind this experiment as you feel comfortable.

ACTIVITY FOUR: WHAT IS PROCESSED FOOD? (30 MINUTES)

Print pictures of processed food and fresh food in various stages of decomposition. Post each photo around the room, and behind the photo post the amount of time the food in the picture has been decomposing. Have the teens walk around the room, guess the amount of time the food has been decomposing, and then lift up the picture to check their answer. The teens should be surprised at how decomposed a strawberry is after a few weeks compared with how fresh a hamburger from McDonald's or a Twinkie looks after several years.

Ask the following questions:

- What happens if we leave an apple on our counter for a month with no refrigeration?
- What happens if we leave an apple juice box on the counter for a month?

The reason an unopened juice box won't rot is that it has chemicals and preservatives that were added making it a processed food. These chemicals and preservatives may be harmful to our body if we eat too many of them. But, like most things, in moderation processed foods are okay.

Now we're going to talk about how to tell if a food is processed. Ask the teens to think about their favorite homemade family recipe. Have them write down all the ingredients and read them out loud. (Bring in some recipes for examples.)

Now, have them name some of their favorite junk food they could buy in a store ready to eat. (Have some empty unhealthy junk food snacks ready.) Ask the teens to read all of the ingredients. (It should be pretty difficult.)

Summarize by reiterating that, if you can't read all of the ingredients easily, it's probably processed. Processed foods are food that comes in boxes, cans, or bags ready to eat. This food usually has to have chemicals added or go through other chemical processes, so it can be stored in bags for long periods of time without losing its taste or rotting. Give the following tips:

- Tip #1: Buy foods for which you can pronounce all the ingredients.
- Tip # 2: If you have freezer space, buy frozen vegetables without added sauces or butter. They are better for you than processed vegetables with additives and more similar to fresh vegetables in nutrition, may cost less, and, without sauces or butter, should not have many added ingredients.
- Tip #3: If you make all of your own junk food, it will be healthier. For example, homemade ice cream and homemade chips are better than store bought.
- Tip # 4: When possible, choose the less processed option.

Debrief

Share the following, either in pairs or as a large group discussion.

- What are your thoughts on processed and fresh foods?
- Did you learn anything today that surprised you?
- What are some healthy alternatives to the snacks we may usually eat or see in stores?
- Where around here can we get healthier foods?
- What can we do to get healthier foods in stores?
- How can we motivate ourselves and our communities to eat healthier?

CLOSE OUT (5 MINUTES)

Review the day

Ask who wants to lead check-in and pluses and deltas next time.

Pluses and deltas (have a teen lead it this time).

Solidarity clap

Session 2b

Food and Our Body Part Two

Objectives: During this session, teens will understand how to read food labels and how to think critically about what is in their food. This session represents an extension of Session 2a. In Session 2a, the teens learned how sugar impacts the body. Now, the teens will learn how fat impacts the body. At the end of the session, participants will be able to

- identify three key terms on a nutrition facts label and use the label to make informed decisions;
- compare nutrition facts labels; and
- investigate and analyze the role of advertising in influencing our food choices.

Materials: Hamburger buns, Crisco, teaspoons, toilet paper tubes, play dough or clay, plastic beads, empty bowls, packaged snacks with nutrition labels (e.g., popcorn, seltzer, fruit juice, and pretzels can be good options), paper, pencils, handouts (“10 percent rule” and “Would you buy that snack?”), video and appropriate A/V capabilities

Session terms: nutrition facts label, serving size, calories, percent daily value, nutrients

WELCOME AND CHECK-IN (5 MINUTES)

Check-in Circle

Review Agenda

Icebreaker

ACTIVITY ONE: BLUBBER BURGER (30 MINUTES)

Before this exercise, do a brain drain of what the teens know about good fats and bad fats.

Present the teens with the following fast food menu options:

- Option one: Burger, fries, and an Oreo milkshake
- Option two: Chicken Nuggets (with Honey Mustard and Ranch), onion rings, and a blended mocha
- Option three: Burrito, nachos, cinnamon bun, water

Ask each teen to pick which of the meals they'd like. 4 grams of fat = 1 tsp Crisco

- Burger -Calculated based on a Burger King Whopper
- Fries- Calculated based on a Burger King medium fries
- Onion Rings -Calculated based on a Burger King medium onion rings
- Chicken Nuggets-Calculated based on McDonalds 10 piece McNuggets

- Milkshake -Calculated based on a McDonalds Oreo McFlurry
- Blended Mocha -Calculated based on the McDonalds Oreo Frappe
- Burrito – Calculated based on Taco Bell’s Cheesy Sausage Burrito
- Nachos – Calculated from Taco Bell’s Bell Grande
- Cinnamon bun – Calculated from Taco Bell’s Cinnabon Delight

Hand each teen a bun and tell them they will measure out how much fat is in their meals. For option one, they will measure 26 teaspoons of Crisco onto their buns. For option two, measure 22 teaspoons. For option three, measure 19 teaspoons.

Debrief

Engage in a conversation asking the following questions:

- Would you eat this Crisco sandwich?
- What is it like to see how much fat is in fast food?
- Did it surprise you that the meal contained this much fat?
- What would happen if you ate this meal every day?
- What else about fast food is unhealthy?
- What are some healthier meals you could have with less fat?
 - » Are these options easy to find around here?
 - » Are these options as affordable, or even cheaper, than fast food?

ACTIVITY TWO: FAT IN OUR BODY (25 MINUTES)

So, why is too much fat bad for our health?

Split the teens into groups of two or three.

Explain they are now going to learn how fat interacts with our bodies like we learned how sugar interacts with our bodies.

First, have each group take a toilet paper tube and hold it over the empty bowl. Now, ask another team member to pour a handful of beads into the tube. Again, the beads are our red blood cells, but now the tube is our artery, instead of the bottle being a vein.

Now, have each member take turns adding bits of clay or play dough to the inside of the tube. After each piece of clay is added, pour the beads again. The clay represents fat. When we eat too much fat, it sticks to the sides of our veins and arteries. Stop again after a few times adding small bits of clay, the beads still have an easy time making it to the bowl. This is what happens when we eat fat in moderation. Now notice how when too much fat sticks to our arteries it becomes difficult for the beads to pass through as quickly. (The inside of the tubes should start taking on an hourglass appearance.) Now there is less room in our arteries and it takes longer for the red blood cells to get through, like when they close a lane on a road and there’s a traffic jam.

When our blood cells take longer to get through our bodies, our heart has to work much harder to pump blood, trying to make the blood move faster. When our bodies have to work harder, this can lead to health problems like diabetes, stroke, and heart disease.

Debrief

Engage in a conversation (5–10 minutes) asking the following questions:

- How does this make you feel?
- What are some examples of foods with a lot of fat?
- What are some examples of foods with a healthy amount of fat?
- Do you have any questions about the way that fat works in our bodies?

Be prepared to explain as little or as much of the science behind this experiment as you feel comfortable.

ACTIVITY THREE: PRACTICING THE 10 PERCENT RULE (55 MINUTES)

Suggested phrasing: “Though we all want to eat healthier, it’s often difficult to figure out which foods are healthy and which aren’t. We’ve learned that too much fat and sugar are bad for us, but how do you tell how much sugar or fat a snack has? We’re going to learn how to read nutrition labels, which is a good start to deciding if something is healthy. Remember, sometimes a big problem is that even when we know which foods are healthier, we don’t have access to them. If someone regularly eats unhealthy food, there may be other factors going on that you don’t know about. Don’t judge anyone based on what they eat.”

Ask the group the following questions:

- Do you consider health when looking for a snack or meal? Why or why not?
- If you walk into a store and want a healthy snack or meal, how do you determine whether that food is good for you or not?
- Do you ever look at the nutrition facts label on packaged food?
- When considering what food to eat, what information would you or do you look for on a nutrition facts label?

Draw a T-chart on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or piece of paper at the front of the room; label one column “eat more” and the other “eat less.” Have the kids come up and write things that we should eat less of (e.g., fat, sugar, sodium) and things that we should eat more of (e.g., vitamins, protein, fiber, potassium). Leave this chart up for the rest of the session.

Have youth watch some of these videos to understand food labels and nutrients:

- Bill Nye the Science Guy, Season 4, Episode 2, “Nutrition,” <http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x3j4ufd>
- Doug Reid, “Label Reading 101,” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WV_tRB0zvUI
- US Food and Drug Administration, “The Food Label and You: Game Show Review (Are You Smarter Than a Food Label?),” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjFVOZ_ALuM
- “Dysgraphia Special Needs Factsheet,” Children’s Mercy, Kansas City, <https://kidshealth.org/ChildrensMercy/en/parents/nutrition-label-video.html?WT.ac=p-ra>

Tell participants they are going to learn about the 10 percent rule—an easy way to use the information on food labels.

THE 10 PERCENT RULE

This rule is a quick and easy way of reading a nutrition facts label. A food is usually a good choice if

- it contains 10 percent or more of your daily value of “good” nutrients (e.g., fiber, calcium, vitamin D, iron),
- it contains 10 percent or less of your daily value of “not so good” nutrients (e.g., sugar, saturated fat, sodium)

Everyone’s body is different, so the 10 percent rule might not work for everyone. It is a good general guideline for snacks. The idea is that there should be more good than bad in everything we eat.

Invite teens to take out the snacks they brought. Encourage teens to share snacks with others who did not bring items. Hand out any extra snacks you may have brought to tables with teens without snacks.

Tell teens to consult the labels on their snacks to answer the questions below. Go around the room and make sure that the teens are locating the right columns, and ask teens to raise their hand to answer each question.

1. Locate the “**servings size**” and “**servings per container**” lines.
 - a. What is a serving size?
 - b. Is it important to eat the right serving size? Why?
 - c. How many servings are in your product? What does this mean?
2. Locate the “**% daily value**” column. Go around the room to check that they all found it.

- a. What does this mean?
3. Locate the “**sugar**” row.
 - a. Is sugar something we want more of or less of? (Refer back to last week’s discussion of added sugar if necessary.)
 - b. What is the total sugar per serving? Is this less or more than 10 percent of your daily value?
 - c. What is the added sugar per serving?
 - d. Is an added sugar one of the first three ingredients? (Recap on last week’s discussion of added sugar if necessary.) Is this less or more than 10 percent of your daily value?
4. Locate the “**fat**” row.
 - a. Is fat something we want more of or less of?
 - b. What is the total fat per serving? Is this less or more than 10 percent of your daily value?
5. Locate the “**calories**” row.
 - a. Are calories something we want more of or less of?
 - b. How many calories are in one serving of the food?
 - c. Is this less or more than 10 percent of your daily value?

Draw a T-chart on the board in the front of the room with one section labeled “something we want more of” and one section labeled “something we want less of.” Split youth into groups depending on the number of snacks and number of participants. For each group/youth ask them to come up to the board and write a nutrient other than those already discussed in one of the columns in the chart. Nutrients we should try and keep below 10 percent put in the minus column and nutrients we should try to keep above 10 percent put in the plus column.

Discuss the columns as a group and make any adjustments that are needed if nutrients were put in the wrong column.

Have each group discuss the following questions and then come up to share their answers with the whole room.

- How much is in one serving of their snack?
- Is that less or more than 10 percent of their daily value of fat, sugar, and one of the other nutrients on the board?
- Is this a healthy snack choice?
- Do you have any other tips for eating healthier options?

Debrief

For 5–10 minutes, share responses to the following questions in pairs or as a large group discussion.

- Did you learn anything today that surprised you?

- Why do you think there is no daily percentage value for total sugar?
- What is helpful about the nutrition facts label?
- What is frustrating about the nutrition facts label?

CLOSE OUT (5 MINUTES)

Review the day

Ask for two teen volunteers to lead an icebreaker at the start of the next meeting. As we transition to the action project, the teens will plan more of the activities. Provide a few examples of icebreaker games, if needed.

Ask teens to wear clothing for the next session that they are comfortable jumping around in (for the lily pad activity).

Identify who wants to lead check-ins and who wants to lead pluses and deltas.

Pluses and deltas

Solidarity clap

Session 3

What Is Food Insecurity?

Objectives: During this session, teens will learn how food insecurity is defined, talk about hunger, and brainstorm how to create a more food-secure community. At the end of this session, the participants will be able to

- define food insecurity, in the context of their lives, the lives of their peers and community, and the greater society;
- understand some of the main facts and myths surrounding food insecurity;
- develop concrete tools on how to notice and combat food insecurity in their community; and
- identify factors that lead to food insecurity and brainstorm how to break down these barriers.

Materials: Paper or cardboard, a timer of some kind, items to limit sensory perception, like a blindfold, small paper cards, a writing utensil, masking tape

Session terms: food insecurity, community food security, poverty, low-income

WELCOME AND CHECK-IN (5 MINUTES)

Check-in Circle

Review Agenda

Icebreaker

ACTIVITY ONE: LILY PADS (25 MINUTES)

We are doing this activity to reinforce working and learning as a team and creating a space for collaboration and bonding.

The goal of the activity is for all team members to cross a marked area designated as the river using only the lily pads. Lily pads can be pieces of cardboard or paper or something of the sort. A successful team will get everyone across the river in as short a time as possible.

When planning for this session ahead of time, let teens know that an activity will be physical so they can prepare to wear clothes that allow them to participate comfortably. If notifying teens ahead of time isn't possible, shorten the jumps or provide alternate modes of passage, if there are youth whose movement is restricted by their clothing.

The rules are as follows:

1. All participants are part of the same team and must take turns crossing from one side of the river to the other.
2. Once participants leave the riverbank, they are allowed to step onto the lily pads. Participants must remain in contact with lily pads at all times. Anyone who touches the river in any way will have to “pay for consequences” – either the whole team or the participant (facilitator’s choice, based on time) will need to return to the riverbank.
3. Once a team member steps on a lily pad, someone must always be touching it or else it floats away. (In other words, participants have to coordinate to have someone step onto the lily pad before stepping off.)
4. No running or diving. Use short leaps and strategic steps to get from pad to pad.
5. The facilitator will time the group.

Optional modification 1: Do a second passing and alter sensory perception, such as a blindfold or telling them they can’t talk.

Optional modification 2: Do a second passing and give each participant a card with a character trait on it. Tell them to review it and not share their characteristic with the other teens. Ask teens to role play their characteristic as they cross the river. Characteristic ideas include shy, bossy, mistrustful, mute, encouraging, or confused.

Debrief

Engage in a conversation (5–10 minutes) asking the following questions:

- What components were necessary for success? (communication, careful planning, team work)
- What components made the work difficult?
- What components made the work easy?
- How could the group have completed the task more efficiently?
- What lessons can you take away from this? Are there any lessons we can relate to food justice?

ACTIVITY TWO: WHAT DOES HUNGER LOOK LIKE? (45 MINUTES)

Setup

Using masking tape, lay out a scale on the floor (or wall), with the extremes labeled as "strongly agree" and "strongly disagree" and the middle indicating "I don't know."

Before beginning, reiterate that this is safe a space where no one will be ridiculed for their opinions. The purpose of this activity is to understand the current views everyone holds and to use those as a starting point. This isn't a competition or an opportunity to prove people wrong.

Game

Instruct participants to listen to each statement and then silently walk to the point on the scale that represents their opinion.

Suggested Statements

(If there are statements that will not speak to the teens, don't use them. If there are statements you'd like to add, please do.)

- If people don't have enough money for food, it is probably because they are wasting their money on other things.
- The world produces enough food to go around.
- Hunger and poverty are the result of laziness and lack of ambition.
- There is no hunger in my community.
- In my financial position, I will never go hungry.
- If I could, I would give up some of my own food or wealth to ensure that others did not go hungry.
- It is the responsibility of individuals, faith communities, and charities to help those who are hungry.
- It is the responsibility of the government to help those who are hungry.
- The government should do more to help those who are poor or hungry.
- There will always be hunger and poverty.
- People are hungry and poor because the rich have more than their fair share.

During the activity, write the statements on a board that yield the greatest division or that include many people congregating in one spot.

Debrief

Engage in a conversation (5–10 minutes) asking the following questions:

- How did you feel about expressing your feelings around hunger and poverty in front of other people?
- Were you ever hesitant to share your opinion?
- When you were making your decision, where did that information come from?
- Were you surprised at your peers' reactions to any questions?
- Were you surprised at any questions that there was a split opinion? Why? Why not?
- Were you surprised at any questions that everyone agreed to? Why? Why not?

ACTIVITY THREE: WHAT IS FOOD INSECURITY? (40 MINUTES)

Team Huddle

Invite teens to count off to three to form teams and to go with their teams to different locations in the room. Choose from an option below based on the youth's comfort level with reading maps,

graphs, and statistics. Option two is more powerful and should be used if youth understand basic graphing skills.

Option 1

- Guide teens to read the Hunger and Poverty fact sheet ([found on Feeding America's website](#)) aloud with their team.
- Have teens note with a star or circle the facts they have strong reactions to (e.g., things they think are interesting, false, scary).
- Ask each team to pick a representative to share the facts they stared.
 - » Write the facts on a board or poster.
 - » Each group should get two minutes to present.
- When each group is done presenting, repeat the highlights that are on the board.

Option 2

- Have a few blank pie charts and bar graphs that mirror the Hunger and Poverty Fact Sheet. Have youth color in what they think the answers are. (For example, have a circle that says percentage of households that are food insecure in the United States, and have them color in the percentage that they guess). Then give handouts with the graphs filled in and have them compare.
- Ask each team to talk about what was surprising.

What Is Food Insecurity?

Engage teens in a 5–10 minute discussion about what they think food insecurity is and how to help fix the problem.

What is food insecurity? As a base definition, USDA defines food insecurity as lacking consistent access to enough quantity and variety of food for an active, healthy life. Have two sections of a white board/blackboard/large piece of paper. On one half, have youth write/draw what food insecurity is in their community. On the other half, have the youth write/draw what food security is in their community.

- Is food security different in our community than in New York City? Is food security different in New York City than in India? Mexico? China? Antarctica? Why?
- Where do we find food insecurity?
- Is food insecurity something happening in this community?
- Does food insecurity look different for grown-ups, teenagers, and kids? How would our pictures change?
- What are some ways we can address food insecurity among teenagers in this community?
 - » Spend the most amount of time on this question.
 - » We've talked a few times now about ways to address food insecurity among teenagers in this community. As we move toward our final project, it might be a good idea if you haven't already to start keeping track of these ideas on a wall in the room.

CLOSE OUT (5 MINUTES)

Review the day

Identify who wants to take lead in the following activities next time: icebreaker; check-in; pluses and deltas; leading the solidarity clap).

Pluses and deltas

Solidarity clap

Session 4

Our Food System

Objectives: During this session, teens will further develop their preliminary knowledge of the institutions and actors in the broader food system and how food travels from production through distribution to consumption. At the end of this session, the participants will be able to

- identify the main stakeholders in the food system;
- understand the flow of food, money, and resources throughout the system; and
- begin to think about the system's impact on food access and choice.

Materials: Video and appropriate A/V capabilities, printouts of the food production chain, and pens and markers to take notes

Session terms: institution, farm or crop yields, commoditization, food system, food desert, community-supported agriculture (CSA)

WELCOME AND CHECK-IN (5 MINUTES)

Check-in Circle

Review Agenda

Icebreaker

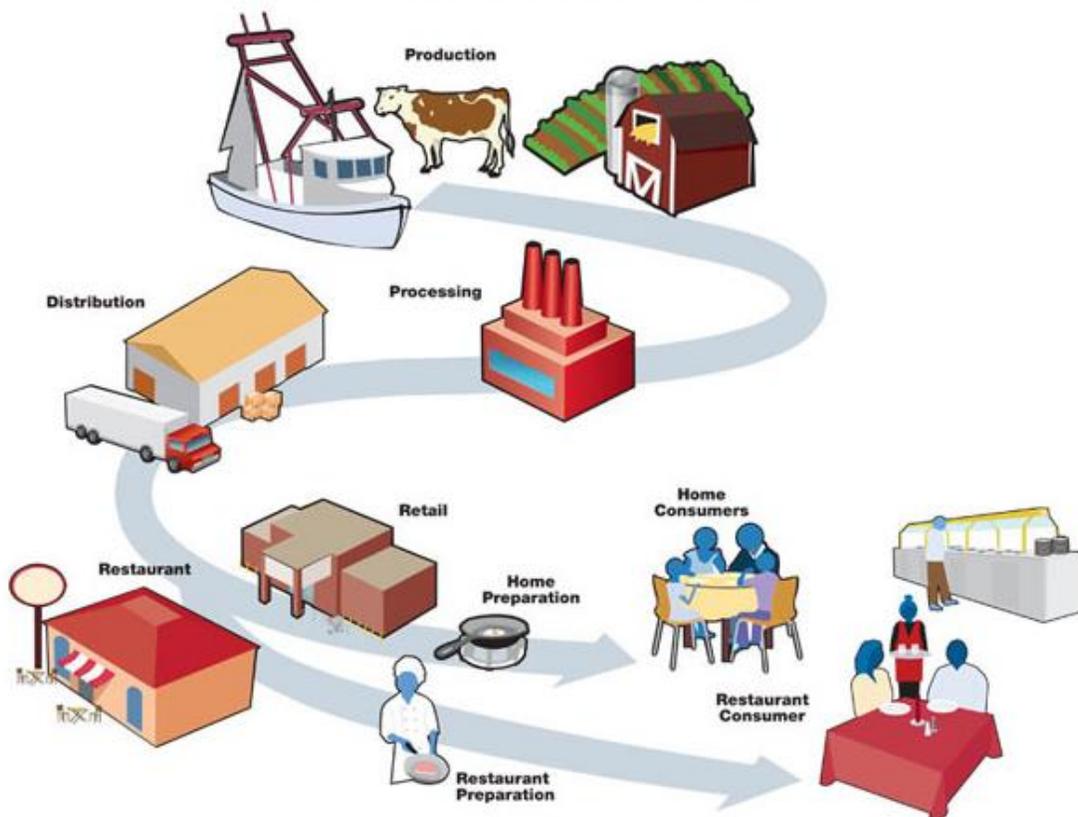
ACTIVITY ONE: BETWEEN THE LINES (20 MINUTES)

Hand out the “food production chain” picture (provided below) and ask teens what they know. Then walk the teens through the food production chain presented. Have groups share their thoughts on the following questions:

- What is missing from this production chain?
- What are words that we associate with each section of the chain? For example, maybe production = farm work; restaurant = expensive; home preparation = too much time; processing = too confusing and not sure what happens.
- What resources are needed at each section of the chain? For example, soil and seeds for production; gas for distribution.
- Given the knowledge we have right now, and we'll revisit this later, what should we change about the food production chain to make it work better for us and our community?
- What questions do we have about different parts of the production chain?

Have the groups then come back together and share as a room.

The Food Production Chain



Source: Centers for Disease Control, <http://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/outbreaks/investigating-outbreaks/production-chain.html>.

ACTIVITY TWO: VIDEO CLIPS AND TEENS IN OTHER COMMUNITIES (55 MINUTES)

How are our food choices impacted by the current food system?

Explain that the teens are going to watch some video clips and then be asked to identify more gaps, associations, and questions in our picture.

Some of the following clips may include sensitive issues for some students, feel free to only show the videos you feel will speak to your students or choose other videos or forms of artistic expression focused on food production chains. These are only some suggestions. We recommend choosing three or four clips or forms of expression.

Video clips explaining food systems

Summaries of clips could be provided if a computer is not present.

- **Food Inc. trailer:** https://youtu.be/eHJiNC_7wuw
 - » How is food grown?
- **The Meatrix** <http://www.thematrix.com/>

- » How is meat produced?
- **How Does It Grow?** <http://www.pbs.org/food/how-does-it-grow/apples/> (You could also watch videos for other vegetables, fruits and fungi.)
 - » How do apples grow?
- **Food Chains trailer** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bnA0zC4szVs>
 - » Who grows our food?
- **What's wrong with our food system TEDx Talk** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F7ld9caYw-Y>
 - » What is the slow food movement?
- **Teens for Food Justice** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6J4SsOpqcuE>
 - » What are some teens in New York City learning about how they purchase food and what are the consequences?
- **Appetite for Change** (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PqgU3co4vcl>)
 - » What stood out to you about this video?

After showing each video, ask the teens to pair up with someone new, look at the “food production chain” picture and talk about the following questions:

- What was surprising about the clips?
- How did it feel to see teens talking about food insecurity?
- What questions do we still have about the food production chain?

After breaking out into pairs, come back together to share with the group, adding notes to the picture.

Break (5 minutes)

ACTIVITY THREE: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES (35 MINUTES)

Divide group into two teams: Causes and Consequences

- Present different food production shifts that could change the food production chain model.
- After each shift is read, each group will sit around a table to develop their response and then share with the room.
 - » The *causes group* objective is to present why a certain scenario happens. What could have caused the shift?
 - » The *consequences group* objective is to present how the scenario impacts the food production chain and at what part of the picture.
- Have each group elect one writer and one reader to record the group’s discussion and present to the overall class after deliberations.

Shifts

1. **Add pesticides.** Pesticides are chemicals that are used to increase farm productivity. Pesticides are tested and approved for use by the Environmental Protection Agency. They set maximum levels that can be used before the pesticide makes the food unsafe to eat. Pesticides have been linked to a number of health problems for humans, animals, and beneficial insects. There are some groups of people, such as farmworkers, that are at high risk for health issues because of too much exposure to chemicals.
2. **Increased food deserts.** Food deserts are geographic areas where access to affordable, healthy food options is limited or nonexistent because there are not enough grocery stores nearby or because the healthy food options are unaffordable. (To locate food deserts, go to [USDA food atlas](#).)
3. **Grow urban farms.** Across the nation, urban agriculture movements are growing. Alternative food movements such as community gardens, mobile food markets, and community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs are gaining popularity. These alternative food movements can allow families in cities to eat more local food. Some types of CSAs and alternative food movements can sometimes be difficult for farmers, since they have to pay for workers to travel and transport their food to customers without being able to increase the prices of their goods.

Debrief

To close out, ask the teens if they know about any other shifts in their local food system, such as changes in their school lunch or the opening of a new grocery store or closing of a smaller grocery store. Why do these shifts happen, and what do they mean for our food production chain?

The following are some examples:

- “Food Issues,” Sustainable Table, Grace Communications Foundation, <http://www.sustainabletable.org/940/food-issues>.
- “Food Deserts,” Food Empowerment Project, <http://www.foodispower.org/food-deserts/>.
- Sheila Golden, *Urban Agriculture Impacts: Social, Health, and Economics: A Literature Review* (Berkeley: University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources, 2013), <http://asi.ucdavis.edu/programs/sarep/publications/food-and-society/ualitreview-2013.pdf>.
- “Food Access Research Atlas,” US Department of Agriculture, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/go-to-the-atlas.aspx>.

CLOSE OUT (5 MINUTES)

Review the day

Identify who wants to take on the following roles next time (icebreaker, check-in, pluses and deltas, leading the solidarity clap)?

Pluses and deltas

Solidarity clap

Session 5

Food Choice

Objectives: During this session, teens will further develop their knowledge of factors determining the health, affordability, accessibility, and availability of certain foods. At the end of this session, the participants will be able to

- understand how the food system influences food choice;
- identify production and distribution factors affecting food access; and
- begin to think about how the affordability, availability, and accessibility of quality foods varies across communities.

Materials: Seltzer, fresh or frozen fruit or fruit juice, popcorn kernels and spice mixtures, A/V capabilities encouraged, print out of MyPlate, paper and pens and a white board

Session terms: food choice, food desert

WELCOME AND CHECK-IN (5 MINUTES)

Check-in Circle

Review Agenda

Icebreaker

ACTIVITY ONE: HEALTHIER CHOICES (15 MINUTES)

Bring in seltzer and fresh or frozen fruit or fruit juice (try to find some with natural sugars only). Have the kids mix their own sodas as a healthy alternative to sugar beverages. Also, pop some popcorn kernels and have different spice mixtures the kids can put on as an alternative to bagged popcorn.

ACTIVITY TWO: FOOD DESERTS (35 MINUTES)

Ask who has heard of a food desert. Come up with a definition of a food desert. Most definitions include the following measures, as identified by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) (<https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/documentation/>):

- Accessibility to sources of healthy food, as measured by distance to a store or by the number of stores in an area.
- Individual-level resources that may affect accessibility, such as family income or vehicle availability.

- Neighborhood-level indicators of resources, such as the average income of the neighborhood and the availability of public transportation.

Have the teens split into groups and give each one the same map of their community or city. Have them draw a circle around the parts they think are in food deserts.

Print out the USDA's "Food Access Research Atlas" (<http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/go-to-the-atlas.aspx>) map of food deserts for your city or community.

First, take a few minutes to discuss what the United States Department of Agriculture is and why it is important in setting the rules, laws, and guidelines for food programs (Food and Nutrition Service), food safety (Food and Drug Administration) and regulating agriculture systems and processes.

The pink area of this map represents those with low access to food. This means that at least 33 percent of people in that area live more than one mile from a supermarket in urban areas and 10 miles from a supermarket in rural areas. Make sure the definition of a supermarket/large grocery store is clear and that a corner store does not qualify. You may also need to explain what a census tract is; it is roughly the size of a neighborhood, usually includes a few thousand people, and is an area that government agencies define for counting and studying populations.

The purple area of this map represents those with low income. This means that at least 20 percent of people in that census tract live below the poverty level.

The green area of this map represents those areas that are low access and low-income. This is how the USDA defines food deserts.

Divide the teens into three separate groups and ask for a volunteer to record the group's conversation on a large piece of paper. If using cofacilitators, this is a good opportunity to have a cofacilitator lead each small group discussion. Pose the following questions:

- Were there any differences between your map and the USDA map? Why do you think that is?
- Should a low-access, high-income neighborhood be considered a food desert?
- Should a high-access, low-income neighborhood where food is expensive and not fresh be considered a food desert?
- What happens to a community in a food desert?

After the three groups discuss and write a few items down on their paper, bring the groups back to a larger discussion and share the conversations. Ask the large group if they think the definition

discussed earlier from the USDA captures the concept of a food desert? Is anything missing from this definition? If so, what?

Suggestions are as follows:

- Type of food offered
- Affordability
- Transportation

A lot of people define food deserts differently. The USDA definition is not always the best way to tell if an area has the food resources that community needs. The USDA designation allows for variance in the types of areas considered to be a food desert—even some high-income areas could be included in this definition. Because of this, it is important to remember that there are food insecure areas that are not considered food deserts or that there are food secure areas that are considered food deserts. It is important to remember the differences between food insecurity, food security, and food deserts.

Split the room into two groups and watch the following clip: “Food Fight: Earth Amplified feat. Stic.Man of Dead Prez,” <https://youtu.be/yraRZZgi7Ek>. The first group should be tasked with identifying images and arguments that stood out to them as effectively conveying the message. The other group should be tasked with identifying images and arguments that did not come across as effectively conveying the message. Give the groups time to huddle up and come up with talking points. Give each side two to three minutes to present their case and then the other side two-three minutes for a rebuttal.

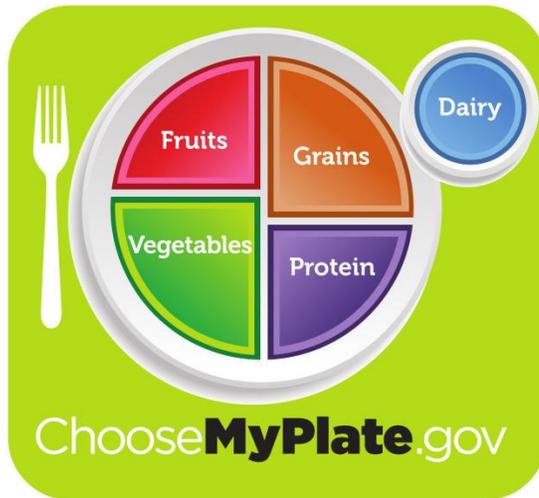
Since this is a long discussion, feel free to give the teens breaks as needed.

ACTIVITY THREE: IDEAL FOOD COMMUNITY (25 MINUTES)

Ask: What is the opposite of a food desert? Brainstorm what that looks like.

Probe: If we had a million dollars and a car, what would we eat every day?

On a large piece of paper in the front of the room, draw a big circle to represent ‘my plate’. On the side, write the different food categories: fruit, vegetable, protein, grain, dairy. Ask the students to help you fill them in, creating a pie chart based on how they consume their typical plate of food without telling them the real USDA recommendations for portions. After the students finish filling out the blank ‘my plate’ activity, show them the following ‘my plate’ image and discuss any differences between this plate and theirs.



Source: "Choose My Play," USDA, last modified April 19, 2017, <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/teens>.

The following are suggested prompts:

- What looks different from the food we eat and the USDA plate?
- Do you think youth in the community eat this way? Why or why not?

Write key words from this discussion on a board at the front of the room.

ACTIVITY FOUR: FOOD CHOICE (35 MINUTES)

If we know how to eat healthy, why do we sometimes choose apple pie over an apple? We don't only make our decisions based on health, what are other factors that play into food choice?

The following are suggested prompts:

- What are reasons you see your friends choose certain foods?
- How about your family?
- Why do you choose certain foods? Who else is involved in your decision?
- Are there any other reasons you see people in your community choose certain foods?

Write student responses on the board. Try to put similar answers near each other. Fill in some gaps if needed. At a minimum, the following categories should develop:

- Taste
- Health
- Convenience
- Price
- Availability
- Social and cultural traditions
- Advertising and marketing

- Food or farm policy

Talk through each category until the teens feel comfortable using those terms. See if the teens can give examples of ways each category changes food choice. For example, if the price is too high, you don't have the choice to buy it.

Suggested phrasing: "Food choice is actually a two-stage process. First, there is the food that's available to you, within your budget that you can reasonably get to. We're going to call that your choice set. (Show an image of a big grocery store, a bodega, and a farmers market). Most times, what is in your choice set is decided at the national, regional, or sometimes community level. Then, there's the food that you choose to eat within the options available to you. We're going to call that your daily choices (show an image of a fridge or vending machine). We make these daily choices at an individual or family level. It's important when looking at food insecurity to target interventions that will work at both stages."

- So, for example, if you had an intervention that taught teens how to make yummy, healthy meals, that wouldn't do any good if teens couldn't readily buy the ingredients needed to cook those meals, in their communities, within their budget. Here you have an intervention targeting daily choices, without the choice set to support those decisions.
- On the flip side, if you started a healthy corner store that sold zucchini from local farms, at an affordable price, it's possible that everyone would keep buying potato chips instead because they didn't know how to cook zucchini, weren't sure what it was, or didn't know how it would taste. Here you have an intervention that's expanding choice set, without working to change daily choice habits.

Successful interventions work to expand choice sets and daily choices.

Set up

Set up eight stations around the room (more, if more categories developed), and label each one with the categories brainstormed above. Instruct the students to move to these stations as a reflection of their opinions in response to the following questions. Ask for volunteers to explain their positions after each question.

- Which of these categories do you think has the greatest influence on our daily food choices?
- If you wanted to change people's daily food choices, what would be some good interventions? Which categories do these fall into (can be more than one).
 - » Do the interventions focus on the stations you're standing at? Why? Why not? Is it more effective to target one category or more than one category? Why? Why not?

- Which of these categories do you think has the greatest influence on our food choice sets?
- If you wanted to change people's food choice sets, what would be some good interventions? Which categories do these fall into (can be more than one).
 - » Do the interventions focus on the stations you're standing at? Why? Why not?
 - » Is it more effective to target one category? Or more than one? Are these interventions focused on different categories than interventions that target daily food choice? Why? Why not?

Debrief

Were there any interventions that you brainstormed that might work particularly well at targeting daily food choice and food choice sets in our community? Are there any interventions that we should keep in mind when we develop our own project campaigns at the end of this curriculum?

We've talked a few times now about ways to address food insecurity among teenagers in this community. As we move toward our final project, it would be good to continue to keep track of these ideas on a wall in the room. Encourage students to write down their ideas privately and leave them in a "parking lot" in the corner of the room.

CLOSE OUT (5 MINUTES)

Review the day

Identify who wants to take on the following roles next time (icebreaker, check-in, pluses and deltas, leading the solidarity clap)?

Give **Action 4 Change (Homework)** to be completed for next session.

Pluses and deltas

Solidarity clap

Action for Change Homework

During Session 3, we talked about where you eat on a daily basis and the qualities these places have. To prepare for our session, pick any day of the week and take this sheet with you. Fill out the blank spaces below. Write down where you're eating your meals or snacks, what you like about this location, what you don't like about this location, why you eat here, and how you think it fits into our overall food system. There are four spaces to account for the different meals and snacks you might have during the day. Try to be as descriptive as possible.

MEAL / SNACK 1

What time are you eating this meal / snack? And, where are you eating this meal / snack?
What are you eating? And, how much did it cost? If you don't know exactly, how much do you think it cost?
What do you like about where you are eating this meal?
What don't you like about where you are eating this meal?
What, if anything, would you change about this meal, where you're eating it, or anything else?
Where do you think this food came from or who do you think made it?

MEAL / SNACK 2

What time are you eating this meal / snack? And, where are you eating this meal / snack?
What are you eating? And, how much did it cost? If you don't know exactly, how much do you think it cost?
What do you like about where you are eating this meal?

What don't you like about where you are eating this meal?
What, if anything, would you change about this meal, where you're eating it, or anything else?
Where do you think this food came from or who do you think made it?

MEAL / SNACK 3

What time are you eating this meal / snack? And, where are you eating this meal / snack?
What are you eating? And, how much did it cost? If you don't know exactly, how much do you think it cost?
What do you like about where you are eating this meal?
What don't you like about where you are eating this meal?
What, if anything, would you change about this meal, where you're eating it, or anything else?
Where do you think this food came from or who do you think made it?

MEAL / SNACK 4

What time are you eating this meal / snack? And, where are you eating this meal / snack?
What are you eating? And, how much did it cost? If you don't know exactly, how much do you think it cost?
What do you like about where you are eating this meal?

What don't you like about where you are eating this meal?
What, if anything, would you change about this meal, where you're eating it, or anything else?
Where do you think this food came from or who do you think made it?

REFLECTION

Do you have anything you'd like to share about your meals and snacks today? (Was this enough food? Did you skip any meals or snacks?)

Session 6

My Community, My Home

Objectives: During this session, teens will practice community asset mapping and delve deeper into the Teen Food Literacy Program's (TFLP's) purpose and goals. At the end of this session, the participants will be able to

- display a greater understanding of TFLP and its purpose;
- analyze community resources; and
- understand how those resources influence life styles and food choice.

Materials: Large map of the community, markers, stoplight dot stickers (red, yellow, and green), small maps as handouts

Session terms: N/A

WELCOME AND CHECK-IN (5 MINUTES)

Check-in Circle

Review Agenda

Icebreaker

ACTIVITY ONE: COMMUNITY ASSET MAPPING (70 MINUTES)

Ask all the teens to pull out their completed homework.

The highs and lows of food: Go around the room and have each teen respond to these questions.

- What was the best thing you ate this week? Where did you get it? What did you like about this meal? Was it wholesome, healthy, and affordable?
- What was the least favorite or unhealthiest food you ate this week? Where did you get it? Was it accessible or affordable?

Set up

Ask teens to sit in a circle facing the front of the room. Ask one teen to volunteer to write down responses in the right categories on a large sheet or on the board.

Categorizing

Ask the teens to share some places they visit on a regular day where they eat or buy food. Use the homework as a guide. Provide the following categories: grocery stores, corner stores, school, after

school activities that provide snacks or meals, the homes of friends and family members, food pantries, and other meal programs. For each category, have teens call out specific places in their community to record (e.g., the name of a grocery store). Teens should share these places but not spend too much time commenting on the quality of these locations as that will happen during discussion.

Record keeping: While the teens are sharing names and locations of places they visit for food resources, the teen volunteer should categorize these places on separate pieces of paper to be attached to the wall. One way is to put circles or stars on the places that continue to come up after each participant shares. If there are locations that don't fit nicely into a category, feel free to create an "other" list.

Coloring in the Categories

After everywhere teens get food is recorded, review the locations on the pieces of paper around the room.

Invite teens to use their stoplight stickers to mark their impressions of the places they go to buy or eat food.

Teens have 5 to 7 minutes for this piece.

- Red stickers are negative ("stop"): The teens go to this place but do not like it at all or they can't get to it. The teens do not go here because of negative connotations.
- Yellow stickers are okay but not good ("slow down"): The teens go here but it's not the best place, maybe they go here because it's convenient, cheap, or accessible.
- Green stickers are good places ("go"): Teens go here often, like the location. Teens hear this is a great place for food.

Debrief

Invite the teens to discuss the locations they shared and the stickers they used to mark the map or categories. The teens should leave this conversation able to think critically about the resources that provide teen-accessible food in their community. They should have a better understanding of their community and what issues there are. Use the following questions to promote the discussion. Write key words from the discussion on the board.

1. What color or colors dominate the categories?
2. Are there categories that have more green/yellow/red stickers? What makes that category a good/okay/bad place to get food?
3. Why is [color] the most dominant color?
4. What would it take to make the red or yellow spots in the categories green ones?

5. What is your ideal green sticker location? In other words, what is your ideal food-resource location?
 - a. What type of food would be served or be available for purchase?
 - b. When would it be open?
 - c. What options would it support (e.g., affordable prices, freshness, organics, healthy)?
 - d. How would it gear towards teens, if at all?
 - e. Where would it be located?

Suggested phrasing: "Ideally, we would have more green locations for teens in our community. Our work with TFLP will be to learn about food justice, develop leadership skills, and change our communities. Over this 13-week period we will learn a lot of lessons from each other, and, at the end, we'll come up with a project that will help the community. Toward the end of this curriculum, as a group you will work on a project that will in some way influence the community regarding food and food access. Start thinking now about what project you would like to take on to create more green dots."

ACTIVITY TWO: THANK YOU NOTES (40 MINUTES)

Invite teens to reflect on what they've learned in the past sessions regarding their community's needs, their needs, and TFLP's purpose. Have the teens pick a green-sticker location to which they would like to send a group thank you note for providing good food for teens.

Write down the following prompts on the board or on pieces of paper around the room.

1. Introduce TFLP: What is TFLP? Who is a part of TFLP? What is TFLP's goal and purpose?
2. Why is the green-sticker location teen friendly?
3. How is the green-sticker location helping TFLP reach its goals?
4. Additional thoughts and compliments.

Then ask the group to answer each prompt, writing them on the board or paper. After the collection of ideas is written on the board, help the teens put together a letter. Invite teens to share phrases to build the community letter. The facilitator should outline these phrases on the board so everyone can see.

Edit the letter with the teens so that it is at a level the teens would be comfortable sharing with outside audiences. Have the facilitator mail the letter to the green dot location that was chosen.

Whenever an organization does something really helpful for TFLP, adjust the letter and send it to them as well. This is a great way to get partners on board and to start thinking about who can help with the community project.

CLOSE OUT (5 MINUTES)

Review the day

Identify who wants to take on the following roles next time (icebreaker, check-in, pluses and deltas, leading the solidarity clap)?

Pluses and deltas

Solidarity clap

Session 7

Identities and Food

Objectives: During this session, teens will further develop their knowledge of the social, economic, and political forces at play creating unequal food environments within the community. At the end of this session, the participants will be able to

- identify specific social, economic, and political inequities different groups in the community experience;
- understand the intersection of racial and economic inequality with food justice; and
- conceptualize how structures of our food system may influence or change different parts of inequality.

Materials: Notecards and paper and pencils/pens or markers

Session terms: food environment, marginalize, identity

WELCOME AND CHECK-IN (5 MINUTES)

Check-in Circle

Review Agenda

Icebreaker

ACTIVITY ONE: IDENTIFIERS AND FOOD (55 MINUTES)

Step One

Have each teen quietly reflect for a few minutes. Instruct each teen to think about different values and identifiers that define who they are. After a few minutes, give each participant a number of index cards. For however many students there are in the classroom, divide by two and add one and that is how many cards they should receive. So if there are 12 kids, they should be given seven cards each. On each card, they should write one value or identifier that best describes who you are and what you are about. Examples of things to write include characteristics, values, race, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, hobbies, or gender identity. Teens may write identifiers that have no apparent relation to food choice; such choices present a challenging opportunity for the teen try to connect how that piece of their identity does or does not impact their food choices. This is okay.

Step Two

Have participants order their notecards in a stack with the values/identifiers ranked in order of how they influence food choices, with the most important on the bottom of the pile. Then, set up the room like speed dating, with two rows of chairs facing each other.

Step Three

For the next 20 minutes, rotating partners every 3 minutes, have pairs share the card on top of their stack and explain why that card is important to their identity. Then have each teen rip up the card on the top of their stack. Partners should then discuss how losing that part of their identity would change/influence/impact their food choices. Each time they switch partners, teens should rip up another index card and continue the discussion. By the end of the activity, they should be left with one card that has not been ripped up. This is the value/identifier they wrote as having the most influence on their food choices. The 3 minutes will seem like a long time for the teens to be paired to discuss their identifier, and it will cause uncomfortable silence. This is meant to force the teens to dig deeper and get to know one another.

Debrief

In large group discussion, reflect on the activity.

- Which identity markers did they rip up first, representing the least amount of influence on their food choices? Why were they considered least influential?
- Which identity marker was each teen left with at the end representing the largest impact on their food choices? Why was this the most influential?
- Would you have written down the same words on your index cards if you knew the event was about food choice? What would you have done the same? Differently?
- Were there any similarities between what members of the group wrote down? What were the differences?

Suggested phrasing: "Each of our unique identities and lived experiences inform how we see the world, how we value food, and what is most important for our food choices."

Break (10 minutes)

ACTIVITY TWO: FOOD SCENARIOS—PEOPLE'S ASSUMPTIONS (55 MINUTES)

In this activity, participants will explore different social and economic elements of their identities. Through this, participants will become more conscious of their own layers of self and those of their

fellow participants. The following exercise will allow us to see how we associate different types of identity characteristics with different types of food choices.

Safe space reminder: Please allow people to have a comfort check system but also emphasize the need for challenge in a safe space and how to do that productively in the group. This process could include revisiting the group guidelines. One question to ask the group is how members like to be supported in times of stress, distress, and discomfort. A safe space does not mean that all difficult issues are avoided, it means that there are avenues to ensure that everyone has the tools and support they need to deal with difficult situations.

Set Up

Divide participants into groups of 3 or 4 people (minimum of 4 groups). Assign each group one of the following food scenarios. Choose from the following scenarios:

- Shopping weekly at a farmers market
- Receiving food stamps (SNAP)
- Making a conscious effort to eat only locally-sourced organic food
- Regularly visiting food banks or soup kitchens
- Receiving free or reduced-price school lunch
- Home cooking most meals with fresh ingredients
- Reading the ingredient label and nutrition facts before purchasing
- Shopping at Walmart (or other large chain known for lower prices)
- Eating fast food numerous times a week

Step One

Have each group spend 5 to 10 minutes brainstorming a skit to act out their food scenario. Then, have each group present to the larger group/their peers. Ask each group to take their food scenario and write down characteristics that they associate with that situation in the first column.

Step Two

After each skit, have the whole room debrief.

Prompts:

- What is a person in that scenario like?
- What does society think of a person in that scenario?
- What is the food like in that scenario?
- What does society think of the food in that scenario?

The goal of this activity is to get participants thinking about how people associate identities with certain types of food scenarios. This exercise will demonstrate the relationship of identity and food.

Debrief

Ask participants how they felt about the activity. Address any questions they may have in relation to content or process. Ask how the above activity demonstrated different aspects of individual identity and values and societal values. Use the following prompts to encourage discussion:

- Do certain food scenarios create bad stereotypes? Do certain food scenarios create praise? Are certain food scenarios more accepted by society? Why?
- How does society value certain feeding scenarios over others? Do different food scenarios create inequality? Why? In a political way? Social way? Economic way?
- Ask participants to revisit their most important identity characteristic they associated with their food choice. See how it is relevant to the question of stigma, inequality.

CLOSE OUT (5 MINUTES)

Review the day

Who wants to take on the following roles next time (icebreaker, check-in, pluses and deltas, leading the solidarity clap)?

Pluses and deltas

Solidarity clap

Session 8

Our Food Justice

Objectives: During this session, teens will further develop their knowledge of social, economic, and political forces creating unequal food environments within community. At the end of this session, the participants will be able to

- understand how power relationships in our country contributes to a food system that doesn't serve everyone equally;
- identify social, economic, and political factors linking hunger to families living in low-income and underserved communities; and
- begin to think about what we could change about the food environment that could improve access to quality food for everyone, especially those who face unequal access today.

Materials: Photos from magazines or the Internet depicting people of different ages, genders, and racial identities; whiteboard and markers

Session terms: intersectionality, structural inequalities, oppression, policies, empowered

WELCOME AND CHECK-IN: (5 MINUTES)

Check-in Circle

Review Agenda

Icebreaker

ACTIVITY ONE: STEREOTYPING EXERCISE (25 MINUTES)

The photos you choose for this activity should not have context that speaks to the subject's wealth or profession (no clothes that label a profession, no indicators of where the person might live or how much money they might make). Break the participants into groups of at least four. Give each group one of the photos on a large piece of paper. Ask each group to use stereotypes to draw out that person's identity and the food they think that person might eat. Then share with the room.

Discuss the Activity Together

How did you feel during this activity? What did you learn? Did anything make you feel uncomfortable? What about each picture led you to make assumptions about that person's food choice? Were these assumptions based on barriers, oppression, or inequality created by society?

Suggested phrasing: “In American culture, there is a big emphasis on individual responsibility and achievement. But this overlooks the many ways in which society’s norms and the ways the world is organized create inequalities. The organizations and systems we live in every day, schools, the economy, religious faiths, the way our physical space has been created, all of these shape the choices and chances that people have. Some people face barriers to fully participating in their food environment because of inequality, discrimination, or a lack of power. As we move forward, let’s make sure that we are aware of different types of inequalities that influence the food environment. Let’s agree that in our project campaign at the end of this curriculum we are working to reduce the inequality of the food environment.”

ACTIVITY TWO: PATHS THAT SHAPE INEQUALITY AND LIMIT PEOPLE POWER (45 MINUTES)

Set Up

On a whiteboard or flip chart, draw a big triangle. Each corner of the triangle should be labeled with one of the following: social, institutional or political, and individual.

Split the room into small groups. Have each group copy the triangle on a piece of paper. Write an example for each corner, and put a picture in each corner of the triangle on the board. Then, have each group fill out their own triangle. Finally, have each group share back with the room and fill out the big triangle with the pictures together.

Social

- Think about what we learned about how our society thinks about hunger and poverty. How does society see you? Write these ideas down under the “social” heading on the triangle. For example, what do we assume are characteristics of people in poverty or people who are hungry (lazy, jobless)?
- Tape an image of a lot of people talking under this corner.

Institutional or Political

- Think about the way in which institutions (e.g., government, legislators, schools, policies) keep people in a cycle of poverty and hunger? Write these ideas down under the “institutional or political” heading on the triangle. For example, what are ways in which our society is set up (structures) that disadvantage people (e.g., inadequate schools, poorly paid jobs, criminal justice policies and practices, SNAP limits).
- Tape a representative image of law or government under this corner.

Individuals

- Think about how your own place in the world and your own barriers and privileges can contribute to society's ideas about hunger and poverty. For example, is it harder to interact with the food system because of an identity you have, such as being a teenager?
- Tape an image of a solidarity fist or an individual or a mirror under this corner.

Break (10 minutes)

ACTIVITY THREE: FINDING OUR ROLE IN LOCAL FOOD JUSTICE (40 MINUTES)

With the previous activity in hand, divide the students into small groups.

We just spent time thinking about how social assumptions, institutional constraints, and how our own identities impact the way we interact with food. These can be barriers to accessing quality, affordable, and appropriate food. However, we have also learned about ways that people all over the world are addressing issues related to food justice in their communities. Think back to the videos of other teens doing work around food justice in their communities. Think about the work and allies in this community who are already involved in food issues. At the beginning of this course we learned about the food system and how food impacts our body. The past few weeks we learned about the social injustices of food, how food impacts people differently based on their social, institutional, and individual identities. Now, we are going to use that knowledge to think of ways we can engage with this system to improve our community.

Spend some time thinking about the barriers written within our triangles. This is the way that the system is currently set up. We are going to try to change it. In a large group discussion, ask the teens if they had all of the money and all of the power in the world, what would they do to reduce social, institutional, and individual barriers to food security in their community. Write the answers down on the large triangle on the board. For example, for the individual barrier of accessing food as a teenager, a solution might be to lower the age limit at food pantries so teenagers could access emergency food resources. Let the teens know that you will save these ideas and that next time, the teens will use these ideas as a starting point to brainstorm which campaign they'd like to work on.

CLOSE OUT (5 MINUTES)

Review the day

Identify who wants to take on the following roles next time (icebreaker, check-in, pluses and deltas, leading the solidarity clap)?

Session 8

Pluses and deltas

Solidarity clap

Session 9

Tying It All Together

Objectives: Teens will reflect on what they've learned so far and draw connections between all of the topics covered. At the end of this session, the participants will be able to

- develop a sense of pride at how much has been accomplished in just nine weeks; and
- understand that all of the topics covered are connected and that we can't talk about hunger without talking about justice.

Materials: A ball of string or twine, an object (e.g., ball, apple) picture of the food production chain used in previous sessions, flashcards or cardboard (some will need to have preprinted solutions glued or taped-on), markers, and post-its or stickers

Session terms: N/A

WELCOME AND CHECK-IN: (5 MINUTES)

Check-in Circle

Review Agenda

Icebreaker

Suggested phrasing: "Everyone has put in a lot of hard work over the past nine weeks. It's important to take the time to celebrate what we've accomplished and acknowledge how far we've come. It's easy to get burned out and tired when you're involved in this kind of work every day. After a while, it can feel like trying to create change is draining the energy out of our group while problems continue to build up around us. Though it's important to acknowledge that feeling, it's really important to remember that the work we are doing is significant. Taking opportunities for celebration, self-care, and reflection are crucial to staying motivated, engaged, and empowered. Today is about celebrating how far we've come."

ACTIVITY ONE: WE'RE ALL CONNECTED STRING EXERCISE (15 MINUTES)

Have participants stand in a circle. Hand one volunteer the ball of string. Ask her/him to name one thing they are proud of accomplishing over the past nine weeks. Then instruct her/him to tie one

end of the string to her/his finger and toss the ball to another participant. That participant should then answer the same question, loop the string around her/his finger and then toss the string to another member. Try to toss the string to members across the circle, not on either side of you. Continue this until everybody has had a chance to speak and there is an intricate web of string uniting the circle. You can ask one question or multiple questions. Acknowledge everything that has been accomplished collectively. There's a lot of power in that web and a lot to be proud of. We've come a long way.

[Option: Keep a ball or apple or small object on hand and see if the string can support the weight of the object.]

If everyone answered, and the web is still not tight enough, feel free to go around several times asking any of the following reflection questions:

- What's something you've learned over the past nine weeks about food justice?
- What's something you've learned over the past nine weeks from one of your fellow teens?
- How did you grow/change over the past nine weeks?
- What is one way someone else in this room has grown or improved over the past nine weeks?

ACTIVITY TWO: LIFE CYCLE OF FOOD (20 MINUTES)

***Suggested phrasing:** "Food justice is not only about what food we buy at the store, but also about how our food is grown, how it's transported to us, how we're able to buy it, and how we throw it away. Think about an apple, there are many steps between how that apple is grown and the core we throw away."*

Lead a discussion around the food production chain, using the following prompts as a guide. To make it more interactive, have the six stations of the chain (not in order) labeled as stations around the room: farm, processing, distribution, grocery, table, and trash. Split the youth into groups at each station. Have the youth discuss as a group the order of the stations. Then, have a volunteer go up to the station, draw something on the board representing that stage of the food system, and have the youth explain what (s)he thinks happens to the food at that stage. At the end, the youth should have a visual at each station. Now, reorder the papers taped to each station so they are in the order of the life cycle of food. As a group, go over the following prompts at each station.

Farming

- Think about what farmers use to fertilize their soil and where they get their seeds.
- Think about how farm workers are hired, paid, and respected.

Processing

- Think about what processing plants add to food. Sometimes processing plants just clean our food and then ship it to stores, but sometimes they cover the food in chemicals, store it, clean it, and process it into fast food, snacks, or other packaged products.

Distribution

- Think about where our food is grown and the trucks and planes and buses it takes to get our food to grocery stores. If we go to the grocery store, where do the kiwis come from? How about oranges? How do Florida oranges get here? How does coffee from Rwanda get here?

Grocery

- Think about how much money different types of food cost. How does an apple in your neighborhood compare to the cost of a bag of chips? What kinds of food can you find in your community? What kinds of food stores are there? (*Have examples and prices on hand*).

Table

- Think about what we do with our food when we bring it home. Do we spend a lot of time cooking? Do we eat fresh food that doesn't have to be heavily prepared like an apple? Do we eat food out of a package?

Trash

- Think about how much food we throw away. What do we do with our leftovers? Does our trash become compost or is it thrown into a landfill?

Suggested phrasing: "There are problems within every part of this larger food system that lead to different types of inequality. Think about how social, institutional or individual changes at each station impact equality in the food system."

ACTIVITY THREE: PROBLEMS WITH OUR FOOD SYSTEM (20 MINUTES)

Set Up

Split the room into six sections. If the teens are already in six groups, mix them up. Have each group brainstorm problems that could occur at each stage of the food system; write the answers on a large piece of paper at the front of the room. Use the following as example problems if needed:

Farming

- Our farmers don't make enough money to buy the food that they grow.

- Our land has chemicals from factories and isn't safe to grow food.
- Climate change makes it hard to grow food.

Processing

- Sometimes the chemicals used to process foods aren't healthy for our bodies.
- According to author Martin Lindstrom, the average apple on a supermarket shelf in the United States is 14 months old and has lost most of its antioxidants. Food loses nutrients the longer it is out of the ground.

Distribution

- Sometimes our food comes from far away. It can be expensive to transport food from the other side of the country or the world. On the way, food can lose nutrients and flavor.

Grocery

- We don't always live near grocery stores with healthy produce.
- Quality food is often too expensive to be accessible to everyone.

Table

- Cooking healthy food takes a long time. We have to go to school or work.
- Sometimes we don't know how to cook healthy food.
- Sometimes we don't like healthy food.

Trash

- Approximately 40 percent of food in the United States goes to waste.
- Every year, people in rich countries waste 222 million tons of food. That's 111 million cars stacked on top of each other.

Now, hand out red stickers to each youth. Ask them to silently go around the room, read all of the problems, and put a sticker next to any problem that worries them. Let youth add new problems if they think of something that isn't on the board.

Debrief

- Which problems have a lot of red stickers?
- Why?
- Do you think this is a problem in our community?
- What are the two biggest problems in our community (add more problems if necessary)?
- What are the biggest barriers to food security (add more problems if necessary)?

ACTIVITY FOUR: SOLUTIONS WITHIN OUR FOOD SYSTEM (35 MINUTES)

Set up

Though there are many challenges, there are also many amazing and dedicated groups and individuals that have fought to change our food system for the better, and they have made some

major progress. As we move toward our own project campaign, this activity will allow the teens to learn about some of these solutions.

Here are some solutions for inspiration. There are also solutions earlier in the curriculum you should feel free to add. There also may be solutions from your community you'd like to add as well.

Farming

- Cultivate community gardens.

Processing

- Teach classes on how to make food from scratch.

Distribution

- Learn who your local farmers are and try to buy food from them.

Grocery

- Create mobile markets or make farmers markets more affordable with double-up food bucks.

Table

- Teach classes on nutrition and healthy food.

Trash

- Recycle and compost.

Ask teens to brainstorm new solutions or ways to change solutions already in place so that they work better in their community. After a number of solutions are brainstormed, ask teens to go around and put green stickers on solutions they think are good ideas.

Debrief

- Which solutions got a lot of green stickers?
- Who are the main actors needed to carry out this solution?
- Who benefits from this solution?
- Does this solution work to change the food system at a local or regional level, a national level, or an international level?
- Do you think this solution could work in our community? Why? Why not?
- Will this solution fix our barriers to food security?

Give each student two star stickers. Have them put the stickers on the solutions they'd like to work on as part of their campaign.

ACTIVITY FIVE POTLUCK (30 MINUTES)

Options for the potluck are as follows:

- Participants could bring in a snack to share.
- A meal could be purchased with organization funds.
- The teens could cook a meal together using food from a food delivery, food pantry, or a donation box.

CLOSE OUT (10 MINUTES)

Review the day

This session should be closed out by transitioning into the plan for action.

- Ask the teens to silently think about the campaigns that they starred. Tell them they will be focusing on one of these as our campaign over the next few weeks. Let's try to reach a consensus on which one.

Identify who wants to take on the following roles next time (icebreaker, check-in, pluses and deltas, leading the solidarity clap)?

Pluses and deltas

Solidarity clap

Session 10

Action Campaign Goals

Objectives: During this session, the teens will begin strategically planning their action campaign project, creating a vision of teen food security for their community. At the end of this session, the participants will be able to

- develop a list of concrete SMART goals for the action campaign project;
- draft a timeline of direct actions; and
- understand how to create mini-goals for each direct action.

Materials: Two colors of notecards; a blackboard, whiteboard, or large paper; and markers or chalk to write on the board

Session terms: ally, action timeline, direct action

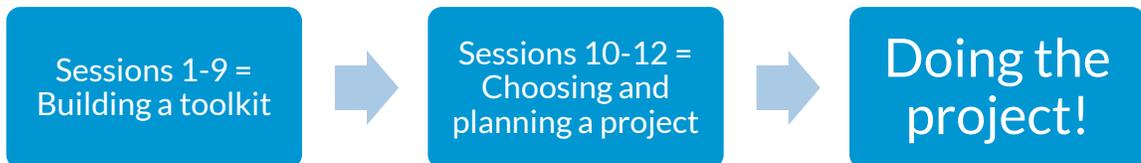
Note: This session is much less structured than the previous sessions. This was done to give room to ideas that your particular group wants to use. It might be a good idea to go over the definitions of consensus and facilitation in this session.

WELCOME AND CHECK-IN (5 MINUTES)

Check-in Circle

Review Agenda

Explain the project timeline:



Explain this session's timeline:



Icebreaker

ACTIVITY ONE: GOAL AND OBJECTIVE SETTING (15 MINUTES)

Go over each part of the SMART (Scheduled, Measureable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely) framework with the teens. Post the bulleted list of questions below at the front of the room to develop the discussion of SMART goals. Present a quick example of a good (SMART) goal and a bad (undefined, unrealistic) goal. Talk the examples through until the teens understand the differences.

Suggested bad example: Ending hunger

- Why is this example problematic?

Suggested SMART example: We're going to work with local community organizations and farms to collect 200 additional pounds of food next month. The food will be donated to a local food distribution center that serves 50 community members.

- Why is this an example of a SMART goal?

Now, let's try to brainstorm a way to frame our campaign using SMART goals. Use the SMART questions to help test the goals. Split the room into three groups. Re-post the solutions brainstormed last week that had star stickers next to them. Have each group use this list of solutions as a starting point to brainstorm a SMART goal related to food work that could become the action campaign for the whole TFLP project.

- What do you want to accomplish? (Specific)
- How are you going to measure your accomplishment? (Measurable)
- Do you have the power and skills, or can you build the power and skills to reach your goal? (Attainable)
- Are you willing to work toward the goal, and do you have the necessary time to do so? (Realistic)
- When do you want to accomplish your goal? (Timely)

Then, have each group report its SMART goal, answering the questions above. As a group, discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each goal. Then decide, by the decisionmaking method agreed on by the group (voting or consensus), which goal or combination of goals the group will move forward with. Write this goal on the board at the front of the room, leaving it up for the rest of the session with the option to put it back up at every new session.

ACTIVITY TWO: WHO IS IN OUR CORNER? (20 MINUTES)

On one color of notecard, have to each teen write down who their allies are in the community. Put each ally on a separate card.

Allies include the following:

- Support systems
- Anyone working on a similar goal
- Any possible partner organizations
- Anyone who will be engaged in working towards the SMART goal.

For example, an ally could be an engaged school administrator if your goal is for the school to purchase a certain percent more fruits and vegetables for school snacks. Or it could be the local food bank if you're goal is to host more food demonstrations in the community.

On another color notecard, have each teen write down any barriers that might stand in the way of the SMART goal. Put each barrier on a separate card.

Barriers include the following:

- Anyone working against the goal
- Anyone working on an opposing goal
- Anyone who will not work with teenagers

At one end of the wall post a sign saying, "strong support", and at the other end of the wall, post a sign reading, "strong challenge." Have the youth place their allies and challenges on the spectrum.

It's important to stress that even though creating a big goal can be overwhelming, there are already so many people on the support side of the room. We are not alone. Our community will support us.

ACTIVITY THREE: TIMELINE CREATION (30 MINUTES)

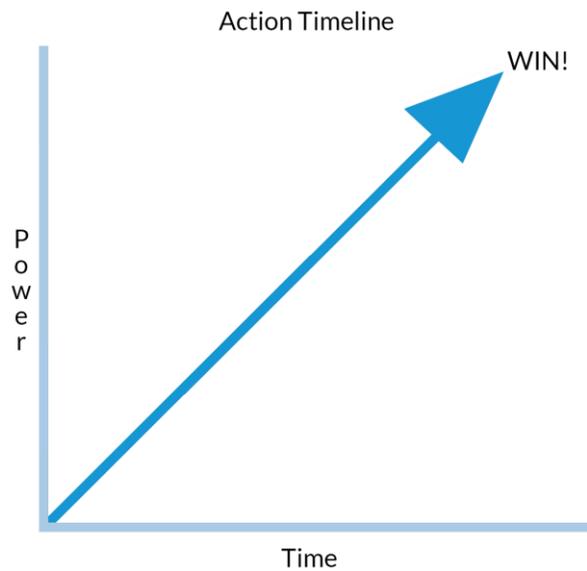
Discussion

Have the teens congratulate each other for developing a goal! And for knowing who to turn to for help. Now it's time to discuss what we need to reach our goal.

Print out or draw the action timeline below on the board or a large piece of paper at the front of the room. Write the SMART goal in the top right corner.

Now ask what the timeline is that we want to set to accomplish our goal? Put this date by the win side of the action timeline. Then put today's date by the starting side of the action timeline.

This is another good time to check in, take the pulse of the room, and make sure that all of the teens are excited and motivated. Make sure everyone understands the concept of an action timeline and is comfortable at this point. This session introduces a lot of new concepts and so make sure there are times to check in. Take a stretch break here if needed.



Suggested phrasing: “We are going to power map how to reach our goal. As time moves along, our power has to increase. We have a big goal to reach. It isn’t going to happen overnight. Successful projects are ones that build up power as they go, growing into a movement that can’t be stopped. That’s what we’re aiming to do here.

So, for example, if we just handed out flyers every week without doing anything else, we would stay at the same level of power over the course of the entire project. Do you think this would be successful? [The answer should be no.] Why?

Now, if we handed out flyers that said to come to an orientation event, then we went out and signed a hundred petitions, then had an action day when 50 people walked to a government office and handed over the petitions, we would keep escalating our power over the course of the entire project. Do you think this would be more successful? Less successful? [The answer should be more successful.] Why?”

Give further examples. Ask why it isn’t a good idea to start with a rally. Synthesize responses and encourage the teens to discuss the drawbacks of starting with a confrontational direct action;

for example, it could alienate potential supporters. Your key players might have agreed with you on some things, but now you've pushed them away.

Ask why it is a good idea to build power over time?

- We'll have a chance to educate the community about this movement in a nonconfrontational way, including those who want to be involved at levels they are comfortable with.
- The community will have seen us on the whole journey of our campaign and so our goals won't be a surprise.

ACTIVITY FOUR: MAPPING THE ACTION TIMELINE (30 MINUTES)

Now we're going to map out our timeline for building up our direct actions.

Explain that though this timeline is flexible, it's good to put down some possible dates to hold ourselves accountable to keep up the momentum. Lead a conversation that maps action items backward from the ideal win date to create potential benchmark dates. Take note if there are strategic dates to include such as a big political function, or a back to school event. The first action can be pretty soon (one or two weeks away). You want the events spaced so that you won't lose momentum but also so it feels attainable.

Ask for some examples of good beginning actions.

Some examples include handing out informational flyers to raise awareness and make more allies and scheduling a start-up meeting with your key players to discuss the facts. Write these options at the beginning of the timeline.

Ask for some examples of mid-level actions.

Some examples include plays or dances in public spaces and creative petition signing. Write these options in the middle of the timeline.

Now, ask for some really powerful actions that we could use towards the end of our timeline.

Examples include a sit-in in the school cafeteria, standing up with a sign at a town hall meeting, and asking the local food bank to publish a piece about us in their newsletter. Write these options at the end of the timeline.

Ask if there are any more actions that the teens would like to add. Reiterate that this is a roadmap and a work in progress. If the teens think of ideas later, they can certainly change things. The most successful action timelines are ones that are flexible enough to change when needed.

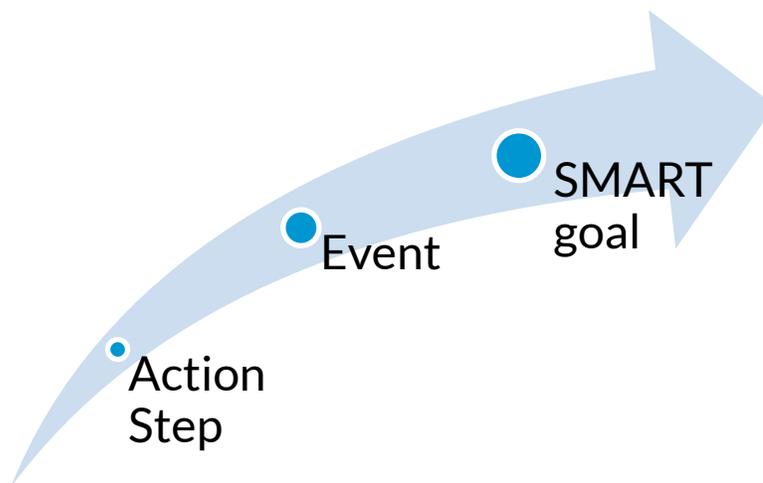
Encourage the teens that when they have a new idea for an action, they should put it on a sticky note and add it to the timeline. Then the group can talk it over at the next meeting.

ACTIVITY FIVE: NEXT STEPS (15 MINUTES)

Now, we have a really exciting set of actions all planned out, and it's looking pretty good. We have a clear end goal. Check in here with the group, as it can be pretty overwhelming to talk about the big picture.

Take a look at the first few actions on the timeline to develop action steps that the teens can take at the next meeting.

- Decide on a date for the first (and maybe second and third) event.
- If the action is to hand out flyers, some steps will be to design a flyer, print the flyer, and decide where to post flyers or hand them out.
- Action steps are the verbs that are going to help us meet our mini-goal. Action steps can be things, like reserve a meeting room, call on one of our allies, set up a Facebook page. They are things that you would put on your to-do list. Decide who in each working group will do what action steps by the next meeting.
- Do we need any help with these action steps? Do we have a computer, a printer, tape, paper?
- Who wants to be in charge of each action step?



CLOSE OUT (5 MINUTES)

Review the day

- Was it difficult to make these decisions today?
- How did you work together as a group?
- Are there any strategies that would help us work better together as a group next time?

Session 10

- What is one thing you appreciate about someone in this room even if you disagree with them?

Identify who wants to take on the following roles next time (icebreaker, check-in, pluses and deltas, leading the solidarity clap)?

Pluses and deltas

Solidarity clap

Session 11

Organizing Our Action Campaign Project

Objectives: During this session, teens will practice identifying short-term goals, developing action tasks to reach their goals, and figuring out how to divide up the work. At the end of this session, the participants will be able to

- determine the resources they have;
- determine the resources they need;
- assign roles, mini goals, and action steps;
- learn to work in small groups; and
- plan the first action.

Materials needed: Paper and markers

Session terms: coalition, one to one conversation, working group

Note: This session might be a messy one as the teens learn to self-manage. It is up to the facilitator to decide how much the teens should figure out on their own vs. how much is assigned. Who is in what working group? What are logical events and action steps?

WELCOME AND CHECK-IN: (5 MINUTES)

Check-in Circle

Review Agenda

Icebreaker

ACTIVITY ONE: BREAK-OUT SESSION PLANNING (30 MINUTES)

Check-in question: Go around the room and have each teen name two things that they're good at and one thing that they'd like to learn.

Last week we talked about action timelines, the power in this room, and the resources and skills we already have. In this room, we already have artists, public speakers, organizers, logistical planners. It's going to be important for us to communicate, work together and coordinate, but there also needs to be space for us to get down and do some work. One way that some groups organize is by splitting up into working groups.

Suggested phrasing: “A working group is a way to split up and have different groups work on tasks that fit their skill sets. This way more work can get done in less time. So, for example, an art working group might paint a logo for a flyer while an outreach working group might develop a script for talking to new people. Different working groups will take on different tasks. Working groups support each other and ask each other for help when needed.”

Check in to make sure everyone understands what a working group is.

The following are some examples of working groups and tasks they complete:

1. Art Power Squad
 - a. Develop any group signs, banners, logos, flyer design, flyer design, and web design. Visual messaging is especially important when working in communities that speak, read, and write in different languages and at different levels of fluency.
2. Social Media Gurus
 - a. Manage Facebook, a phone tree, Twitter, Snapchat, e-mail, group text, or whatever is trendy. Use media to do things like sending meeting reminders, setting up events, sending press releases, and spreading the word about fun updates.
3. Direct Action
 - a. Brainstorming ways to use gatherings and creative events to get messaging across to a broad population through chants, songs, flash mobs, letter-deliveries, or other events.
4. Logistics
 - a. Take notes at meetings; keep an ongoing record for new people to learn from or to remind us of what we’ve done; plan for food, meeting space, any equipment necessary; coordinate set up and clean-up; and keep an updated list of all the people in the group and their contact information.
5. Coalition Building
 - a. Reach out to local nonprofits and other student organizations that are doing work that connects to your action plan. Keep in touch with leaders in these other groups, go to their meetings, support their movements, invite them to your meetings, and tell them how to support your movement.
6. Outreach

- a. Write messages for flyers, call or text people the day before an action to remind them to show up, call or message people the day after an action to thank them and plug them into your next event, and have one-on-one conversations at actions to rope people into your movement.

Feel free to include more groups and have teens rename them to take ownership. If there are a lot of teens, have more groups. Each group should have at least three people and no more than five people. You can also combine groups if there aren't enough participants, such as social media + logistics, or art power squad + direct action, or outreach + direct action. If you're going to combine, it's good to combine direct action since there aren't always direct actions to plan.

Refer back to the action steps created last week for the first event on the timeline. Together, brainstorm which working group should be in charge of each action step.

ACTIVITY TWO: INTERNAL CAPACITY (50 MINUTES)

Break out into your working groups. Ask each working group to discuss the following prompts and for a volunteer in each group to write down ideas.

- What is needed to accomplish each action task assigned to your working group (e.g., materials, technical support, allies, time, and money)?
- What do you already have that can help accomplish each action task? These can be experiences such as giving a school assembly; skills such as being a good writer; resources such as Internet access to get a Facebook page; connections such as already being part of a group that's interested in working with us; or materials, such as paper and markers.
- When will your group complete each action step?
- Who will be in charge of making sure each action step gets done?

Report back

This part is really important. Working groups are great: we can work more efficiently, and make sure everyone has a task. However, the tradeoff to working groups is that we don't have as many voices and opinions to make sure we are staying true to our group values. After every break-out group meeting, let's make sure we check back in. This is a space for us to voice concerns across working groups. For example, if you are in the logistics group but you feel that the language the outreach group developed for the flyers could make some folks feel uncomfortable or be misinterpreted, here is your space to say that. If you think that the coalition team is missing a huge segment of this community, say so. This movement is only as powerful as we are together. Check each other. Give each working group a few minutes to present. Ask every group to come to the front of the room, explain what they discussed and write down who will do what action step by next meeting on the board. Use this board to hold each other accountable.

ACTIVITY THREE: BRINGING IT BACK IN (30 MINUTES)

So last week we started off by

1. creating a SMART goal;
2. looking at our action plan and deciding the next strategic step—our first event; and
3. breaking down our first action into smaller action steps.

Today, we kept going by

1. breaking into working groups;
2. deciding which working group would carry out each action step;
3. identifying what we already had that could help us reach our action step;
4. deciding what was missing that we needed to reach our action step;
5. starting work within our groups; and
6. reporting back to the whole group.

Ask the teens what they think of that process.

Remind the group that we're all dedicated to this cause and in this for the long haul. We all have other commitments outside of this room, such as school, work, and family. Make sure that you can do what you say you can do. Don't overcommit, and stay true to your word.

Stress that we have to carry out the action steps we volunteered for if this project is going to work. Talk about what should happen if you can't or don't complete your action step. Should it be like a job where you have to find a friend to fill in? What should happen? Talk about how important it is to speak up if you are behind or feeling overwhelmed. Go back to the community guidelines if needed.

Ask the following:

- Was it difficult to make these decisions today?
- How did you work together as a group?
- Are there any strategies that would help us work better together as a group?
- What is one thing you appreciate about someone in this room even if you disagree with them?

CLOSE OUT (5 MINUTES)

Review the day

Invite each participant to bring a healthy snack from home to share at the next session.

Session 11

Identify who wants to take on the following roles next time (icebreaker, check-in, pluses and deltas, leading the solidarity clap)?

Pluses and deltas

Solidarity clap

Session 12

What Do We Need to Move Forward?

Objectives: During this session, the teens will decide what action/next steps are needed to start on their plan of action or campaign, work on those steps, and celebrate the end of TFLP training. At the end of this sessions, the participants will be able to

- create a strategy for working together in the weeks to come outside of formal TFLP sessions; and
- celebrate the end of TFLP training.

Materials: Teens Decide

Session terms: N/A

Note: From this point onward, we recommend that the teens meet at least twice a week to work on the action campaign. At this point it is up to the teens and facilitators to decide how much formal involvement the facilitator will have or whether it will be up to the teens.

WELCOME AND CHECK-IN (5 MINUTES)

Check-in Circle

Review Agenda

Icebreaker

ACTIVITY ONE: SELF-REFLECTION (20 MINUTES)

Have the teens split into pairs. For two minutes, have one teen use only “I am” statements. For example, “I am athletic” or “I am [name].” Switch to the other teen for another two minutes. Then spend the next four minutes debriefing on how they felt and what they thought.

Possible probes:

- What statements came to you first? Why do you think that is?
- How did your first few statements impact your later statements?
- For the teens who went first, how did it feel?
- For the teens who went second, did the answers of the first impact your answers? If so, how?

Afterward, have the teens repeat the exercise, but this time have them say statements related to the action plan, what they hope to achieve, and what role they hope to play as the curriculum ends and the campaign begins. These statements can be “I am,” “I hope,” or any similar

configuration. Debrief with the same questions above. Allot two minutes for each teen and four minutes for the debrief. Then give the teens the opportunity to share to the entire room. Have each teen say to the room the part of the action timeline they're most excited to work on and why.

ACTIVITY TWO: GROUP REFLECTION (20 MINUTES)

Place collective definitions, images drawn on big pieces of paper, collective rules, and other materials from the previous TFLP sessions on the board and around the room. Have the teens walk around the room reading their past work and reflecting on how far they've come.

ACTIVITY THREE: LOOKING FORWARD (25 MINUTES)

This is our last formal TFLP session, after this you'll be a little more on your own. With that in mind, we're going to talk a little bit today about what this group will look like moving forward.

List supports that will remain in place, such as an adult advisor, the larger support network already identified from previous sessions, meeting space, food, printer, and office supplies.

Last week, we went through a new type of meeting structure. It looked like this:

1. Check-in question/icebreaker.
2. Identify the next event.
3. Break the event into action steps.
4. Assign action steps to working groups.
5. Break out into working groups. Have each working group:
 - Identify what we already have that could help us reach our action step.
 - Decide what is missing that we still need to reach our action step.
 - Reflect on if our larger support network help to fill those gaps.
 - Begin work in action steps.
 - Set a deadline for each action step.
6. Report back and put our action steps with people's names on the wall. Have someone take notes.
7. Regroup to our big picture and check each other.
8. Plan facilitators, notetaker, agenda, and date for our next meeting.
9. Close out with pluses and deltas.
10. Solidarity clap.

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Ask whether the teens think this agenda format could be a useful way to facilitate future sessions? If not, what should we change? What about this format was useful? What can be improved?

At our first meeting, we set up some community guidelines and collective values. (Remind the group what those were). Should we make any changes moving forward?

Remind the teens that the work we are doing is important and valuable and will create change. However, parts of it will be thankless, parts of it will be hard, and, at times, it will feel like we aren't getting anywhere. It's just as important to stay true to our goals and values when things get tough. This isn't about the glamour. This work is about creating a better community.

Ask, when things get tough, how can we work to support each other? Who can we go to for help?

Are there any traditions that we should add to our group? We've always closed with a solidarity clap. Should we continue this? Should we have graduating members partner with the next round of TFLP students one-on-one as peer mentors? Should we eat certain foods to celebrate successes? How can we create a culture as TFLP graduates?

CLOSE OUT (5 MINUTES)

Review the day

Remind the group of the roles for next time: who will lead the icebreaker, check-in, pluses and deltas, leading the solidarity clap? Are there any other roles that we should assign? Timekeeper? Who will write the agenda?

Pluses and deltas

Solidarity clap

GRADUATION CELEBRATION (45 MINUTES)

This time should be used to celebrate the end of TFLP and how much the teens have learned and grown. One option is to invite parents and community organizations and have a graduation ceremony with certificates of completion. Another option is to have a potluck. Use the time how to celebrate the hard work of the teen participants the best way for this group.

About the Authors

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