



Fighting Senior Hunger in the Nation's Capital: Making it Work with D.C. Nutrition Programs

Video Series Discussion Guide



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D.C. Hunger Solutions



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D.C. Hunger Solutions

Ending hunger in the nation's capital

AARP Foundation Drive to End Hunger

Why We Created Drive to End Hunger

For an alarming number of Americans age 50 and over, the worst downturn since the Great Depression and a slow recovery have made their “American Dream” opportunity feel distant, if not totally unattainable. This group faces choices and pressures unlike those of any other age group – choices no one could have prepared for – and those nearly 9 million people 50+ who struggle every day to put food on the table need a voice and an advocate now more than ever.

That’s why, in February 2011, AARP Foundation initiated Drive to End Hunger, a multiyear nationwide campaign to raise awareness and funds to address the problem of hunger among people 50+, and develop both short-term and long-term solutions to the hunger problem.

AARP Foundation believes that older adults should not have to choose between food and paying the bills or essential medications. Together we can help older adults regain their confidence and get back on track. We’re creating innovative approaches to combat hunger among Americans 50 and older in communities across the nation.

D.C. Hunger Solutions, founded in 2002 as a separately staffed and funded initiative of the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), seeks to create a hunger-free community and improve the nutrition, health, economic security, and well-being of low-income children and families in the District of Columbia. To learn more about D.C. Hunger Solutions, visit www.dchunger.org.

Overview: FOOD INSECURITY AND SENIOR HUNGER

With rising food prices and fixed incomes, coupled with a growth in the aging population, the District of Columbia has seen dramatic increases in senior hunger. Due to advancing age, seniors often experience health and medical conditions that may place them at-risk when there is not enough food to eat or when they cannot shop or cook for themselves. No senior in the District should have to worry about getting enough food. In response to a growing need for awareness about senior nutrition, we have created these videos to give an overview of four nutrition assistance programs funded and supported by both the federal and local District Government as well as community based organizations. The following four programs provide healthy foods to thousands of D.C. seniors:

- The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/Food Stamps)
- Meals with Friends (Congregate Meals)
- Home Delivered Meals
- The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

While these programs cannot end hunger alone, these programs exist to help thousands of additional eligible seniors. Watch the video to find out how you or a loved one can benefit from free healthy meals or groceries.

This video series was developed by AARP Foundation, AARP District of Columbia and D.C. Hunger Solutions.

Audience and Setting

These videos explain nutrition programs intended for Washington, D.C. residents age 60 or older. Videos can be used in a variety of settings to:

- Provide information on nutrition assistance programs available to older residents in Washington, D.C.
- Facilitate a discussion around the issues of senior hunger
- Encourage senior residents to advocate for senior nutrition assistance programs

How to Use This Discussion Guide

While the videos can be viewed alone, the goal of this Discussion Guide is to help senior service providers use the videos in a group setting. Each video discussion will take approximately 15 minutes including the viewing of the video. Each video is approximately 2-3 minutes long. This discussion guide includes a synopsis and step-by-step lesson plan for each video. The videos should be viewed one at a time followed by discussion around each individual nutrition assistance program found in the lesson plans in this guide. Discussion facilitators need to obtain a copy of *How to Get Food in the District of Columbia: A Food and Nutrition Resource Guide for Older Adults* (Senior Food Guide) to use in conjunction with the videos. The guide can be downloaded at www.dchunger.org or you can call D.C. Hunger Solutions at (202) 986-2200 for free copies while supplies last.

Be an Anti-Hunger Champion!

As you watch the videos, think about ways you can be an Anti-Hunger Champion.

In each video, the star says, "I am making it work!" You can also help make it work by being an Anti-Hunger Champion:

- Share information about the senior nutrition programs with friends, family and neighbors
- Share how important senior nutrition programs are with elected officials
- Share ideas to improve the senior nutrition programs or reach more people
- Share what you are doing to help seniors improve their nutrition

For more ways to take action and become an Anti-Hunger Champion, visit D.C. Hunger Solutions at www.dchunger.org

Part 1 – Making it Work with Home Delivered Meals

Video Time: 2 minutes, 10 seconds

Discussion Time: 10-15 minutes

Synopsis:

This video features a D.C. senior who participates in the Home Delivered Meals program and provides an overview of his experience with the program. The Home Delivered Meals program serves seniors age 60 or older (or people with disabilities) who are homebound. The D.C. Office on Aging administers the Home Delivered Meals program. For more information about this program, contact the D.C. Office on Aging at (202) 724-5626.

Goals:

Participants will be able to:

- Identify basic information about home delivered meals in Washington, D.C.
- Discuss the value of home delivered meals
- Know how to find out more information about the program

Materials:

- *How to Get Food in the District of Columbia: A Food and Nutrition Resource Guide for Older Adults* (Senior Food Guide)
- DVD/Flash drive with videos (You can also download the videos at www.dchunger.org)
- Laptop & projector or television and DVD player to view video

Before Watching the Video:

1. Welcome participants and briefly describe the goals of the video.
2. Ask participants the following question:

Under what circumstances might people need meals delivered to their home?

Sample answers:

- Recovering from a hospitalization or illness
- People with disabilities who cannot readily shop for food
- Lack of income to buy food
- Lack of transportation
- No grocery store nearby

3. Introduce video:

We will now watch a video to learn more about the Home Delivered Meals program in Washington, D.C. (Play Video: 2 min. 10 sec.)

Part 1 – Making it Work with Home Delivered Meals

Discussion

1. Ask participants what they thought of the video.
2. After viewing the video, ask participants the following questions:
 - *Why did Mr. Tom Quinn need meals?*
(Answer: He had broken his hip and ankle.)
 - *What does he like about the meals?*
(Answer: For example, the volunteer contact, the food provided and meals he can count on.)
 - *Do you know anyone who gets a home delivered meal? Share what they like about the meals.*
(Answer: DCOA has revamped their home delivered meals and now uses meals from Mom's Meals and Catholic Charities.)
 - *Do you know someone who could benefit from home delivered meals?*

Refer to the Senior Food Guide's section on home delivered meals to find information on program eligibility guidelines, numbers to call to participate in the program, and general program information.

3. Discuss other programs that deliver meals:

There are other programs in Washington, D.C. that deliver meals, but these programs may have a limited service area or specific eligibility requirements.

Food & Friends provides home delivered meals, groceries and nutrition counseling to people living with life-challenging illnesses such as HIV/AIDS and cancer. For more information, call 202-269-2277.

Meals on Wheels provides home delivered meals to residents age 60 or older and people with disabilities in a limited service area. Refer to the Senior Food Guide for contact information.

Wrap-Up

1. Ask participants the following question:

What is one thing you learned about Home Delivered Meals?

2. Encourage participants to help spread the word about home delivered meals and become advocates for helping end senior hunger.

Part 2 – Making it Work with Food Commodities

Video Time: 1 minute, 50 seconds

Discussion Time: 10-15 minutes

Synopsis:

This video features a D.C. senior who participates in the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) and provides an overview of her experience with the program. CSFP provides a monthly food package to low-income seniors age 60 or older living in D.C. The Capital Area Food Bank and D.C. Office on Aging administer the program. For more information about this program, contact the Capital Area Food Bank at (202) 644-9815 or the D.C. Office on Aging at (202) 535-1417.

Goals:

Participants will be able to:

- Identify basic information about the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) in Washington, D.C.
- Discuss the benefits of CSFP
- Know how to find out more information about the program

Materials:

- *How to Get Food in the District of Columbia: A Food and Nutrition Resource Guide for Older Adults* (Senior Food Guide)
- DVD/Flash drive with videos (You can also download the videos at: www.dchunger.org)
- Laptop & projector or television and DVD player to view video

Before Watching the Video:

1. Welcome participants and briefly describe the Commodity Supplemental Food Program and the goals of the video.

The Commodity Supplemental Food Program provides eligible seniors with a free monthly food package. Clients must be D.C. residents, 60 years or older, and meet certain income limits. Food packages include staples like canned fruit and vegetables, pasta, and beans.

2. Ask participants to raise their hands if they have ever heard of the program.
3. Introduce the video:

We will now watch a video to learn more about the Commodity Supplemental Food program in Washington, D.C. (Play Video: 1min. 50 sec.)

Part 2 – Making it Work with Food Commodities

Discussion

1. Ask participants what they thought of the video.
2. Review with participants the following list of food items that can be included in the monthly food package:

When a customer picks up her/his CSFP package every month, she/he may have the following food items in their box:

- Canned vegetables (green beans, corn, carrots, etc.)
- Fruit juice
- Canned fruit (applesauce, pears, peaches, etc.)
- Canned meat/fish
- Rice/Pasta
- Beans
- Cereal

3. Discuss the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP)

CSFP food packages do not have fresh fruits and vegetables. However, seniors who participate in CSFP will receive \$25 in coupons to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at local farmers' markets from June to November. Some farmers' markets will double the \$25 coupon amount so seniors can get even more fresh produce.

Refer to the Senior Food Guide's section on SFMNP for more information.

4. Ask participants the following question:

I am interested in signing up for a monthly food package from the Commodity Supplemental Food Program. How do I get more information on CSFP?

Refer to the Senior Food Guide's section on CSFP to find information on program eligibility guidelines, numbers to call to participate in the program, and general program information.

Wrap-Up

1. Ask participants to share one thing that they learned.
2. Encourage participants to help spread the word about the Commodity Supplemental Food Program and become advocates against senior hunger.

Part 3 – Making it Work with SNAP

Video Time: 2 minutes, 27 seconds

Discussion Time: 10-15 minutes

Synopsis:

This video features a D.C. senior who participates in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as Food Stamps, and provides an overview of her experience with the program. SNAP can help eligible seniors stretch their food dollars and buy healthy food at grocery stores, farmers' markets and other food retailers. Some farmers' markets will double your SNAP dollars you when you use your SNAP/EBT card to buy fresh fruits and vegetables. The D.C. Department of Human Services (DHS) administers SNAP. For more information on how to apply for SNAP, call DHS at (202) 727-5355.

Goals:

Participants will be able to:

- Identify basic information about SNAP/Food Stamps in Washington, D.C.
- Discuss the benefits of SNAP/Food Stamps
- Know how to find out more information about the program

Materials:

- How to Get Food in the District of Columbia: A Food and Nutrition Resource Guide for Older Adults (Senior Food Guide)
- DVD/Flash drive with videos (You can also download the videos at: www.dchunger.org)
- Laptop & projector or television & DVD player to view video
- Marker and Flip-chart
- Senior SNAP/Food Stamp brochure (optional)

Before Watching the Video:

1. Welcome participants and briefly describe the goals of the video.
2. Have participants brainstorm around the following question:

What do you think about when you hear "SNAP" or "Food Stamps"?

Write participants' answers on a Flip-chart.

3. Introduce the video:

We will now watch a video to learn more about the SNAP/Food Stamp program in Washington, D.C. (Play Video: 2min. 27sec.)

Part 3 – Making it Work with SNAP

Discussion

1. Ask participants what they thought of the video.
2. SNAP Myths vs. Facts

Let's talk more about how the SNAP program applies to you. Here are some common misconceptions seniors may have about SNAP which might discourage someone from applying. Let's look at a few statements that you may hear when talking about SNAP.

I heard I will only get \$10 a month in SNAP benefits.

(Answer: The minimum monthly SNAP benefit is \$15, which adds up to \$180 a year. Everyone's case is different, but the average SNAP benefit for a senior living alone in D.C. is \$122.)

I don't want to take food assistance away from someone else who might need it more than I do.

(Answer: SNAP is an entitlement program which means that everyone who is eligible for SNAP can receive it.)

There is too much paperwork involved in applying for SNAP.

(Answer: There is some paperwork involved in applying for SNAP. However, there are some special rules for seniors that make applying easier. For example, seniors can arrange for a phone interview so they do not need to go to the Economic Security Administration Service Center to apply for SNAP. Also, seniors living on a fixed income only have to recertify every two years.)

3. Ask participants to review the list of words and phrases from the anticipatory activity. Ask participants if there is anything they would like to add to the list, remove from the list, or change.

Refer to the Senior Food Guide's section on SNAP/Food Stamps to share information with participants on program eligibility guidelines and contact information.

Wrap-Up

1. Ask participants to share one thing that they learned.
2. Encourage participants to help spread the word about SNAP and become advocates against senior hunger.

Part 4 – Making it Work with the Congregate Meals Program

Video Time: 2 minutes, 10 seconds

Discussion Time: 10-15 minutes

Synopsis:

This video features a D.C. senior who participates in the Congregate Meals program and provides an overview of her experience with the program. Congregate meal sites offer seniors a chance to visit with friends while enjoying a low-cost, nutritious meal. The D.C. Department on Aging (DCOA) administers the congregate meal program. For more information, call DCOA at (202) 724-5626.

Goals:

Participants will be able to:

- Identify basic information about the Congregate Meals program in Washington, D.C.
- Discuss the benefits of Congregate Meals
- Know how to find out more information about the program

Materials:

- *How to Get Food in the District of Columbia: A Food and Nutrition Resource Guide for Older Adults* (Senior Food Guide)
- DVD/Flash drive with videos (You can also download the videos at: www.dchunger.org)
- Laptop & projector or television and DVD player to view video

Before Watching the Video:

1. Welcome participants and briefly describe the goals of the video.
2. Ask participants the following questions:

Where are places seniors gather?

Which of the spaces might be suitable places to host a meal for seniors?

3. Introduce the video:

Many of the places you listed – churches, recreation centers, senior centers, common rooms in apartment buildings--- are actually places where the D.C. government provides funding so seniors can access congregate meals. We will now watch a video to learn more about the Congregate Meal program in Washington, D.C.

(Play Video: 2 min. 10 sec.)

Part 4 – Making it Work with the Congregate Meals Program

Discussion

1. Ask participants what they thought of the video.
2. Ask participants if they have ever been to a congregate meals site.
3. Role-play :
Ask participants to break into pairs and try to convince their friend about why they might want to go to congregate meals.

Sample prompts:

- Many congregate meals sites also have other activities for seniors, like exercise classes and field trips.
 - You can enjoy a hot and nutritious meal.
 - Participating in congregate meals is a great way to socialize with friends and meet new people.
4. Have pairs share the key points they gave their friend about the benefits of going to congregate meals.

Refer to the Senior Food Guide's section on Meals with Friends/Congregate Meals to share information on program eligibility guidelines and contact information.

Wrap-Up

1. Ask participants to share one thing that they learned.
2. Encourage participants to help spread the word about congregate meals and become advocates against senior hunger.

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