

Body of Knowledge: Project Advocates Impact on Classroom Hunger

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Abstract

Students apply the Body of Knowledge in a capstone assignment in a Foundations course in Human Sciences. In the *Making an Impact* assignment students are charged to research a social issue in their discipline, apply strengths they learned in self-assessment instruments, and advocate to improve the issue. An example is the project showcasing educator support of the Backpack Buddy program to impact childhood hunger in the classroom which connects Body of Knowledge concepts of basic needs, wellness, family strengths, community vitality, sustainability, and capacity building.

Purpose

The objectives for this assignment are two-fold, first, to evaluate current and future trends that impact work and the near environment and second, to synthesize of the body of knowledge and integration of the issues and trends impacting all of the professionals and careers in Human Sciences Professions.

Literature Review

Social issues are unifying topics students can make connections to the body of knowledge concepts. When learners are actively involved examining social issues where they can relate problems to families and communities associated with everyday life, they can pose alternative ways of resolving the practical and perennial problems (Williams, 1999).

Social issue context theory provides a meaning for examining social forces initiated by individuals who seek to change or impact a broader social structure, belief or behavior (Kozulin, 2002). Central to community development, it implies a sense of awareness, and acceptance of a pattern of beliefs or actions of individuals. The theory can be used as a tool to analyze, identify, understand and make predictions in relation to social issues that impact the well-being and life chances of individuals. Williams (1999) suggests students looking at social issues must be encouraged to find their own solutions.

Students can learn about professionalism and methods of advocacy to support the mission of the profession to improve the lives of individuals, families and communities.

Childhood hunger in school is a social issue and a growing problem in this nation. As the economy continues to be unpredictable, many families find it hard to provide 3 meals a day for their families. The students come to school hungry on Monday morning and are not getting the full value that school is supposed to offer. The goal of the Backpack Buddy is to work to fill that gap by providing nutritious, child-friendly food for school children to take home over the weekend (houstonfoodbank, 2016), teachers can utilize their strengths to advocate utilizing the direction action organizer steps. The AAFCS body of knowledge concepts of basic needs, wellness, family strengths, community vitality, sustainability and capacity building relate to the social issue of hunger and food insecurity.

Methodology

Family and Consumer Sciences professional are in a position to impact individuals, families, communities and the issues they confront.

Procedures

Students outlined a social problem, analyzed personal strengths, identified a community agency, and ways to advocate for change in a written paper and visual presentation. The paper and visual presentation, a reflection of learning related to the topics of the course brought together the problem, possible solutions, challenges, a time frame and the stakeholders involved in addressing the issue.

Steps:

1. Research a social issue in your field
2. Review strengths from self-assessment instrument records
3. Identify an agency, activity or resource associate with the issue
4. Utilize the Direct action organizer steps to determine how to advocate for the issue
5. Produce a paper outlining the components
6. Design a visual presentation using Piktochart

Results

Childhood hunger in schools is an example of a social issue that impacts the role of professionals such as FCS teachers and families who struggle to meet basic needs. The Body of Knowledge core concepts are reflected in the families who are food insecure and utilize the Backpack Buddy program. Building on family strengths, community vitality and sustaining the resources available to families allows children to thrive and learn in the classroom. Teachers must utilize capacity building to utilize strengths, understand and solve problems while respecting the diversity of students. Sustainability is reflected in the Backpack program management of resources and the promotion of sustainable practices to support students in need.

The capstone assignment reflects how students can integrate the use of self assessment strengths, to advocate for positive change to impact a social issue by applying steps to improve lives utilizing steps from the direct action organizer guide.

Conclusions and Implications

- ✓ Students make an impact on social issues by advocating for change utilizing the direct action organizer tool.
- ✓ Students are able to determine how to utilize personal strengths to solve social problems.
- ✓ Students are able to identify the Body of Knowledge components in social issues where they can advocate for positive change.
- ✓ Students are able to learn new technology to present highlights of assignment.

Hunger in the Classroom

3 meals a day is a privilege that not all students get due to family poverty or economic crisis

Many Students don't get the basic needs at home and rely on the school for breakfast and lunch but on the weekends get few to no meals

When children do not get the proper nutrients, they have a hard time focusing and learning in class

It's hard to learn when you're hungry.



17 million children live in food insecure households

FEEDING AMERICA

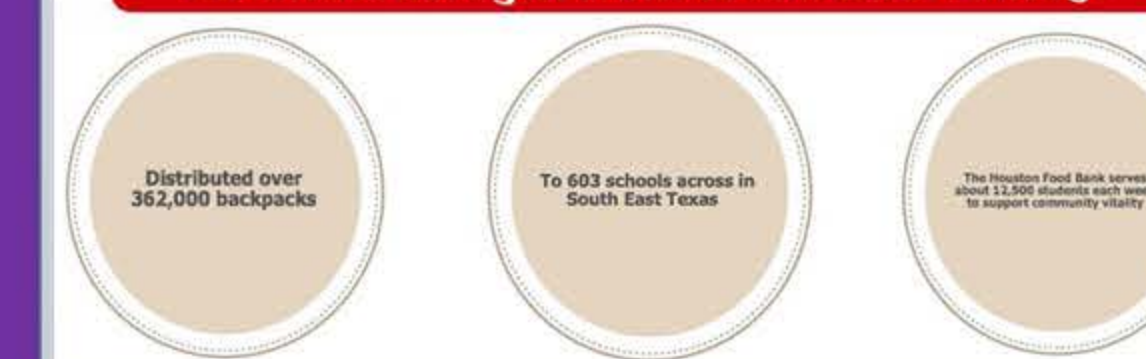
A look inside the Backpack



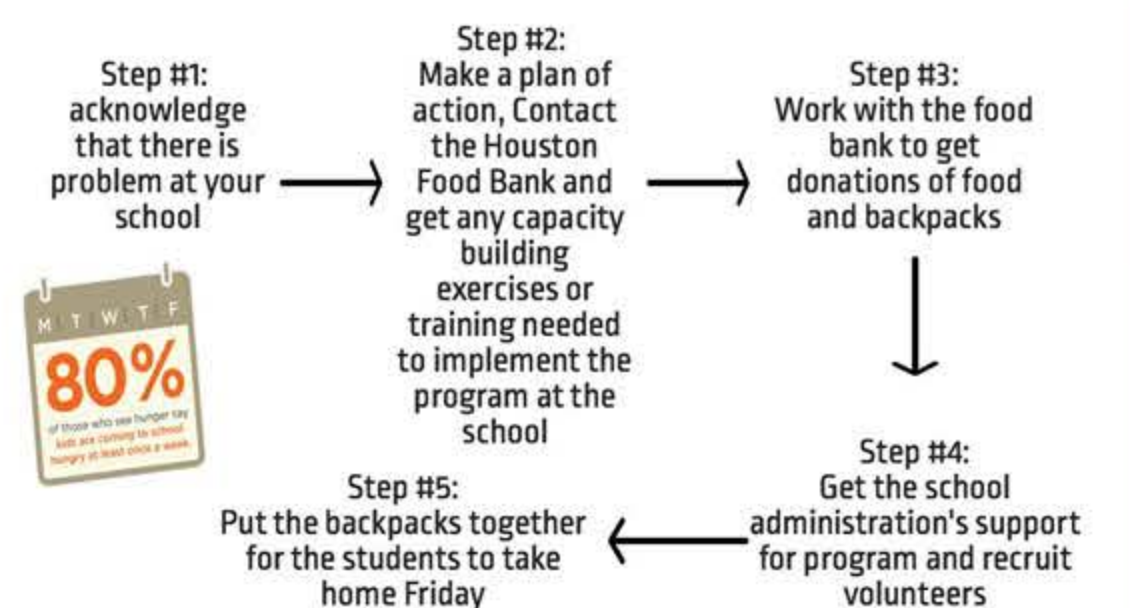
Each Backpack provides 6 meals per weekend. Food that is included are items like cereal, canned vegetables, beans, canned fruit and healthy snacks. Providing meals on the weekend can help families stress less about not being able to give their children the meals they need, helps maintain the wellness of the children and strengthens the family as a whole.

Backpack Buddy

Backpack BUDDIES
Because hunger doesn't end on Friday.



What it takes to be an Advocate



References

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