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2014 CCE Summer Internships

CATEGORY ARCHIVES: THE INFLUENCE OF PAST FOOD INSECURITY ON PARENTS' USE OF CHILD FEEDING

PRACTICES RECOMMENDED TO PREVENT CHILD OBESITY

Weeks 7 and 8: Aug 4 – 16

Posted on **August 25, 2014** by **Tracey Rosa**

I can't believe this internship is over already! These last two weeks things have been slowing down quite a bit, as I have finished the bulk of my interviews. I did a few interviews early in the week, and spent the rest of my time going over everything I've learned this summer! This is actually my favorite part because now I can revisit all my interviews and really look at what people were saying. By listening to them again and reviewing transcripts I am able to notice things people said that I may not have picked up on during the interviews. There are a lot of different themes and ideas that have come up in these interviews that I think are important for understanding the effects of food insecurity. For example, a lot of participants have told me that growing up worried about having enough food has made them "obsessed" with food, and some participants have told me that they think this led to them having a weight problem later in life. Other participants have explained that their experiences in childhood motivate them to make sure their own children always have enough to eat, and never have to experience hunger like they themselves may have experienced. Of course these are just a few examples of what I've heard from my participants, and I think that in these interviews we have a good picture of what it is like to grow up with food insecurity. Now the next step is making sense of everything and using this data to develop a survey that will be used to identify people who may have had similar experiences in their childhoods, which I will be doing this fall back at Cornell.

Now that it is the end of my internship, I'd just like to say how thankful I am for this experience. Not only did I learn a lot about research and collect a lot of data for this project, but I met a lot of new and interesting people, and learned quite a bit from them. I think this has been the most valuable part of my internship, because I have learned a lot about the needs of low-income families and the challenges they face. I also really enjoyed talking with people from different backgrounds and who may have had very different experiences than me. Lastly, I would like to thank Jennifer Colletti and Zahrine Bajwa and all the CCE Nutrition staff at Nassau and Suffolk for hosting me as an intern this summer, and to specially thank their educators Mae Bennett, Victoria Guardon, and Gerry Lake who were so

helpful with recruitment for my project!

Now it's back to Ithaca for analysis and writing!

Posted in **The Influence of Past Food Insecurity on Parents' use of Child Feeding Practices Recommended to Prevent Child Obesity**

Week 6 – July 28- Aug 2

Posted on **August 5, 2014** by **Tracey Rosa**

Wow, I can't believe this is already the 6th week of my internship! This week was pretty busy with interviews, all of which were done at a food pantry in Suffolk County. I have now conducted close to 30 interviews with participants from all over Long Island, with all different backgrounds and experiences. I spent a lot of time thinking about this throughout the week, and realized how much I have learned. Before I began working on this project I felt like I sort of understood how low-income families live and what it means to be food insecure. However, after talking to almost 30 different people about their experiences I've realized how little I really knew about how other families live. For example, even though I knew hunger could be a part of food insecurity, I realized I really didn't understand what it was like to be hungry. But just by listening to people talk about their experiences, I've gained a better understanding of the sensations, memories, and emotions that go along with something like hunger, and learned people hold onto these experiences throughout their childhood and into adulthood.

When I was waiting for my participants in between interviews I spent some time sitting in the food pantry, and this alone has been a wonderful experience. Even though the people visiting the pantry are experiencing hard times, it was great seeing how happy and thankful they all were when they got their food packages. What was really amazing though, was watching all the volunteers—some of them young kids—put together the food packages. Just by watching and talking with them I could tell that they really enjoyed having the opportunity to help out their fellow community members. I also saw a few people stop by with food to donate, like one smiling man who came in with bags of fresh vegetables from his own garden. Then I saw a lot of people receiving tips on healthy eating from the CCE educator. After hearing about some really sad or challenging experiences people had when growing up during the interviews, it was great seeing how many different people are giving and receiving help so that fewer people need to have such experiences.

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Week 5 – July 21-26

Posted on **July 30, 2014** by **Tracey Rosa**

This has definitely been my busiest week so far! Originally I had about six interviews scheduled, and I ended up doing eleven interviews this week! Interviewing at the food pantry has been working out very well. The pantry volunteers have been so helpful and scheduled two or three interviews every day this week for me and had a quiet room for me to use so I was able to interview the participants right then and there, which has been great because I don't have to worry about people forgetting about the interview or getting last-minute schedule conflicts. And again this week from interviewing at the pantry, shelter, and a few other places I am hearing about a lot of very different experiences from my participants. This week I interviewed a few participants who grew up outside of the United States, mostly in Latin and Central America, and it has been very interesting hearing what they have to say. From what they're telling me it seems like the types of foods and ways they are cooked there are quite different than here!

I also think that after doing 11 interviews this week I have gotten much more comfortable and skilled with the interview process. I feel like I am getting better at knowing when to probe for more information and noticing when I am asking the same question repeatedly just with different words. Some participants are more talkative and open to sharing these experiences than others, so for them I am trying to avoid asking questions about things they already talked at lengths about, and for the less talkative participants I am working on probing and asking follow-up questions to get a little more information where I can. So far I think my interviews are going really well though, and next week I plan to do a few more interviews and then start going over the transcripts and recordings of the ones I have done to see what I've learned so far!

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Week 4- July 14-19

Posted on **July 30, 2014** by **Tracey Rosa**

This was quite an exciting week for me! After all the recruitment work I am happy to say that I finally got started interviewing! I had four interviews this week, which means I got to hear about some very interesting experiences that people have had. I also had the opportunity to visit a few different communities on Long Island to meet with participants, and even had the opportunity to visit a shelter for some interviews. I really enjoy conducting these interviews because I get the opportunity to hear about how different families ate and how participants remember these experiences, all while practicing my interviewing skills! Because each participant has his/her own experiences to share each interview flows a little differently, so I have been able to practice asking follow-up questions and probing. Sometimes it's hard to know what information is missing from the interview until after we're done and I listen to the recording, but I think with practice I am getting better at recognizing when I need more information from the participant while interviewing.

I also attended the Cooperative Extension class in Nassau again this week, and had the chance to interview there

and help out with the 24-hour food recall they were doing that day. The challenge is trying to help people estimate how much of each food they ate, because most people don't measure out their meals in cups or ounces. The class learned and made a healthy snack recipe with tortilla chips, beans, corn, and salsa, so it was fun being there for that. One class participant's kid really liked the recipe! I also had the opportunity to attend a staff meeting in Suffolk, where I was able to meet more educators who are helping me continue to find interested participants.

Next week I have a lot of interviews scheduled. Some are with people I met at the DSS, others are from the shelter, and quite a few were recruited from a food pantry with the help of Suffolk educator Victoria Guardon. I am really looking forward to getting more interviews done!

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Week 3- July 7-12

Posted on **July 15, 2014** by **Tracey Rosa**

This was a very busy week for me! Monday and Tuesday I went to the Department of Social Services with Mae Bennett, and educator from Nassau CCE. We had a nice table set up in the waiting room at the DSS with plastic fruits and vegetables and all kinds of brochures and pamphlets on healthy eating. Mae was there giving out information about CCE and nutrition classes, so when people came to our table to hear from Mae, I had the opportunity to tell them about my study. Between the two days I got almost 20 people to sign up for the interviews, so I was very happy about that!

Sitting at the table at DSS was also great because I got to hear people's nutrition questions and learn what really concerns people. One young woman came up to the table to tell us how she's trying to eat healthier because she just found out she was pre-diabetic, and so she was very excited about all the information we were able to give her. Another man came up and asked how his friend who is a vegetarian can get protein, so Mae and I explained how eating beans and nuts is a great way to get protein.

After spending some time at DSS, I tried my luck at scheduling some interviews with the people I recruited. I had scheduled two interviews this week, but neither of them showed up. Disappointing, but at least I am getting somewhere with recruitment! Then on Saturday I attended the first day of Mae's class in Hempstead. Since it was the first day we spent most of the time getting to know the class and filling out paperwork. Next week I'll have to remember to take a picture of the great posters and plastic foods Mae sets up for the class. Her students were also interested in participating in my study, so my plan is to interview them one-by-one at the end of class each week. Suffolk CCE has also gotten me in touch with the staff at a shelter where they do some nutrition programs, and there is space and interested people for the interviews there too.

Now that I have a good number of interested participants, my focus is now scheduling interviews!

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Week 2- June 30-July 5

Posted on **July 4, 2014** by **Tracey Rosa**

Today marks the end of my second week as an intern, and I am amazed at how quickly this is going by! This week my focus was recruitment, recruitment, recruitment. I have a lot of interviews ahead of me, so I am happy to finally begin the recruitment process. Unfortunately, so far it has been tricky getting the recruitment process started because with summer vacation starting for kids on Long Island, Cooperative Extension has been in the process of shifting focus from programs for adults to programs for kids. This was also a slow week due to the Fourth of July, so I didn't have the chance to attend any events for recruitment yet. However, next week a lot of the programs and events in Nassau and Suffolk start up, so I have a lot of events to attend on my schedule. Monday and Tuesday I am going to the Department of Social Services with an educator from the Nassau office to recruit. The DSS is where people go to receive aid for programs like Family Assistance and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps), so it should be a great place to recruit for my study. Hopefully I will find some people who are interested in participating, and can schedule some interviews for later in the week.

Because this was a slow week recruitment-wise, I spent a lot of time coding interviews, reading some literature, and working on writing up the methodologies for this study, focusing particularly on sampling procedures and criteria. I am also trying to familiarize myself more with Atlas.ti, the software I am using to code my interviews. I usually like to code them by hand first and then do them on the computer, but I figured it would be a good idea to get more comfortable with the program so I can save time and skip the hand-written portion.

Now that recruitment plans are set, I feel like this project is really picking up momentum, and hopefully by this time next week I will at least have some interested participants, and maybe even an interview or two done already!

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Week 1- June 23-28

Posted on **June 27, 2014** by **Tracey Rosa**

I just finished my first week as a Cooperative Extension intern, and I am so excited for all the work ahead of me! I will be working on a research project all summer, and am happy to be working with Cooperative Extension. I am

located at the Cooperative Extension offices in Suffolk and Nassau Counties on Long Island. I am working on my faculty sponsor Dr. Katherine Dickin's research project that aims to understand how parents' experiences with food insecurity in their childhoods affects how they feed their own children. For the summer, I will be conducting interviews to learn about peoples' different experiences with food insecurity, and will be testing and revising a survey tool that will be used to assess levels of previous food insecurity. The goal of this project is to understand how peoples' experiences may act as a barrier to adopting healthy feeding practices, so that in the future nutrition education programs can address these issues.

This week I met with my supervisors at Suffolk and Nassau to talk about the project and discuss plans for recruiting participants. The plan is for me to go to their classes and programs and try to find people who are interested in doing an interview with me. Recruitment is always a challenge, so I am happy I'll have Cooperative Extension's help with this. I am also looking forward to getting the chance to attend these classes and programs. One educator told me that she has class participants who tell her that they have their kids clean their plates because that's what their mothers made them do, which is something that people experiencing food insecurity are sometimes told to do, so this should be a great learning experience for me!

Because I also worked on this project in Ithaca during the school year, I also spent this week going over old interviews and looking at what I've already learned, what new questions I should ask, and what I still need to find out. I am really excited to see how Long Island participants' experiences will be similar or different to the upstate participants' experiences. Some of my upstate participants talked about how their families grew a lot of their own food, and I am interested to see if this idea comes up in a more suburban population. Having grown up on Long Island I am already familiar with this area, but it should be interesting to learn more about the lives of my fellow Long Islanders.

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CATEGORIES

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- **Assessing Potential for Scaling Up Farm to Cafeteria in Saratoga and Washington counties in New York State** (3)
- **Building a Community Legacy Together Program Evaluation** (4)
- **CCE Climate Change and Agriculture Intern: Helping Farmers Adapt to Climate Change in New York – Dutchess** (8)
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- **CCE Invasive Species Statewide Outreach Program Internship – Saratoga** (8)
- **CCE Invasive Species Statewide Outreach Program Internship – Tompkins** (5)
- **Development of Survey and monitoring procedures for a new pest in orchards – Black stem borer** (6)
- **Employing Biological Control Measures To Manage Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD) In Commercial and Organic Small Fruit Production Systems.** (6)
- **Health and the Brain Neuroscience Outreach** (10)

- [Healthy Gardens, Healthy Youth](#) (8)
- [Immigrant Integration in New Destinations: How to engage Latino children and youth with 4-H](#) (7)
- [Infant Poverty and the Achievement Gap](#) (7)
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