



Food for Thought: “Kids as Communicators”

What would it look like to inspire the next generation while urging our communities to take action against hunger?

Mid-Ohio Foodbank, in partnership with the *Growing Together Network* and *Partnerships Make a Difference*, present the sequential service-learning project to last year’s Hunger Art Action initiative.

Through Food for Thought: “Kids as Communicators,” students will act as marketing strategists for Mid-Ohio Foodbank’s newest campaign that engages your friends, family and community as essential sponsors of an important “Get Fresh. Give Fresh.” Produce Market initiative.

Each year, there is enough food grown in the U.S. to feed 10 billion people, yet more than 14 billion pounds of fresh produce is left in the fields. Meanwhile one in six Ohioans face food insecurity every day. With Mid-Ohio Foodbank’s commitment to fresh, nutritious foods, we are continually working to connect with farmers near and far to get produce from the fields to the plates of hungry central and eastern Ohioans. In 2013, 54 percent of food distributed by Mid-Ohio Foodbank was FRESH.

We believe food is health. Issues such as obesity, diabetes and hypertension, disproportionately affect those living with low incomes. We find that truth unacceptable. Mid-Ohio Foodbank strives to increase access to healthy foods in an effort to combat serious issues that accompany food insecurity. Mid-Ohio Foodbank distributes fresh food options that many of our neighbors cannot afford through essential programs such as Produce Markets. Fresh, healthy, nutritious foods are not a luxury – they are a necessity to thrive.

Produce Markets are free community events sponsored by Mid-Ohio Foodbank and select partnering agencies. At each Produce Market, a Foodbank truck delivers at least 10,000 pounds of fresh produce, bread and bakery products to a pre-selected community location to distribute to community members. The large events serve more than 200 families per market. The cost for one Produce Market is about \$2,500. Our goal is to host at least 1,000 Produce Markets, but, we can’t do that without our friends’ and family’s help!

The “Get Fresh. Give Fresh.” Campaign encourages community members to donate the funds needed to fill a Produce Market truck – effectively, financing the market to feed their hungry neighbors. Friends and family members do not have to fund a truck in its entirety; anyone can choose to make a donation to an already existing supporter truck. To donate, community members must visit www.midohiofoodbank.org/getfresh.

That’s where your students come in! The Foodbank is commissioning your students’ creativity. Students will learn about the issue of hunger through dedicated classroom time, service-learning projects and even tours or volunteer shifts (if age 13 or older) at Mid-Ohio Foodbank. Following, students will exercise their innovative marketing brains to produce food for thought, designing promotional tools they will deploy in their community to educate and encourage friends and family

to donate. Some examples of marketing tools you can create include handbill fliers, brochures, posters, commercials or PSAs, signage, branded T-shirts or merchandise, Facebook cover images, campaign specific mini-websites, performance art (poem, play, song, etc.) and public demonstrations, among others.

Educators, please refer to “Get Fresh with Your Education: Hunger Education Resource Guide” as a starting point for your and your students’ research and learning.

The Foodbank is eager to see your students’ work! Because students and classrooms will be responsible for deploying the marketing tactics into their communities, we ask that your students create a depiction of their “project journey” for display. Interpretation of the assignment is left to you and your students... a visual timeline, a collective class video with student interviews, an infographic, weekly blog posts, a written reflection, artwork, photography.

Through the “project journey,” we hope to capture your students’ learning experience throughout the process, including reflections, feelings and emotions and new skills acquired.

This is a layered project, with three major points of focus:

- 1) Learn and engage: research the realities of hunger, including lack of access to fresh produce
- 2) Authentic action: create and deploy marketing tools
- 3) Reflection: capture your journey to share

Nothing better than students doing the work of real people, practicing a potential career and learning more about their individual and collective power.

Although fundraising may occur during the project, the “learning journey” is the priority. If, through the project, your students decide they want collect and donate funds toward a Produce Market, please direct funds to the collaborative Network Schools Produce Market. While we encourage the marketing of the “Get Fresh. Give Fresh.” Campaign, we will not turn away other hunger-specific projects you wish to focus on instead.

Timeline:

March 6, 2014: “Growing Together” Critical Issues Summit – presentation of project

August 6, 2014: “Growing Together” kick-off – announce Hunger Action Month’s Kickoff event that students and teachers are invited to attend at Mid-Ohio Foodbank (3960 Brookham Dr., Grove City, OH 43213); present Hunger Education Resource Guide, media kit and “Kids as Communicators” project

Mid- to late-August: School begins

August 23, 2014 (12-2 p.m.): Hunger Action Month’s Kickoff event – teachers, students, families and community members are invited to attend at Mid-Ohio Foodbank (3960 Brookham Dr., Grove City, OH 43213)

September: Hunger Action Month begins – Network students encouraged to take part in events, begin hunger research

October-January: Teachers, students work on service-learning and creation of designs

End of February: Deploy marketing designs in your community, turn in depiction of “project journey”

March: “Growing Together” Critical Issues Summit serves as a time to share progress on “project journey”

May: “Growing Together” Student Leadership Summit and Year-End Celebration – culminating event to showcase your students’ depiction of “project journey”

Funds and marketing strategies must be completed by April 30, 2015, to ensure best deployment and effectiveness toward Produce Markets in summer 2015 and beyond.

Disclaimer: Mid-Ohio Foodbank will still accept and appreciate funds raised after April 30, 2015.

For questions, inquiries, suggestions or concerns, please contact Mid-Ohio Foodbank’s Yolanda Owens at yowens@midohiofoodbank.org or 614.317.9412 or *Growing Together Network* and *Partnerships Make a Difference’s* Karen Patterson at karen@partnershipsmakeadifference.org or 614.561.7310.