

Cross-Sector Intervention Strategies to Target Childhood Food Insecurity in North Carolina

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Background

- 1 in 5 children in North Carolina are food insecure (FI) or lack consistent access to adequate food
- FI is linked to poor child and adult outcomes in several domains

The NC Early Childhood Action Plan aims to ensure all young children in NC are:

- 1) healthy
- 2) safe and nurtured
- 3) learning and ready to succeed

Key benchmarks in 10 target areas including FI.



North Carolina Integrated Care for Kids (NC InCK):

- Child-centered service delivery and payment model, aims to improve quality of care and reduce cost of care for children insured by Medicaid or CHIP
- 80,000-100,000 children, 5 NC counties (Alamance, Orange, Durham, Granville, Vance), 2020-2026
- Aims to:
 - More holistically assess the needs of children
 - Coordinate services across sectors for kids with high needs
 - Design new ways of paying for care and outcomes
- Integrated care across core services areas e.g. clinical care, schools, **food**, housing, early care, child welfare, legal. Currently developing implementation strategies.

Objectives:

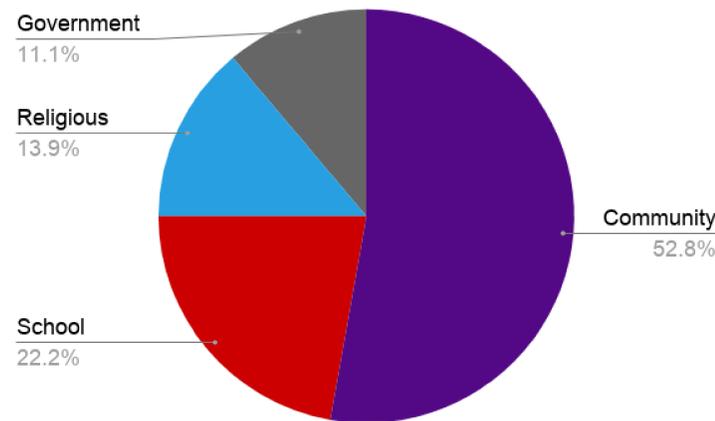
- 1) Describe cross-sector community-based resources and strategies to address FI for children in NC in order to inform NC ECAP planning
- 1) Apply findings to develop specific implementation recommendations to target FI in the NC InCK model

Data & Methods

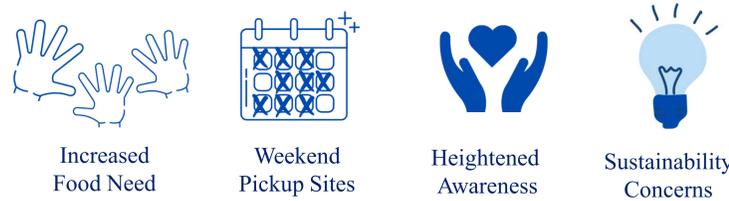


- 34 informants in various sectors, including school, community, and government (Figure 1).
- Interview content: organizational information and services, changes due to COVID-19, referral and engagement processes, community engagement, gaps and potential solutions, and best practices for addressing FI with families

Figure 1. Key informants (N=34) interviewed from a range of sectors providing food resources for children



Key Findings: COVID-19 Specific



“...COVID had really, has really awakened the public to the childhood nutrition issues.”

Key Findings: General



Barrier	Informant Quote
Transportation	“the ability to have resources to get everybody to where... It's hard. During this day and time, we don't think about people who don't have transportation because we just go out and get in the car and go.”
Stigma	“They don't want charity. It's embarrassing and it's denigrating in a way for them to come and get food for free.”
Access Barriers	“There are some people that don't get the support that they need because of where they live or because of lack of knowledge of how to get it, and I'm not sure how else to reach them. There might be a language barrier , there might be because of lack of internet access .”
Federal Program Enrollment	“A lot of times we hear that, “Yeah, I knew that they were serving free meals at school, but that's not for my family .” When really, it is.”

Recommendations for NC InCK



Systemic Recommendations:



Next Steps:

- Recommendations to be delivered at community and policy levels in order to inform ECAP planning and InCK development/implementation