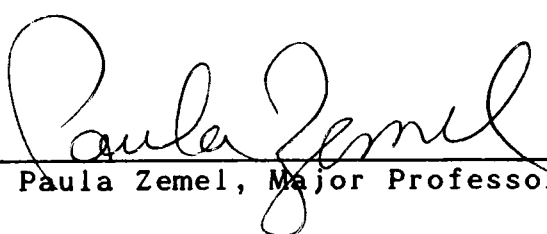
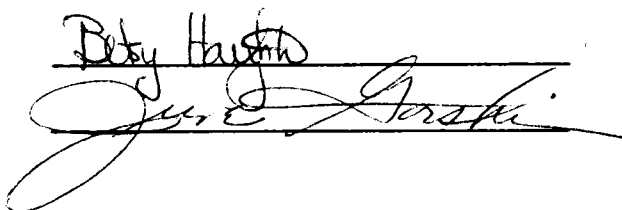


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I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Connie Frances McMichael entitled "Perceptions of School Personnel and Local Anti-Hunger Advocates on Hunger in Knox County Elementary Schools and Hunger Awareness Education Needs." I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Nutrition.


Dr. Paula Zemel, Major Professor

We have read this thesis
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Perceptions of School Personnel and Local Anti-Hunger
Advocates on Hunger in Knox County Elementary Schools and
Hunger Awareness Education Needs

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Science
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Connie Frances McMichael

August, 1994

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother,

MaryJo Smith McMichael

who is not only my mother but my best

friend and sister in Christ

and

Billy Hilman McMichael, Sr. my father

and brother in Christ.

My parents have both supported me emotionally
and financially during my educational endeavors.

This is also dedicated

to the millions of children in this

country who go hungry everyday.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Praise, honor and glory to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. . ." (Eph.3:20). I want to thank Him for giving me the strength, knowledge and ability to complete this thesis and "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in (me) will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil.1:6).

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their love and support: my parents, Mr. and Mrs. B. H. McMichael; my brother, Billy McMichael; my sister, brother-in-law, and niece, Beth, Dwayne, and Brooke Nail of Birmingham, AL. You have given me more than all the experiences in life could give. You have given me love, and without this I would not be where I am today.

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I believe in a country as wealthy as ours, that hunger is unacceptable, and my hope is that somehow this research will be used to bring awareness of the need to fight against

childhood hunger in this community and communities
throughout the country.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this project was to examine the perceptions of childhood hunger and hunger education needs in the elementary school, from key informants within the school and community. A needs assessment was conducted using grounded theory and qualitative techniques. Incorporating hunger education in the elementary schools can empower children to work against hunger within the community and take action to reduce their own hunger. However, the need for hunger education first must be identified by those involved in its implementation.

Volunteers including elementary school principals, secretaries, teachers, school food service employees, and anti-hunger advocates from the community were recruited to participate in group discussions about childhood hunger and the need for hunger education. There were three discussion groups with eight to nine participants. Group discussions were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim.

Qualitative techniques, using an interactive model adapted from Miles and Huberman, were used to analyze the transcript. Main themes were identified, clustered by similar contexts, and assigned a name that best described them. Data analysis continued when a data display was developed and representative statements were placed into issues, categories, subcategories, or components. Data were analyzed concurrently by a second researcher trained in

qualitative methods so that bias would be decreased and validity of findings would be verified. Findings suggest that the majority of elementary school personnel and local anti-hunger advocates are aware of hunger among children. Key informants attributed hunger to "neglectful parenting"; "uninformed parents"; "lack of financial resources"; "stigma and pride"; as well as "students choose to skip meals". Participants also recognized indicators of hunger among children including: "performance indicators"; "physical symptom indicators"; "children taking responsibility for their own food"; and "psychosocial indicators". Elementary school personnel and anti-hunger advocates defined hunger in two ways: "food insecurity (limited access to food)" and "poor quality of food".

Throughout the discussion, hunger education was confused with nutrition education. Therefore, some participants perceived that hunger education was actually addressed within nutrition education. Others stated it already existed within the schools' anti-hunger activities. Key informants thought it was included or should be included in other areas. These areas include religious institutions, PTA meetings, and parent education through community programs. Key informants viewed hunger education as important for parents and children. Community advocates and health professionals were recognized as being important in the development and implementation of a hunger education

curriculum. Additionally, elementary school personnel and local anti-hunger advocates suggested goals and objectives for a hunger education curriculum as well as hunger awareness activities. Although the school was recognized as an avenue to decrease hunger, parent education was emphasized. The findings suggest that teachers felt overburdened and this may be a barrier to the introduction of hunger education within the schools.

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PART I

Introduction, Background and Significance of Research

INTRODUCTION

Childhood hunger is a major problem in the United States. Although many developing countries face the problem of hunger, it also is prevalent in the United States. A recently reported study, supported by the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), identified approximately 11.5 million children under age 12 who are hungry or at risk of hunger in this country (1). Children are susceptible to hunger in the U.S. due to their dependency on the family and the community to provide them with a nurturing environment (2). Children who do not receive adequate nutrition will be exposed to poor physical and mental development and decreased resistance to infection. Hunger can lead to increased medical, educational, psychological and social costs (3).

According to Healthy People 2000: National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Objectives, children are targeted as an important group for health promotion and disease prevention goals (4). Two important goals of this report are to reduce health disparities among Americans and to improve the effectiveness of health education in schools (4). Learning about hunger and ways to prevent it also are important components of both health promotion and disease prevention, and should to be addressed in the classroom.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans include seven recommendations. These guidelines, which primarily attempt

to correct over-consumption of specific nutrients, are being implemented currently in many school health education curricula and in cafeteria menu planning (5). However, the problems of hunger and undernutrition still need to be addressed in schools. A cycle of undernutrition predisposes one to infection, contributing further to undernutrition, and ultimately to excess levels of morbidity and mortality (6).

The position statement of the American Dietetic Association, prepared by Hinton, Heimindinger, and Foerster, state that intensified education on hunger can help to end hunger (3). Lesson plans about hunger can be used in the classroom to teach elementary school children about the problem of hunger and ways to prevent it (7). While most curricula dealing with hunger focus on global hunger, only small components of some curricula specifically address community hunger problems (8). Little emphasis is directed toward ways to empower children to seek food assistance (9-12). Empowering children starts by educating them. Therefore, teaching children about resources available in the community as well as ways to recognize signs of hunger, can empower them to seek food assistance or help others (7). Hunger awareness education in elementary school classrooms has not been widespread in nutrition education literature. However, hunger education curricula, lesson plans, and materials can be found throughout the Educational Resource

Information Center (ERIC) database (8-12).

Social scientists have used qualitative research to explain real-world problems and phenomenon (13,14). The purpose of qualitative research is to discover important questions, processes and relationships, without testing them (13). Qualitative research methods can be used to better define what children can be taught about hunger in our communities as well as ways to empower children to have access to food (7). The ineffectiveness of teaching materials and their usability have been related to curriculum designers' poor understanding of the needs of teachers (15). However, by performing a needs assessment with key informants, such as teachers, school personnel and anti-hunger advocates, needs may be better identified. Teachers can contribute information about ways in which knowledge can be translated in the classrooms to facilitate teacher/student communication (15).

Key informants can provide information on how they perceive community problems and needs as front-line human service providers (16). Key informants within the elementary school setting, such as principals, school secretaries, school food service employees and teachers, are exposed to a large group of children and have insight into their educational needs and in many instances have insight into their home lives. Likewise, anti-hunger advocates, active in the fight against hunger within the community,

also can provide great insight into childhood hunger.

The Congressional Hunger Center, a new organization that functions much like the discontinued Select Committee on Hunger, is looking at ways to educate citizens about hunger issues and is targeting elementary and secondary schools (17). Discussion groups with key informants, including elementary school personnel and local anti-hunger advocates, can provide rich, descriptive information about their perceptions of childhood hunger. This information can be used to facilitate anti-hunger efforts between children, schools and the community. These key informants can assess also possible educational approaches in teaching children about hunger as a means to empower them (7).

In qualitative research, there is no precise problem statement or hypothesis, but rather a guiding hypothesis which is used as a tool to generate questions and explore patterns (13). The guiding hypothesis is a tool which should be used to help the researcher focus on the question to be answered (13). In this research, a grounded theory approach was used to help answer questions about childhood hunger and the needs for hunger awareness education in the school. Grounded theory means that the findings or data are grounded and supported in specific contexts (14). In other words, theories or questions to be answered are grounded in real-world patterns. Grounded theory relies on methods that take the researcher into and close to the real-world (14).

Qualitative research methods, such as group discussions using open ended questions are one way to obtain real-world information. Thus, a useful method to conduct this research is the application of qualitative methods in the form of group discussions. The purpose of this research was to explore the real-world perceptions and opinions of elementary school personnel and local anti-hunger advocates about childhood hunger and the needs of hunger awareness education in the schools.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

In order to address the specific aims identified for this project, research from several areas of hunger, nutrition, and qualitative research need to be examined.

Specifically, these areas include:

- Childhood hunger in the U.S.;
- Health issues and hunger;
- Efforts to decrease hunger in the U.S.;
- Areas of hunger research;
- Hunger education materials;
- Qualitative research;
- Qualitative research in nutrition;
- Needs assessment; and
- Key informants.

Childhood Hunger in the U.S.

It is estimated that as many as 11.5 million children under age 12 are hungry or at risk of being hungry (1). In an experience locally, over one quarter of the teachers in a school district stated children in their classrooms were hungry because they did not have enough food at home. An average of 3.4 +/- 1.9 hungry children were reported per 25 students in an average classroom (18). Hunger was discussed in an interview with mothers living in a low income urban neighborhood in a Mid-West city by a well known newspaper (19). These women commented on evidence of childhood hunger in their community, including children searching for food in garbage dumpsters (19). College students involved in a

community nutrition project in a soup kitchen noted the large number of children who came for food (20). Childhood hunger is becoming more recognized in daily life experiences and in the research literature.

Health Issues and Hunger

Children who suffer from hunger are two to three times more likely to suffer from other health problems, such as weight loss, irritability, headaches, fatigue, and inability to concentrate, than those children who do not experience hunger (1). Temper tantrums tend to occur more frequently when a child is hungry, tired or ill (21). Children who experience any of the health problems mentioned above are usually absent from school almost twice as many days than those without health problems (1).

The United States has one of the highest levels of poor children among industrialized countries. Children in poor families are at a disadvantage by being more susceptible to disease, accidents, death and hunger, because of their dependency on the family and the community to provide them with a nurturing environment (2,6). In addition to the children, society is suffering. Children who do not receive adequate nutrition may experience poor physical and mental development and have decreased resistance to infection (6). Thus, if children do not get the food they need, they may

not learn as well or as much in school. This can lead to higher costs for health care, special education and other social needs (3).

Efforts to Decrease Childhood Hunger in the U.S.

Programs that address childhood hunger, in addition to their own agendas, are available through non-governmental and governmental agencies. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has responsibility for food and agricultural agencies, such as the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). FNS administers the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, the Child Care Food Program and Summer Food Program, as well as the Nutrition Education and Training (NET) Program (22,23).

WIC provides nutritious foods to low-income children up to five years of age as well as infants, and pregnant, lactating, and post-partum women who are found to be at nutritional risk (22). The National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program are administered by FNS through state departments of education. Cost of meals for those participating in these programs is based on family income with children from low-income families receiving free or reduced price meals (22).

The Summer Food Service Program provides funds for

students' meals or snacks during summer months. The programs are operated by schools or local or municipal governments. Although the students do not have to prove their eligibility, the program is restricted to areas where one-half of the children are eligible for free or reduced price school lunches. Meals are served in school cafeterias, parks, or community recreation centers (24).

The Child Care Food Program (CCFP) provides standards and technical assistance as well as financial assistance to public family day care homes and child day care centers that serve food to low-income children (22). The Nutrition Education and Training (NET) Program, authorized as an amendment to the National School Lunch Act, provides nutrition education in the schools. The NET Program is administered through state departments of education and sponsors nutrition education for teachers, students, school food service managers and child day care providers (22). Although this program does not deal directly with childhood hunger, it educates children about the relationship of food to health and instructs teachers to teach nutrition in their classes (22).

There are also non-governmental organizations that are involved in assisting the hungry and impoverished. Some of these professional organizations include the American School Food Service Association, Children's Defense Fund, Bread for the World, and the Food Research and Action Center (23,25).

The American School Food Service Association aspires to secure the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. It also seeks to improve the health of and education for children, particularly from low-income families (25). The Children's Defense Fund (CDF), a leading advocacy group for children, deals with issues of state and federal budgets that fund programs for poor and minority children (25). Bread for the World is an independent public interest organization that monitors U.S. policy, conducts legislative advocacy with Congress, and guides voter action on behalf of people susceptible to hunger and poverty both in the United States and in developing countries (25).

The Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) is another non-profit organization that works to eradicate domestic hunger and undernutrition. It analyzes federal food assistance policies, and examines regulations and programs affecting the poor. FRAC developed a national questionnaire as part of a project to analyze the problem of childhood hunger in the U.S. This project is referred to as the Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project (CCHIP) survey. Results from this survey have helped promote advocacy and program development in order to address childhood hunger (1).

Children also have been recognized as an important target population in health promotion and disease prevention planning. The Department of Health and Human Services'

Healthy People 2000: National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Objectives (4) is a federal document used as a guide to develop and implement many health-related policies. Two goals of the Healthy People 2000 report are to reduce health disparities among Americans and improve the effectiveness of health education in schools (4). Learning about hunger and its prevention is also an important component of health promotion and disease prevention. According to an American Dietetic Association position paper, education on hunger can help end hunger (3). By incorporating hunger awareness education in the schools, teachers can empower hungry children to obtain food, teach children how to help others within the community in food shortage situations, and promote good health (7). Community hunger awareness education can help decrease the incidence of hunger in our children, our communities and our country (7).

Efforts to decrease hunger have been addressed by governmental and non-governmental programs. Although some of these programs do not address the issue of childhood hunger directly, they provide technical assistance so that nutritious foods and nutrition education can be provided to programs that serve low-income children that might be hungry or at risk of hunger (22,24).

Areas of Hunger Research

In the 1980's, when responsibility for social programs moved from the federal government to the states and private sectors, emergency food and shelter providers began to report an increasing number of children, youths, families and deinstitutionalized mentally ill using their services (26). This prompted many private and public agencies and organizations to document the need for food assistance through studies of hunger prevalence. Unfortunately, most of these reports are not available because they are unpublished manuscripts and circulation of these manuscripts is limited (26).

Studies about hunger in this country have been hindered because of the lack of agreement about what hunger is and how it should be assessed (27). However recent reports and research related to hunger in the U.S. were published in a supplemental issue in the Journal of Nutrition Education (23). One study (28) surveyed clients in food pantries of three different regions of New York State to identify their sources and amounts of income, as well as their food expenses and use of food programs. It was found that senior meal programs were not used to the extent food stamps, commodity foods and school meal programs were used. Another study (29) presented the development of questions about food sufficiency for the Third National Health and Nutrition

Examination Survey. Additionally, a survey using the Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project questionnaire, to assess the prevalence of hunger among low income families in Washington state, was published. The researchers in this study concluded that the survey's use was validated, because it complimented the theoretical model of domestic hunger (30). Cohen and others (31) performed a national study on hunger among the homeless in twenty different cities. They performed 24-hour recalls, a tool used to assess food intake, with 1,704 homeless adults using services at soup kitchens and shelters. The results of the 24-hour recalls showed that the homeless were receiving two or more meals a day and meeting the USDA recommendations of 2-3 servings for meat and meat substitutes. However, the intake of fruits, vegetables, grains and dairy products was particularly low. This study indicates that although great efforts are being made to provide food for the homeless population, diets are inadequate.

Qualitative methods of research also have been used in the study of hunger (32). A study (32) was performed to understand hunger from the perspective of women who had been hungry and as a means to construct and evaluate indicators measuring hunger. The first purpose of the study was to understand perceptions of hunger by completing in-depth interviews with 32 women. The second purpose was to use the information derived in those interviews to develop survey

items as a means to assess the prevalence of hunger. Concepts from the interviews were used to develop items, such as questions, that could be used to assess hunger. Three dimensions to measure hunger evolved. These dimensions included household hunger, children's hunger, and women's hunger. The items within each dimension were assessed in interviews with women and scored. Scale scores were formed for each dimension by adding together the responses to each item. The responses were scored 1 for "never" to 5 for "always". A higher number indicated greater hunger. The authors concluded that the scales can be used as tools for measuring hunger in households, women, and children, by making it possible to study the nature of the relationship between hunger and its risk factors and consequences.

In the area of hunger, there are numerous possibilities for research. Developing hunger assessment tools, measuring the extent of hunger using these tools, evaluating the use of food assistance programs, and assessing the diets of people at risk of hunger are valuable areas of hunger research (28-32). This type of research can help the public understand the problem and find ways to end hunger in the United States.

The area of hunger research is important because not all people experience hunger in the same way (32). Likewise, hunger can not be measured in the same way. For

example, women in the Radimer et al study (32) were selected to provide information about their experience with hunger. However, in addition to their own experiences, items emerged dealing with their children's hunger (32). This research is important because collecting information from those who have experienced hunger can be helpful in developing measures of hunger. Researchers must be able to measure hunger in a reliable manner so needs of the hungry population can be documented for policy and program development. Further research examining perceptions of those people working with groups at risk of hunger, for example children, could also be beneficial in assessing the needs of children. Worthwhile information for policy and program development could be gathered by further research in the area of hunger.

Hunger Educational Materials

There are few educational curricula that solely address hunger and hunger as it is related to the community. Hunger issues are most often seen integrated into curricula in the context of global hunger and associated global issues (8-12). There are curricula and activities available for elementary school students, high school students, nutrition students at the college level, as well as nutrition professionals working with hungry people (8-12,20,21). However, only curricula for elementary school students will

be discussed in this review. Many of these instructional materials are developed for fourth, fifth and sixth grade students. At this age, children are able to review their own situations and to develop attitudes based on knowledge, and are open-minded and are sufficiently mature to process relatively complex information (35).

Hunger curricula for elementary education include the Food First Curriculum: An Integrated Curriculum for Grade 6, World Food Day Curriculum Grades K-3, World Food Day Curriculum Grades 4-7 and World Hunger: Learning to Meet the Challenge (8-11). In addition to these curricula, a unit entitled Our Divided World: Poverty, Hunger and Overpopulation is part of the curriculum Our Only Earth Series: A Curriculum for Global Problem Solving (12). A brief discussion of these curricula is provided below.

The Food First Curriculum: An Integrated Curriculum of Grade 6 is a six-unit social studies curriculum that helps students learn not only the paths of food from the farm to the table, but also global problems associated with hunger. One unit entitled "Why are People Hungry?" addresses hunger and explores ways to help children understand global hunger. Another unit entitled "Who's Hungry in the U.S.A.?" aims to discuss poverty and hunger among certain groups of Americans, such as the elderly, children, women, and minorities. This curriculum addresses hunger at the global and local level; however, other curricula exclusively

address global hunger (8).

There are actually three curricula associated with World Food Day. The curricula are for grades K-3, 4-7, and 8-12. World Food Day Curriculum K-3 (10) is designed for use by teachers on World Food Day, October 16, and includes activities that can be used throughout the year. This curriculum focuses on the world's food and farm problems. World Food Day Curriculum 4-7 (11) also covers issues dealing with world hunger. In this curriculum, children are introduced to the concept of food as the most basic human need. They also explore the differences between wants and needs. Students also are encouraged in one activity to discuss how First and Second World countries can help solve the problem of hunger in Third World Countries (11).

World Hunger: Learning to Meet the Challenge (9) is a curriculum for elementary and secondary education. The section of this curriculum for elementary school students provides strategies that can be integrated into special school events and holidays, such as Thanksgiving.

The unit from the curriculum, Our Only Earth Series: A Curriculum for Global Problem Solving (12) entitled "Our Divided World: Poverty, Hunger and Overpopulation", is designed for grades 4-12. This unit is intended to provide students with the knowledge and skills to address problems associated with global effects of poverty, hunger and overpopulation around the world.

Most instructional materials did not mention or discuss the method of design used in the development of the curricula (9-12). Evaluation techniques of these previous curricula were not discussed and only subjective comments described their usability. The Food First Curriculum does state that materials were tested across the country, but evaluation methods and results were not detailed (8).

Although many curricula and classroom activities dealing with hunger exist, it is not known to what extent these curricula are being used in the classroom (8-12). The curricula do not address community hunger and ways to empower children in the classroom who may be at risk of hunger. In addition, there are no indications that they were developed following a thorough assessment of school and community needs.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research methods are an important method of inquiry for the social sciences (13,14). Qualitative research is descriptive in nature. The primary focus of qualitative research is usually real-world observations, problems and questions (12,31). Thus, data collection and interpretation in qualitative research involves the use of words or content. There are three qualitative methodologies used to collect data: in-depth open-ended interviews,

direct observation, and written documents (13).

Qualitative Research in Nutrition

Qualitative methods have been used in the area of nutrition research. Trendner and Achterberg (36) interpreted focus group tapes using qualitative methods to evaluate nutrition education materials. Hunt (37) used qualitative research methods to develop cross-cultural nutrition curricula in an international setting. Janas et al, (38) produced a model for understanding and organizing the process involved in dietary changes to lower cholesterol using qualitative methods.

Until recently, qualitative research in nutrition education has been mainly in the use of survey questionnaires (39). Questionnaires with open-ended questions have been sent to subjects and their written responses analyzed. In-depth, open ended interviews with individuals and groups are being used increasingly to explore perceptions about nutrition education materials (36).

Needs Assessment

Needs assessment is a significant element of program planning in a community or agency (40). Needs assessments

can be conducted with individuals, groups, or institutions (40,41). In a needs assessment one can identify the needs of an organization or community. The perceived needs are usually important to society and not currently being addressed (41).

Eastmond et al, (42) suggest needs assessments should be structured in two phases. The first phase is a pre-assessment phase and the second phase serves as a formal needs assessment. The pre-assessment phase deals with planning rather than true evaluation. Therefore, the pre-needs assessment looks to the future to identify critical or unmet needs and is a valuable step in the planning process.

Key Informants

Key informants can provide important data during the pre-assessment phase of a needs assessment (16). A key informant is an individual who has direct contact with those experiencing problems and is presumed to be knowledgeable about the needs and problems of the group being studied (12,40,41). The idea of using key informants is that these individuals can provide valuable information about issues important to a community, by virtue of their own experiences with individuals in the community (40,43). Often the use of key informants is referred to as the key informant approach or the "grapevine" approach (40). Key informants are a

valuable asset to program planning and the program implementation process.

Summary

Current research and literature illustrate the importance of studying childhood hunger. Fortunately, there are governmental and non-governmental programs that provide food and advocacy activities that can help reduce the prevalence of hunger.

Hunger education has been recognized by advocacy groups as a means of reducing hunger. Many curricula and materials are available through the Educational Resource Information Center (ERIC); however, the majority of these curricula focus on world hunger. Teaching children about hunger at the local level and available food resources can empower them to seek access to food or help others seek food assistance.

There are many studies that address the issue of hunger. Qualitative methods have been used to develop indicators to measure the prevalence of hunger. The collection of data using qualitative techniques can provide rich and descriptive information that supports real-world experiences.

A needs assessment with key informants using qualitative methods is an appropriate means to examine the

perceptions of childhood hunger. Key informants also can help determine the needs of hunger awareness education in elementary schools.

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APPENDIX
Definition of Terms

CCHIP: "Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project (CCHIP) is a research project employing a point-prevalence survey to document the extent of hunger among low income families (with incomes at or below 185% of the federal poverty level) with at least one child under the age of twelve. CCHIP was designed as a systematic approach to studying the problem of hunger particularly among families with children" (1).

HUNGER: "As defined by CCHIP, hunger is the mental and physical condition that comes from not eating enough food due to insufficient economic, family or community resources" (1).

UNDERNUTRITION: "Measurable changes in nutritional status that result from a chronic marginal deficit of food quality and/or quantity" (2).

CURRICULUM: "The planned interaction of students with instructional content, instructional resources, and instructional processes for the attainment of educational objectives" (3).

LESSON PLAN: "A teaching outline of the important points of a lesson arranged in the order in which they are to be presented: may include objectives, points to be made,

questions to ask, references to materials, assignments, etc." (4).

HUNGER EDUCATION: The process of educating or of being educated in the area of hunger including: the definition, indicators, consequences, prevalence, causes, as well as methods to prevent hunger involving awareness and utilization of resources and resource people. Hunger education is known as hunger awareness education also.

NUTRITION EDUCATION: "A process which assists the public in applying knowledge from nutrition science and the relationship between diet and health to their food practices. It is a deliberate effort to improve the nutritional well-being of people by assessing the multiple factors that affect food choices, tailoring educational methodologies and messages to the publics being reached and evaluating results. It can help individuals develop a knowledge base, make a commitment to good nutrition, promote selection of nutritionally adequate diets and develop decision-making skills" (5).

Definition of Terms: Bibliography

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PART II

**Needs Assessment to Determine Hunger Education Needs
in Elementary Schools Based on Perceptions
of Key Informants Within the Community**

INTRODUCTION

Recent surveys have indicated the magnitude of childhood hunger risk in the U.S. (1). Governmental and non-governmental programs have responded to hunger and food insecurity among children and families (2). Schools can provide an opportunity to identify, intervene, refer and empower children and their families to meet their needs and function in society (3). Schools can also be a focal point for increasing awareness among children about hunger and food security (4).

Educational materials have been developed to increase awareness among school-aged children about the need to reduce global hunger and promote citizenship (5-9). However, many of these curricula do not address hunger in communities in the U.S. (5-8). Although these curricula are available to teachers and nutritionists, information about how the needs were assessed, and subsequently how materials were developed to meet the identified needs, have not been described in the literature (9-10).

Thus, the present study was planned to: 1) identify the need for hunger education in an urban elementary school system and 2) elicit approaches from school personnel and local anti-hunger advocates for development of educational materials that address hunger and food insecurity in the community.

METHODS

The purpose of this qualitative-naturalistic-formative study was to identify needs by collecting information from school personnel and community anti-hunger advocates in order to ground the findings in the context of the community (11). This approach has been shown to be effective and appropriate for developing innovative programs, such as designing nutrition education materials and programs (12-15). Thus, a qualitative approach using semi-structured group interviews in a discussion format may be useful to understand how school personnel and community anti-hunger advocates perceive the need for hunger awareness in their schools (11,16-17). This study was approved by the University's Office of Research Compliance and the School Districts's research office.

Participants

Sixty-four letters were mailed to each elementary school principal in a school district asking for volunteers to participate in this project. Three principals volunteered to contribute their opinions during semi-structured discussion group held at each school. Anti-hunger advocates from the same community were identified after consultation with a nutrition director of a local

agency involved in anti-hunger activities. The anti-hunger advocates were asked to volunteer to participate in these discussion groups and identify needs also. All of these individuals served as key informants to provide input in the needs assessment process. Key informants provide valuable information about issues important to a community by virtue of their own experiences with those individuals in the community (18-19). Key informants in this project included the elementary school principals, teachers, office and food service staff and local anti-hunger advocates.

Data Collection

Data collection procedures were developed based on qualitative techniques described in the literature (11,17,20-21). Data were collected during three one-hour semi-structured group discussions led by trained moderators. Training included reviewing literature on qualitative research (11-17,20-21), attending seminars (22-23), practicing qualitative techniques with others experienced in these methods and gaining experience as a participant in other focus groups (22).

Group discussions were held in the library of each elementary school with eight to nine participants and three moderators in each group. Prior to the group discussion, consent forms were signed, demographic information was

obtained, and refreshments were served.

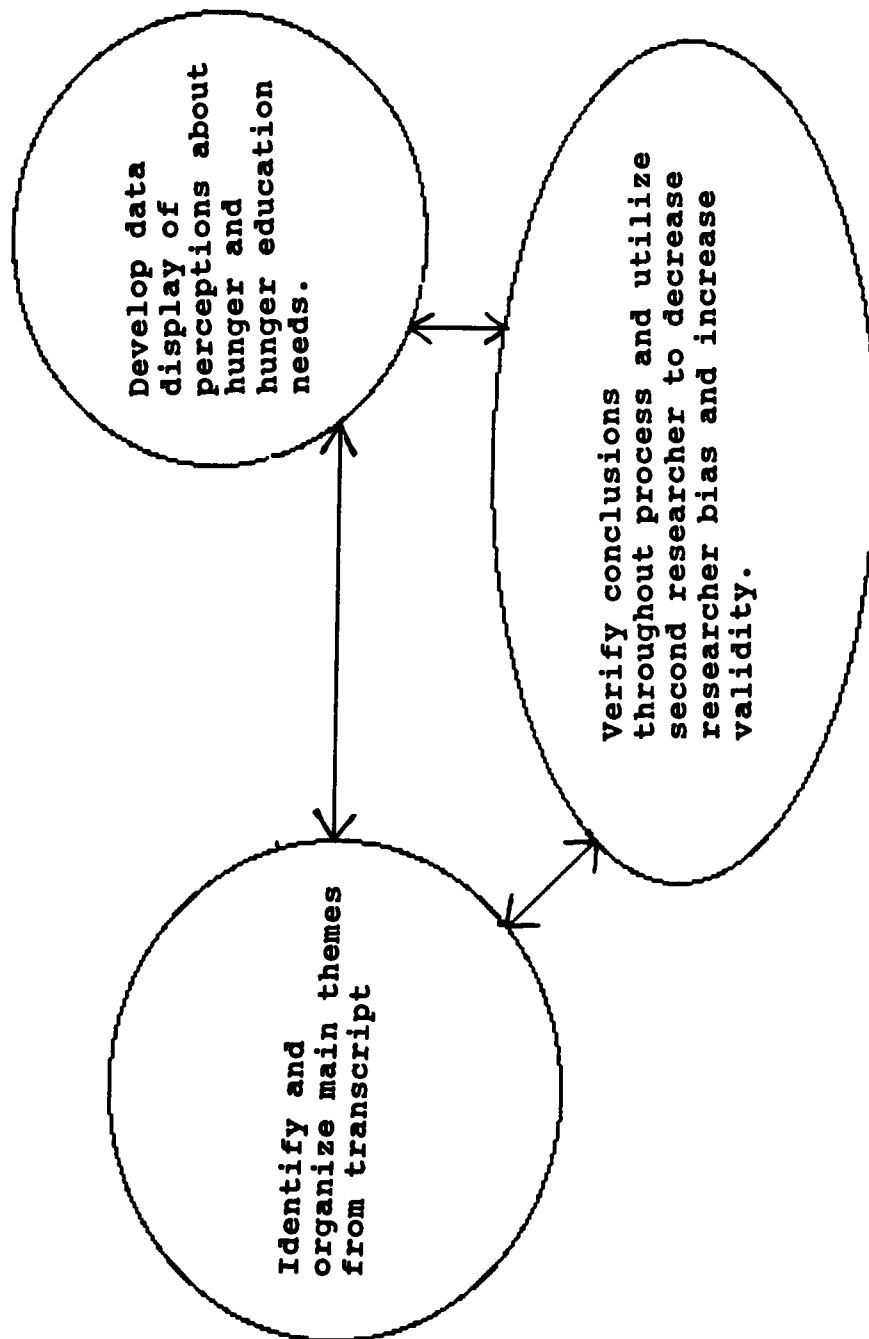
The same three moderators were present at each group discussion. The moderators included moderator #1 who facilitated discussion; moderator #2 who assisted in monitoring the audio tape player and helped to facilitate discussion; and moderator #3 who sat outside the group and recorded the dialogue progression. Short notes were written with identification of group member and a few brief words of dialogue to facilitate subsequent transcription.

Discussions were semi-structured group interviews and used a previously validated discussion instrument (24). Group discussions were audio-taped and the tapes subsequently were transcribed verbatim. Proper names were not included in the transcription so that key informants would remain anonymous. Transcripts from all three schools were merged together. The final transcript was organized in dialogue form and each key informant's position title preceded his/her statement. Copies of the transcripts were used for data analysis.

Data Analysis

Methods for analysis of transcripts from the discussion groups were based on a model adapted from Miles and Huberman (20) (Fig. 1). This model is an interactive, concurrent process and includes 3 components: 1) identify and organize

Figure 1
Components of Data Analysis of Key Informants'
Perceptions of Hunger and Hunger Education Needs



main themes from transcripts; 2) develop data display of perceptions about hunger and hunger education needs; and 3) verify conclusions throughout process and utilize second researcher to decrease bias and increase validity.

Identify and organize main themes

Data reduction is "the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the raw data that appears in written-up field notes" (20). In this project the raw data were the transcripts of dialogue by all key informants. The final merged transcript was printed in a line numbered format to identify and isolate representative statements easily.

Prior to identifying main themes the transcript was read several times. The data reduction procedure involved identifying main themes and clustering comparable themes. Decision rules for identifying themes included highlighting only those themes that involved perceptions, opinions, or experiences of respondents. Factual data that supported these themes (eg. hunger statistics or food items served in the school breakfast program) were not coded.

Transcripts were reviewed and the main themes and ideas were highlighted by the researcher. Main themes and ideas were in the form of words, phrase(s), and sentence(s). An example of a main theme is "Well, if the parents do not know

how to buy things properly, the children will be hungry". An example of factual information, which was not highlighted, is "50% of our students are on free lunch".

Themes then were organized according to the nine questions contained in the discussion instrument however themes related to questions one and two were similar and therefore combined. The highlighted themes or ideas were cut out and placed in folders which corresponded to the eight theme areas from the discussion instrument. When unanticipated themes were identified, they were placed in additional folders. The themes or ideas then were clustered according to similar concepts. A copy of the transcript was reviewed sometimes in order to understand the context of the representative statement. Finally, a name or phrase that best described each cluster of representative statements was determined.

Develop data display of perceptions of hunger and hunger education needs

The second step was development of the data display. According to Miles and Huberman (20), a "display" is an organized assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action taking. Representative statements including word(s), phrase(s) and sentence(s) were organized into categories, subcategories, and components. For each

issue, one or more categories were identified. If a category contained more than one impression, they were identified as subcategories. Further, if a subcategory contained more than one concept, it was differentiated into components.

The researcher reviewed the transcript and identified the key informants who had provided the theme and established the number of key informants who contributed representative statements that supported the category, subcategory, or component. To identify the degree to which there was consensus among key informants, agreements also were tallied to determine the number of key informants who provided representative statement(s) to support each category, subcategory or component. Agreements included statements such as "yeah", "yes", "that's right", and "I agree". Head nodding and responses such as "Uh huh" were noted in the field notes and incorporated in the transcript. However, they were not tallied in the frequency count, because it was impossible to know whether it showed agreement with a comment or merely demonstrated that the person was following the conversation. A key informant could be included in the frequency count for each category, subcategory, or component only once. Thus, if a key informant made three comments which were attributed to a category, subcategory, or component, he/she was only counted once.

The first column in the data display is "issues" and reflects one of the nine questions from the discussion instrument. Additional issues that were identified by key informants are included also. The second column includes the "category" and provides a broad description of topics conveyed during the discussion of each issue. The third column, or "subcategory" further delineates the category. The fourth column, or "component", provides an additional level of detail for some subcategories. The last column provides the frequency, or the number of key informants who provided representative statements about each issue, category, subcategory, and component.

Verify conclusions throughout process and utilize second researcher to decrease bias and increase validity

Another researcher with previous experience in qualitative research participated in each phase of analysis in order to decrease researcher bias and increase validity of analysis and findings. The second researcher identified themes, clustered representative statements according to similar concepts, assigned a category, subcategory, or component name and displayed information in an outline form. For verification, researchers met and discussed findings until concordance was reached regarding themes, clustered representative statements, and category, subcategory, and

component names.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Description of Subjects

Twenty-five participants from 3 schools were involved as key informants in data collection. There were seven or eight elementary school personnel and one anti-hunger advocate from the community present at each discussion group. Each group was comprised of an elementary school principal, secretary, food service employee, three to five teachers and an anti-hunger advocate.

All participants were female. Two-thirds of the teachers had ten or more years of experience and were teaching kindergarten through fifth grade currently. Two of the teachers were involved in educating children with special needs. The anti-hunger advocates were involved actively in community food programs and legislative activities.

Eighty-four percent of participants indicated they had children at their school who were hungry, because there was not enough food at home. All participants identified their school as being in a low income neighborhood and approximately 49% to 78% of each school's students received either free or reduced price meals (25).

**Issues, categories, subcategories, components, and
representative statements from group discussions with key
informants**

Ten issues were addressed by key informants. Eight related to questions included in the discussion instrument and two were unanticipated issues identified by key informants. These issues are shown in Table 1 and indicate that key informants were aware of hunger among children and attributed the parents to it. There were some discrepancies about the need for hunger education in the elementary schools. This was due to the inability of key informants to differentiate between nutrition education and hunger education. This discrepancy also arose when key informants were asked to provide some ideas for a hunger education curriculum, such as objectives, activities and ways to measure hunger awareness. There was, however, information provided by key informants that supported the idea of hunger education, including possible target groups and ways to develop and implement the curriculum. These issues are discussed further and related to selected representative statements made by key informants. A summary of common issues was generated along with a summary of implications for curriculum development.

Table 1
Issues, Categories, Subcategories, and Components
of Hunger and Hunger Education in Elementary Schools
as Identified by Key Informants

Table 1. Issues, Categories, Subcategories, and Components of Hunger and Hunger Education in Elementary Schools as Identified by Key Informants.

Issue	Category	Subcategory	Component	Frequency*
I. PERCEPTIONS OF CHILDHOOD HUNGER	A. Causes of hunger	1. Neglectful parenting	a. lack of responsibility	12
			b. misuse of resources	6
			c. poor food choices	4
			d. family dysfunction	3
		2. Uninformed parents	a. food preparation	3
			b. nutrition	2
		3. Lack of financial resources		5
		4. Stigma and pride		5
		5. Students choose to skip meals		3

Table 1. (continued)

Issue	Category	Subcategory	Component	Frequency*
	B. Indicators of hunger	1. Performance indicators		8
		2. Physical symptom indicators		7
		3. Children taking responsibility for their own food		5
		4. Psychosocial indicators		3
	C. Definitions of hunger	1. Food insecurity (limited access to food)		10
		2. Poor quality of food		8
	D. Hunger not perceived as a problem			3

Table 1. (continued)

Issue	Category	Subcategory	Component	Frequency*
II. Hunger Education In School/ Classroom	A. It already exists			7
	B. It ought to be included somewhere else			
		1. Parent education through community programs		6
		2. Religious institutions		4
		3. Parent education through PTA		2
52	C. Do not include it in school classroom			4
	D. Nutrition education already exists			3

Table 1. (continued)

Issue	Category	Subcategory	Component	Frequency*
III. TARGET POPULATION FOR HUNGER EDUCATION	A. Parents			6
	B. All ages			5
	C. Younger children			4
	D. Both parents and children			2
	E. Older children			2
IV. WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN DEVELOPMENT OF HUNGER EDUCATION	A. Community advocates			3
	B. Health professionals			3
V. WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN PRESENTING HUNGER EDUCATION	A. Community advocates			3
	B. Teachers			2
	C. Health professionals			2
VI. WHAT SHOULD BE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF HUNGER EDUCATION	A. Goals			2
	B. Objectives	1. Nutrition education for children		4
		2. Hunger education for parents		4
		3. Definition of hunger		3
		4. Hunger awareness-- hunger is a problem		3

Table 1. (continued)

Issue	Category	Subcategory	Component	Frequency*
VII. ACTIVITIES FOR HUNGER EDUCATION	A. Hunger-related activities B. Nutrition-education-related activities	5. Awareness of food resources		2 5 4
VIII. EVALUATING HUNGER AWARENESS				8
IX. SENSITIVITY IN APPROACHING CHILD AND PARENT				4
X. WORKING THROUGH SCHOOL TO ADDRESS HUNGER				2

* Number of key informants providing representative statements about issue, category, subcategory, or component.

I. ISSUE: PERCEPTIONS OF CHILDHOOD HUNGER

A. Causes of hunger

Causes of hunger were described by representative statements from key informants. The "causes of hunger" category included five subcategories: "neglectful parenting"; "uninformed parents"; "lack of financial resources"; "stigma and pride"; and "students choose to skip meals".

1. Neglectful parenting

Key informants expressed concerns that parents were responsible for hunger among children. The first subcategory of "causes of hunger" was "neglectful parenting"; it contained four components: "lack of responsibility"; "misuse of resources"; "poor food choices"; and "family dysfunction."

a. lack of responsibility. This component was supported by 12 key informants. One food service employee said children "...could come in at breakfast if the parents perhaps would get them here in time to eat breakfast." Some key informants felt that parents were not feeding the children at home. One school food service employee

explained "...the mother and daddy both working a lot of times, they're tired and worn out and don't want to do what mothers do. They just give them the money to go to...." A teacher added "they don't really take that much time to prepare foods...." Another teacher commented, "...lack of planning on the part of the parent" contributes to children being hungry.

b. misuse of resources. The second component under neglectful parenting was "misuse of resources." Six key informants had specific concerns that children were hungry because their parents were not using resources effectively. One school secretary said, "And you think your food stamps and everything here in town, nobody should go hungry, but they do. Parents spend it on something else." Another school secretary explained, "Well, if the parents are not, do not know how to buy things properly, the children will be hungry...." This component was supported also by comments associated with food purchases. One teacher stated, "...the 'quickie food' is expensive," which also suggested misuse of resources.

c. poor food choices. Poor food choices was the third component. Four key informants felt that children were hungry because parents were not providing the right types of foods. These remarks also reflected on the definition of

hunger as it relates to poor quality food. One principal explained, "I just don't think nutrition is, ah, is not a part of people's planning in their meals anymore." Some teachers made comments, such as "...not lack of food but poor choices about what they feed the children" and "...it will be like frozen pizza." I think a lot of it is what's convenient, what's quick for them."

d. family dysfunction. The last component, "family dysfunction," was another concern among the key informants. One teacher said, "...these parents don't spend too much time talking with their children anyway...." Another teacher explained, "I think, too, it's not just there's not food in the house, there's a thousand other things going on that, they're losing their home, Dad's out of work, Dad just left, Mom's losing her job...." The lack of communication was related to this component of family dysfunction when a principal commented, "There is no interaction or conversation between parent and child...."

2. Uninformed parents

The second subcategory under "causes of hunger" in Table 1 explained the causes of hunger as they relate to parents being uninformed. There were two components under "uninformed parents": nutrition and food preparation.

a. food preparation. Food preparation was the first component under "uninformed parents". One principal referred to the lack of knowledge about food preparation with commodities and explained, "They don't even know how to prepare the food...." A school food service employee commented, "...it is a matter, too, of not knowing how to prepare," and a principal agreed, "That's right, I think so too, I think that has a lot to do with that."

b. nutrition. Key informants referred to poor quality of food. Throughout all group discussions, however, two key informants referred to parents' being uninformed about nutrition. One principal stated, "I think ignorance of nutrition is part of the reason children go hungry too. A lot of parents do not know that this candy bar is going to go pretty quick and an apple...." An anti-hunger advocate expressed her opinion, "And the message of good nutrition, it's harder, it seems like it's harder to get that message to lower income families than it is to higher income families...."

3. Lack of financial resources

"Lack of financial resources" was the third subcategory under "causes of hunger." Five key informants made the correlation between childhood hunger and insufficient

resources. One advocate explained "...uncertainty about whether there's enough resources to purchase the needed food for the home...." Another anti-hunger advocate reminded the group, "...families that have to make the decision between paying rent and buying food...."

4. Stigma and pride

"Stigma and pride" was the fourth subcategory under "causes of hunger." Four key informants expressed concern that the stigma associated with receiving free and reduced price meals and the indication of pride were contributors to childhood hunger. One principal stated, "You know children will go hungry rather than admit they're on free lunch... they would rather be hungry, that pride;" and an advocate agreed, "And they do in high school, they do." Another anti-hunger advocate explained, "...there is a growing awareness of the stigma of having to get free and reduced meals, and so it really means that as kids get into their preteens and they're even more at risk because they are not getting the food they need at school." One key informant made the correlation of pride with parents. This food service employee explained, "Okay, knowing all the places that they do have to go to get food. You know, I think pride also gets in a lot of way as far as not going to these places."

5. Students choose to skip meals

The final subcategory under "causes of hunger" associated hunger with students making the decision to skip a meal. One food service employee said, "They're going to have breakfast and lunch if they choose to." Another participant noted, "But then if they don't come in...late, then they don't get that. They don't get any," suggesting that the children did not get to breakfast on time and that it was by choice.

B. Indicators of hunger

"Indicators of hunger" was the second category under the issue "perceptions of hunger." This category contained four subcategories, including performance indicators, physical symptom indicators, children taking responsibility for their own food, and psychosocial indicators.

1. Performance indicators

The subcategory "performance indicators" described school performance as affected by hunger. Representative statements by teachers included: "They are laying their heads down and they just really don't feel like participating in activities or things we do"; and "a lot of

times when my children are having a bad morning I'll say 'Did you have breakfast?' (and they'll say) 'No'."

Teachers appeared to be more aware of performance indicators than other key informants because the majority of comments in this subcategory were made by teachers.

2. Physical symptom indicators

When asked about physical symptoms, one teacher noted children, "...complaining that their stomachs hurt or that they're hungry." A food service employee recounted, "...[a] little girl was crying and they said, 'What's wrong?' and she said she didn't feel good and they said 'Well, did you have breakfast?' and she said 'No'."

3. Children taking responsibility for their own food

Five key informants recognized this as an indicator of childhood hunger by sharing their experiences that had occurred outside of the school setting during summer feeding programs, camps, and bible school. One school secretary explained, "...they did not come for the bible stories and the games and anything else, but when it came time to eat, we had more kids than we knew what to do with." A food service employee reflected, "...working in, like, a project area and kids would come, the kids that didn't go to the

camp would come at that time to literally beg for food."

4. Psychosocial indicators

Psychosocial indicators, the final subcategory under "indicators of hunger," was supported by three key informants. Comments included one made by a food service employee, "They're also not a happy person if they're hungry. They are just not going to be happy, they are not going to be content." One teacher also explained "It would have to effect things like self esteem and the way they feel about themselves and the way they relate to others."

C. Definitions of hunger

The third category under "perceptions of hunger was "defining hunger." Childhood hunger was defined by key informants in two ways: food insecurity or limited access to food and poor quality of food.

1. Food insecurity (limited access to food)

Ten key informants expressed hunger in relation to food insecurity or limited access to food. One teacher described a child's reaction when school was dismissed due to snow: "...first thing that a child said to me was, 'Oh, now I

won't get my lunch will I?' And that was the very first thing that occurred to her by her going home early." Other key informants made general comments about hunger which were very similar to those questions used in the Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project survey. These comments included, "...not having enough food at home to eat" and "...going to bed hungry at night." "Food insecurity" was sometimes described within the context of time. For example, weekends and summers were viewed by many participants as times when there was a increase in the risk of hunger among children. One anti-hunger advocate stated, "...we always served refreshments before they started their work, and we could sometimes tell, in certain children that on Mondays they just got their hands on all they could get them. So Monday did seem like they hadn't eaten well over the weekend." A teacher expressed concern by saying, "...risk increases, for me when I see them, I have concern that the risk goes greater in the summer." One advocate supported the subcategory "food insecurity" among a family when she expressed, "...a sudden emergency that causes them to be without food,...it's hard for them to maybe even find out where to go in some cases."

2. Poor quality of food

There were eight key informants who provided

representative statements that support this second subcategory. "Poor quality of food" was described in statements, such as, "...their nutritional needs aren't being met" and "...and a lot of the hunger is not always just not having food they may keep junk food there...." One principal explained, "it's malnutrition, maybe, that is maybe really more prevalent than hunger itself."

D. Hunger not perceived as a problem

When key informants were asked to describe their perceptions of childhood hunger, three key informants stated that it was not a problem. A principal shared, "I don't think most people perceive that to be a problem. I think our support level is high enough that people don't have to go hungry like they used to." One school food service employee said, "I just don't conceive people being that hungry here, and I look at TV and see overseas people starving to death...." Another food service employee reassured, "...it's just a small percentage that you notice and you worry about...."

II. ISSUE: HUNGER EDUCATION IN SCHOOL/CLASSROOM

The second issue discussed within the group concerned hunger education in the school or classroom. There were

many different views expressed by key informants. These views were presented in four categories: "it already exists"; "it ought to be included somewhere else"; "do not include it in school classroom"; and "nutrition education already exists." The category "include it somewhere else" has three subcategories that further delineate the category.

A. It already exists

Some key informants indicated that hunger education already exists, not in an existing curriculum but as part of the school's anti-hunger activities. One teacher explained, "... I don't think we sit down and actually take that as a main topic or a unit, but it's included in, like the principal said, when we have a food drive. That's addressed, when we do our needs and wants." Another teacher said, "I think maybe we talk about that when we're talking about nutrition and good foods to eat. I think we talk about how it makes us feel if we don't eat and what happens to our bodies if we don't eat right."

B. It ought to be included somewhere else

Key informants described other places that hunger education was or could be included. These included community programs, religious institutions, and PTA

meetings.

1. Parent education through community programs

Community programs were suggested by key informants as a means to provide hunger education. Many informants believed parents needed to be aware of hunger and food resources. One teacher explained, "...there are programs, adult education, where we're helping them to get their G.E.D.'s and high school diplomas. If there are some single parents in there or any parents at all that are going through those programs, that might be a good place to teach them because there the people have the money and they're going to have the say so about where the money goes if you're really going to be doing something about hunger". An advocate shared some strategies about making parents aware of resources. She stated, "...commodities program and the summer feeding sites and through the emergency food helpers system network; the bags of food that we give out we put information about other resources that are available". Programs that involve both parent and children were suggested as possible avenues for hunger education, such as when a teacher made a comment, "Even Start, uh even the Head Start program...."

2. Religious institutions

Religious institutions was the second subcategory under "include it somewhere else." Key informants felt religious institutions were places that were already involved in hunger education. One advocate commented, "I know, we take the kids at my church, we take them down to the union area rescue mission to serve...." A teacher shared, "In our synagogue my place of worship, we address hunger all the time."

3. Parent education through PTA

The final subcategory was "parent education through PTA". A teacher suggested, "...local PTA meetings, as far as giving information to the parents." Another teacher commented, "To educate the parents you could have meetings set up for PTA meetings."

C. Do not include it in school classroom

The third category, under the issue of "hunger education in the school/classroom", identified by key informants was one that indicated lack of support for including hunger education in the classroom. Some teachers were adamant when discussing hunger education in schools.

Comments from teachers, such as, "...everything coming down the pipe ends up being the school's responsibility..."; "Well I want to say not the schools"; and "We get dumped on with everything," were not supportive of hunger education in the elementary schools. Another teacher explained, "...because we've got a captive audience in the classroom then we just want 'oh well here's something else you can teach those children'.

D. Nutrition education already exists

The topic of nutrition education came up many times in these group discussions. Several participants made reference that nutrition education already existed and that hunger was addressed already when they talked about the right foods to eat. This implied the definition of hunger as it relates to poor quality of food. One principal said, "...we have nutrition education in every grade not so much hunger education but I would expect that we couldn't need much more if we needed any at all because we do have nutrition education...."

III. ISSUE: TARGET POPULATION FOR HUNGER EDUCATION

The third issue discussed possible target audiences for hunger education. When key informants were asked who they

felt should be the target audience of a hunger education curriculum, there were a variety of responses. There were five categories: "parents"; "all ages"; "younger children"; "both parents and children"; and "older children."

A. Parents

The first category was parents. Parents as targets were supported by representative statements from teachers, such as, "...some kind of breaking the cycle and developing some kind of education plan where those people that are in charge of these children" and "...cycles being set at home. The parents are going to have to be trained, they're going to have to be retrained. We don't break the cycle by teaching the children." An additional comment by one teacher implied that parents would be an appropriate target audience. She said, "...what they see and hear at home is a lot more influence. You know we might be able to make them aware, but we just don't have the influence that mamma and daddy do." Another teacher explained, "They're still going to pattern themselves with what they see everyday and what they live with and what they see their parents do. So the educational part for the parent is going to have to be the change."

B. All ages

Representative statements also supported the category "all ages." One teacher said, "...they all need to be aware, you know even if they're not hungry, they need to be aware that there is a problem in our world and I kind of think it should be all grade levels." An anti-hunger advocate agreed by saying, "I would certainly agree with that. I think that there's room for that kind of education at all levels."

C. Younger children

Four key informants provided representative statements to support the category "younger children." One teacher emphasized, "...you start that awareness as young as you can and then as, hopefully as you get it with them every year that the awareness, becomes clearer and clearer...." One anti-hunger advocate explained, "...start with the kids either because they are going to grow up and be parents one day themselves...." Another anti-hunger advocate indicated younger children when she said, "...one place to do it [hunger education] is in preschool day cares."

D. Both parents and children

Two key informants supported this category. One teacher commented, "...it might be the child sort of taking the parents' hands saying, "We need to do this." This implied that both parents and children should be involved in hunger education. A local anti-hunger advocate suggested, "...programs like Even Start and some of these other types of things where they're working with the children and they're also working with the parents as well...."

E. Older children

Older children was the last category under "target population for hunger education." There were two key informants that provided information that recognized older children as a target audience. These were: "Probably the older..." with an agreement, "Older, yeah."

IV. ISSUE: WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN DEVELOPMENT OF HUNGER EDUCATION

There were two categories identified as important in the development of hunger education curricula. These categories represented specific types of individuals. They were "community advocates" and "health professionals."

A. Community advocates

Community advocates were identified frequently by participants as important to involve in the development of hunger education. One teacher said, "Someone who's aware of the resources that are available...." That same teacher also suggested, "...they know how to teach budgeting, to teach meal planning, probably a home economist...." Lastly, a school food service employee recommended "a social worker."

B. Health professionals

The second category under "involved in development" was health professionals. A teacher gave her opinion when she said, "I think a nutritionist should be on there." An anti-hunger advocate agreed. The school secretary suggested, "Maybe a nurse."

V. ISSUE: WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN PRESENTING HUNGER EDUCATION

The next issue dealing with hunger education needs was the identification of people who would be important in presenting information in a hunger education curricula. Responses were similar to those recognized as being important in the development of the curricula.

A. Community advocates

This category was identified when key informants proposed several individuals throughout the community to present information about hunger. One teacher suggested, "The resources that know what's going on." An anti-hunger advocate added, "Anti-hunger groups that are working on those issues that could be guest speakers." She continued, "Emergency food helpers group that is made up of people that work in pantries and associated with programs like that, and then there is Bread for the World that lobbies the US Congress on hunger issues...." Another teacher recommended, "...someone from the local shelter...."

B. Teachers

This category was supported by two different teachers. One commented "...maybe some teachers who would, maybe, be better aware of what is going on in the community. The other teacher suggested, "The teachers, along with her health lesson...."

C. Health professionals

The third category, "health professionals," was identified through several references to those professionals

delivering messages of good health to people. One advocate suggested, "...getting information out, would be through a nutrition educator...." A teacher recommended, "...the school nurse...." Another teacher said, "...call the health department...."

VI. ISSUE: WHAT SHOULD BE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF HUNGER EDUCATION

Key informants had several ideas about goals and objectives for a hunger education curricula. There were two main goals which established the category "goals". The second category was the "objectives" category which contains five subcategories.

A. Goals

Two key informants provided information that involved goals for a hunger education curriculum. One anti-hunger advocate said, "To try to reduce hunger". A teacher commented, "...how to avoid being hungry...."

B. Objectives

The objectives recommended for a hunger education curricula were represented by each subcategory. There were

five subcategories: "nutrition education for children"; "hunger education for parents"; "definition of hunger"; "hunger awareness--hunger is a problem"; and "awareness of food resources." The key informants had different agendas for children and parents. In the first two subcategories nutrition-related objectives were described more often for children and hunger-related objectives were suggested more important for parents.

1. Nutrition education for children

The subcategory "nutrition education for children" described objectives for children that were more related to nutrition education. A teacher suggested, "...getting them to realize how important it is to eat" and a principal expressed concern, "...they should be taught that they are primarily responsible for choosing healthy foods." One advocate recommended, "...the teaching of long-term thinking, rather than short-term thinking, and in planning for the future. Planning for next week, next month rather than just eating it now."

2. Hunger education for parents

Key informants felt hunger education objectives would better meet the need of parents. One teacher suggested

"budgets" as being an important topic. One school secretary said, "There's a lot of coupons they can use," and two other key informants agreed. Lastly, the school food service employee added "Yeah, cause they need to learn how to use the paper to hunt their bargains...."

3. Definition of hunger

The third subcategory under the category "objectives" was "definition of hunger." This subcategory was supported with representative statements from key informants. One teacher recommended, "...to make children aware of the difference between, I guess hunger and being hungry...". A principal added, "...understand the gradations between starvation and well being and the hungers in there." Another teacher suggested, "...give the definition of hunger...."

4. Hunger awareness -- hunger is a problem

Hunger awareness was another subcategory dealing with objectives for a hunger education curricula. One teacher said, "...they all need to be aware, you know even if they're not hungry, they need to be aware that there is a problem...." An advocate added, there is a need to promote "...that there are children out there who are not as blessed

as you, that don't have the things that you have...."

5. Awareness of food resources

The last subcategory under "objectives" was "awareness of resources". One advocate responded, "So it might be good that the children knew those societies or agencies that would be able to help. And what they could do and how could they help their parents be aware. Another teacher supported that same comment with, "...make those people, what, aware of what's going on, aware of places to get food...."

VII. ISSUE: ACTIVITIES FOR HUNGER EDUCATION

The key informants then suggested activities for a hunger education curricula. These activities all appeared to be related to children. Five key informants provided representative statements for "hunger-related activities" and five for "nutrition education-related activities".

A. Hunger-related activities

Hunger-related activities was one of the areas of discussion among key informants. One teacher specified an activity for older children: "...bring in resource people who are connected with these special food programs, to give

them the information, talk to them and explain how it works, and where it is and where they get the food". Another teacher shared, "Thanksgiving baskets. That's an activity that makes them aware; they bring food and send it to other people." Another teacher suggested a situational activity for a child: "You have five dollars, what would be the best way to spend it in a nutritional and sound way?"

B. Nutrition education-related activities

There were several ideas for nutrition education. One teacher suggested, "Tasting parties." Activities that would help parents were recommended also when a teacher said, "Role playing like a model meal, role playing their part on how to set the table and that kind of thing."

VIII. ISSUE: EVALUATING HUNGER AWARENESS

When asked how hunger awareness should be evaluated, the answers varied. A teacher said, "See how they respond with a full stomach versus not giving them that breakfast the next morning." Some of these measures related to the evaluation of nutrition education and not hunger awareness. One teacher suggested, "Have them pack their lunch, and see what they bring." Only one participant, a principal, recommended, "Survey, written, oral some kind of survey,

pretest, post test, to me would be the easiest."

IX. ISSUE: SENSITIVITY IN APPROACHING CHILD AND PARENT

Finally, the issue "sensitivity in approaching child and parent" was identified. Many key informants expressed interest in wanting to meet the needs of children and families. One teacher expressed concern, "...isn't it hard to approach a parent?" She continued, "...what type of an approach are we as teachers supposed to do when we do see a child like this?" Another teacher commented, "...to deal with it individually, it has to be real apparent." One local anti-hunger advocate also voiced concern, "It would take a great deal of sensitivity to discuss it with the children without further stigmatizing the ones who have a problem...." These last two issues identified in the group discussions provided useful information and should be considered in future planning.

X. ISSUE: WORKING THROUGH SCHOOL TO ADDRESS HUNGER

Other issues came up during the group discussions with key informants. The ninth issue discussed was "working through the school to decrease hunger." Two participants made reference that the school was already being used as an avenue to help needy parents and children. One principal

explained, "We do have some parents who call or come by and say 'I need help.' I don't know that they've ever come since I've been here for food.... So apparently they do know, some do know that school is a place where people can come and get some help or find a way to get some help." A teacher also provided input into this area by sharing, "...if we suspect it, I know (the secretary), we send our social worker out or you know what do you think is going on here, ...you can spot it pretty quick."

DISCUSSION

Many of the categories, subcategories, and components established by representative statements made by key informants supported information already in the literature. The CCHIP Conceptual Model developed by Wehler and coworkers provides a visual concept of the factors associated with hunger and its outcomes (Figure 2). Some of the components within the model are intended to facilitate the understanding of hunger and its most salient factors. Results of this project support several of these factors. Education, for example, was discussed in the context of parents' being uninformed about nutrition and food preparation. Key informants stated that some parents who receive commodity foods are unable to use them. This indicated that lack of information may be related to the

Figure 2. CCHIP Conceptual Model. Factors associated with hunger and its outcomes.

Source: Wehler CA, Scott RI, Anderson JJ. The Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project: a model of domestic hunger - demonstration in Seattle, Washington. J Nutr Educ. 1992;24(suppl):29-35.

causes of hunger.

Household features that effect food related behaviors also were mentioned in the group discussions and can be related to Wheler's conceptual model. In this study the category, "lack of financial resources," and the component, "family dysfunction," correlate with the circled variables, "Financial Stress & Disorder" and "Food & Feeding Decision-maker (Gatekeeper)," from the CCHIP conceptual model. Furthermore, the components "food choices" and "misuse of resources" are associated with "Food & Feeding Decision-maker (Gatekeeper)" variable. Key informants' perceptions agreed with other studies (1,26) which support the influence of home and family environment on childhood hunger. Finally, key informants' perceptions of hunger and indicators of hunger, such as "performance indicators," "physical symptom indicators," and "psychosocial indicators," are related to the CCHIP conceptual model's hunger determinant and consequence variables (1).

Elementary school personnel and anti-hunger advocates defined hunger within the group discussions. Their definitions "food insecurity (limited access to food)" and "poor quality of food" are comparable to those conceptualizations of hunger in the literature (27).

Implications for Teachers

This study suggested that teachers are overburdened with the existing responsibilities they have as teachers. They expressed that they were already burdened with an overload of curricula to teach. Many felt that hunger was already addressed in nutrition education and discouraged the development of a hunger education curriculum. Although the teachers did not significantly express a desire to be involved in the development of a curriculum, they did recognize themselves as being involved in teaching it. This study also suggested that many teachers have social pressures upon them through the demands put upon the school through society.

Implications for Nutrition Educators

Nutrition educators have provided information and educational programs to encourage the public to make informed food choices. In addition to providing information about good nutrition and quality food choices, nutrition educators can provide information about hunger and access to food. Nutrition educators within the school system could assist teachers in the implementation of hunger education and nutrition education within the classroom.

Implications for Hunger Education

As seen in the literature, there are several definitions of hunger. This can be related to the distinction in which different groups of people within the U.S. experience hunger. The complexity associated with the definition of hunger has been cited frequently as a hindrance to the study of hunger and development of hunger policy (28). Similarly, the acceptance of hunger education in the elementary school may be effected by the need for a comprehensible definition; a definition that would be distinguish it from nutrition education. For this reason and for possible implementation in the future, whether as its own curriculum or a component of nutrition education, hunger education needs to be defined. **The definition of hunger education is: The process of educating or of being educated in the area of hunger including; the definition, indicators, consequences, prevalence, causes, as well as methods to prevent hunger involving awareness and utilization of resources and resource people. Hunger education is also known as hunger awareness education.**

CONCLUSIONS

Using qualitative techniques in group discussions with key informants was effective in collecting information for

the preassessment phase of curriculum development. The results of this research indicate that those working closely with children, within the elementary school and community, can recognize hunger. Perceptions of childhood hunger were identified and supported those findings already in the literature. Parent involvement was identified as being important in hunger education, because the family plays an important role in and selection and service of quantity and quality of food. Additionally, hunger education was confused with nutrition education and the need for a definition of hunger education was established.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Preliminary Work and Expanded Methods

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Preliminary Work and Expanded Methods

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INTRODUCTION

Preliminary work and expanded methodology of this research are explained in this section of the thesis. The preliminary work included the Hunger Awareness Project, semi-structured interviews with hunger experts, and preparation for discussion groups. This work was closely related to the methods of this research. The preliminary work allowed the researcher to direct her interest and justify the need for the research. This thesis section also includes more detail about the research methods. The methods provide an outline of each step taken in this research. Appendices B - K, which provide supporting information, follow this section of preliminary work and expanded methods.

Hunger Awareness Project

A Hunger Awareness Project was designed as a community service project for the Knox County Health Department Nutrition Services Division (1). Elementary school children were targeted due to the overwhelming number of hungry children that had been identified in a questionnaire sent to elementary school teachers within the community (2). The objective of this project was to provide fourth grade students with information that would increase awareness of

hunger in the communities by helping students identify signs of hunger, food pantries within their school zip code, and a resource person within their school who could help children gain access to food (1). The project was developed also to empower children to seek food assistance. The Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project (CCHIP) survey (Appendix B) and the Emergency Food Helpers program provided a framework for the development of the project (1,3). A lesson plan, instructional materials, and evaluation instruments were designed. The Hunger Awareness Project was presented to a group of 62 fourth grade students in an elementary school that was located in a low income neighborhood. The post test scores showed a 38% increase of knowledge in identifying the signs of hunger, food pantries, and a resource person at school who could help children gain access to food. The researcher concluded that the Hunger Awareness Project was a worthwhile activity to increase awareness of hunger and available food resources to reduce the incidence of childhood hunger in the community (1).

Semi-structured Interviews with Hunger Experts

Preliminary work continued by conducting semi-structured interviews with hunger experts in the U.S. who recently had published articles on hunger and undernutrition in a peer reviewed nutrition journal (4). These hunger

experts included educators, researchers and anti-hunger advocates. During these telephone interviews, a list of questions (Appendix C) were asked concerning hunger awareness education needs in the classroom and notes were taken by the interviewer. Responses were tallied and evaluated (Appendix D). Most experts agreed that hunger awareness education should be included in the elementary school (5). Teachers were recognized as being an important source of information and valuable in the hunger awareness Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project: A Survey of Childhood Hunger in the United States, Executive Summary. Washington, D.C.: Food Research & Action Center; 1991. education process, development of hunger education materials, as well as delivery and instruction. The experts supported schools as a focal point for hunger awareness education (5).

These preliminary findings confirmed the need for and importance of using key informants to examine childhood hunger and hunger awareness education needs. The clarity, understandability, and relevance of the questions were validated during those interviews.

The questions listed in Appendix C were used as an outline and two additional questions were added to facilitate discussion about hunger and to examine how childhood hunger is perceived. These were used in the

discussion groups with the key informants (Appendix E). These questions helped prepare the key informants for subsequent questions about hunger awareness education needs.

Preparation for Discussion Groups

In preparing for the discussion groups, the researcher had to develop some skills on moderating a group discussion. Preparation consisted of reading the literature on qualitative interviewing and focus group procedures (6-7). Other training techniques included talking with well experienced interviewers and focus group moderators. Further exposure to interviewing took place at a lecture where the moderator watched a nationally recognized qualitative researcher interview a client.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research was approved by the University of Tennessee's office of Research Compliance and by the Coordinator of Research and Evaluation for Knox County School System. The methods of this research are discussed below. The methods are divided into subheading areas which provide detailed information. Specifically, these areas include:

- identification of subjects;
- description of subjects;

- data collection;
- transcription of audiotapes; and
- data analysis.

Identification of Subjects

Letters (Appendix F) were sent to all Knox County Elementary School principals requesting they help identify volunteers to participate in group discussions about childhood hunger and the needs of hunger awareness education. All schools had equal opportunity to volunteer to participate in the research, but the first three schools to schedule appointments with the researcher comprised the key informant pool for data collection in order to provide a large enough data pool (8). Each school assembled a group of key informants (Appendix G). The key informants within each school had previously been recognized as being important in the development of a curriculum, during semistructured interviews with hunger experts (Appendix D).

Local anti-hunger advocates within the area were also part of the key informant pool. The anti-hunger advocates were contacted and asked to volunteer for each discussion group. Groups were scheduled to meet during after-school hours in each school. All participants signed consent forms before participating in the group discussions. Refreshments were provided to all participants.

Description of Subjects

The subjects who served as key informants included Knox County Elementary School Personnel and local anti-hunger advocates. A total of twenty-five people were involved in the three discussion groups. There were approximately eight key informants present at each discussion group. Each group consisted of an elementary school principal, school secretary, school food service employee, 3-5 teachers, and a local anti-hunger advocate from the community. Demographic characteristics of the key informants are shown in Appendix I.

Data Collection

In qualitative research, data is in the form of words. The data for this research were collected in discussion groups with key informants. There were three moderators present at each discussion group, but only the main moderator, moderator #1, was trained to lead the discussion group. The moderators included: moderator #1 who facilitated discussion; moderator #2 who assisted in monitoring the audio tape player and helped to facilitate discussion; and Moderator #3 who sat outside the group discussion and recorded the dialogue progression. Short notes were written down with identification of group member

and a few brief words of dialogue to facilitate subsequent transcription.

Each group discussion began with a warm-up period, and included refreshments. During this time consent forms (Appendix H) were signed, collected, and name tags were distributed. A short information form was also filled out by key informants during this time (Appendix I).

Each person present had a name plate on the table to facilitate communication. At the beginning of the discussion, the moderator explained the purpose of the study. Two tape recorders were used to tape the group discussions in case one malfunctioned. Each group was asked a series of questions (Appendix E) and all members of the group were encouraged to answer every question. The moderator explained that there were no right or wrong answers and encouraged each person to speak freely.

After the discussion there was a short debriefing period. The moderators then met briefly to review the group discussion.

Transcription of Audiotapes

After the discussion groups were held, the audiotapes were transcribed verbatim. During transcription, the field notes for each discussion were used to help identify who was speaking. Each person was identified as one of the

following: Moderator, Local Anti-Hunger Advocate, Principal, Teacher, School Food Service, and School Secretary. When more than one held this title a number was given to them i.e., Moderator #2; Teacher #3. All personal names, names of schools, cities, and counties were replaced with general descriptive information placed in parentheses to maintain anonymity. All transcripts were merged together and each line was numbered for identification purposes.

Data Analysis

A second researcher trained in qualitative methods was involved in all subsequent data analysis. In a practice session with a transcript not pertaining to this research, the evaluators practiced the identification of themes. Both evaluators read a copy of the transcript and highlighted the main themes. The results were discussed until both evaluators agreed on the main themes contained in the transcript. The evaluators proceeded with the transcripts (Appendix J) from this research.

Both evaluators had a copy of the audio tapes and transcripts from the three group discussions with key informants. These tapes aided in reviewing the group discussions and their overall tone and feelings about hunger and hunger education. Separately, each evaluator highlighted every theme or main idea that was evoked in the

dialogue of the transcripts. This may have been a one word comment, phrases, or sentences.

After completing this process, the evaluators met and read the transcripts to establish agreement about identification of quotes that represented main themes. There were some disagreements among the resulting highlighted themes when one evaluator had identified a theme and the other had not. These were discussed and resolved among the evaluators. Disagreements were the result of one of the following reasons: factual information stated by a participant or reiteration of a theme by the same participant. Factual information, although it initiated good discussion, was excluded from the highlighted themes. An example of factual information is "50% of our students are on free lunch." Sometimes one of the evaluators would mark two main themes that were really a reiteration of the same thought or theme by the same participant. This was easily resolved and the theme that was stated most clearly was identified by both evaluators and added to the collection of themes. An example of main themes that were identified by both evaluators and agreed upon was, "Well, if the parents are not, do not know how to buy things properly, the children will be hungry."

After all highlighted themes were identified, they were transferred onto two separate copies of the transcript. The highlighted themes or ideas and line number were then cut

out and placed into folders. Each folder represented a question used in the group discussions. All themes that were highlighted were placed into the respective folder. Themes that did not relate to any question were unanticipated themes and were put in a separate folder for subsequent evaluation. Follow up and clarity questions were not assigned to a folder because they were only used as a means to continue and prompt discussion.

According to Krueger (7), in analysis "a key principle is to remember the purpose of the study, and to use the depth or intensity of analysis appropriate to the problem". During this analysis, the evaluators continuously kept in mind the purpose of the study, which was outlined in the questions used in the discussion groups. Therefore, these questions framed the issues of this research.

At this time, both evaluators had the identified themes in their respective folders and were ready for analysis. Separately, each evaluator placed similar and alike themes together. This is called clustering. After clustering the themes, category, subcategory, and component names were assigned to each cluster of themes. Most of these reflected the issues of discussion. The evaluators then met to discuss their results. Themes that were not categorized the same way by both evaluators were further analyzed and discussed until the evaluators came to an agreement on its appropriate place in the data display. The data display,

including the issues, categories, subcategories, components, and representative statements can be found in Appendix K. The two evaluators were used to increase reliability and decrease researcher bias.

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APPENDIX B

**Hunger Identification Questions from the Community
Childhood Hunger Identification Project (CCHIP) Survey**

- (1) Does your household ever run out of money to buy food to make a meal?
- (2) Do you or adult members of your household ever eat less than you feel you should because there is not enough money for food?
- (3) Do you or adult members of your household ever cut the size of meals or skip meals because there is not enough money for food?
- (4) Do your children ever eat less than you feel they should because there is not enough money for food?
- (5) Do you ever cut the size of your children's meals or do they ever skip meals because there is not enough money for food?
- (6) Do your children ever say they are hungry because there is not enough food in the house?
- (7) Do you ever rely on a limited number of foods to feed your children because you are running out of money to buy food for a meal?
- (8) Do any of your children ever go to bed hungry because there is not enough money to buy food?

Source: Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project:
A Survey of Childhood Hunger in the United States,
Executive Summary. Washington, D.C.: Food Research
& Action Center; 1991.

APPENDIX C

**Questions Presented to Hunger Experts
in Semi-structured Interviews**

- (1) Should we include hunger awareness education in our elementary schools?
- (2) Who should be involved in development of a hunger awareness education curricula?
- (3) Who should be part of a hunger awareness education program at the elementary setting?
- (4) Who would deliver the hunger awareness education curricula?
- (5) What would the curricula include?
- (6) How would you measure hunger awareness or how would you evaluate the hunger awareness curricula?
- (7) What grade should be the prime focus or should it be included in all grades?

Source: McMichael C, Zemel P, Haughton B. Hunger in the U.S. -- Developing educational approaches.
Baltimore, MD: Office of Educational Research and Improvement; 1992. US Dept of Education publication ERIC.

APPENDIX D

Results from Semi-structured

Interviews with Hunger Experts

QUESTION	RESPONSES
1. Should we include hunger awareness education in our elementary schools?	Many said "Yes" Only one said "It already exists in the nutrition curricula"
2. Who should be involved in development of a hunger awareness education curricula?	Social Service professionals, food and nutrition professionals, teachers, school administrators, local anti-hunger advocates, students, parents and those who have experienced hunger
3. Who should be part of a hunger awareness education program at the elementary setting?	Principals, teachers, PTA, school lunch administrators, school nurses, and nutritionist /dietitians from the community
4. Who would deliver the hunger education curricula?	Teachers, nutritionists and health professionals
5. What would the curricula include?	Classroom activities; community experiences; visits to food banks; visits to food pantries; food stamp offices; participation in school lunch and breakfast programs; empathy; inequality in our society; sharing; social responsibility; explanation of why people do not always have food; access to food; nutrition; social role of food; health consequences of hunger; grocery shopping; and hunger problems in third world countries.

QUESTION	RESPONSES
6. How would you measure hunger awareness or how would you evaluate the hunger awareness curriculum?	Paper and pencil tests, classroom discussion, poster contests to assess knowledge of hunger, empathy, social responsibility
7. What grade should be the prime focus or should it be included in all grades?	Throughout elementary, middle and high school; Emphasized fourth, fifth, and sixth grades
Other Comments:	Hunger education could be integrated into all content areas including health science, social studies, language arts and math

Source: McMichael C, Zemel P, Haughton B. Hunger in the U.S. -- Developing educational approaches.

Baltimore, MD: Office of Educational Research and Improvement; 1992. US Dept of Education publication ERIC.

APPENDIX E

**Question Outline Used in Discussion Groups
with Key Informants**

- (1) What does hunger among children mean to you?
- (2) Can you think of some experiences or situations of hunger among children that you could describe?
- (3) Should education about hunger and risk of hunger be included in the elementary schools?
- (4) Who should be the target audience?
- (5) Who should be involved in the development of hunger awareness education material for use in a curricula?
- (6) Who would be involved in presenting the information to the children?
- (7) What would be some of the goals and objectives of the curricula?
- (8) What kinds of activities could the students be involved in?
- (9) How could students awareness of hunger be measured?

APPENDIX F

**Letter Sent to Elementary School Principal
Requesting Volunteers for Discussion Groups**

November 2, 1993

Dear Knox County School Principal:

Many professionals are concerned about hunger among children in East Tennessee. We are interested in learning what elementary school personnel (principals, teachers, food service managers, guidance counselors, secretaries and administrators) think about childhood hunger in the Knox County School System as well as hunger awareness education needs. Several discussion groups with approximately 7 participants in each group will be held. These group discussions will be audio-taped however anonymity will be maintained. The group sessions will be scheduled outside school hours, and will only last approximately one hour and can be held at a location convenient to you and your staff.

We need your assistance. If you are interested in this opportunity and have interested staff (approximately 3-4 teachers from any grade, a food service manager, school secretary, guidance counselor) please contact me at the phone number below.

This project has been approved by the Office of Research and Evaluation in the Knox County School System and by the Office of Compliances at the University of Tennessee. The results of the discussion groups will be analyzed and no teacher, or school will be identifiable. We appreciate your support for this project. If you have any questions about this study, please contact Connie McMichael, at 974-5445.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Connie McMichael, B.S.
U.T. Graduate Student, Department of Nutrition

Paula Zemel, Ph.D., R.D.
Assistant Professor, Department of Nutrition

Dave Huntsinger, M.S.
Supervisor of Physical Education and Health,
K - 8

APPENDIX G

**Subject Pool of Key Informants
Participating in Discussion Groups**

School #1

Elementary School Principal
Elementary School Secretary
School Food Service Employee
Elementary School Teachers (5)
Local Anti-Hunger Advocate

TOTAL = 9

School #2

Elementary School Principal
Elementary School Secretary
School Food Service Employee
Elementary School Teachers (4)
Local Anti-Hunger Advocate

TOTAL = 8

School #3

Elementary School Principal
Elementary School Secretary
School Food Service Manager
School Food Service Employee
Elementary School Teachers (3)
Local Anti-Hunger Advocate

TOTAL = 8

TOTAL SUBJECT POOL OF KEY INFORMANTS = 25

APPENDIX H

Consent Form Used at Group Discussion

Description of the Project:

I understand that I am being asked to participate in a research study designed to provide information on childhood hunger within elementary schools. I am being asked to participate in this study because I am either a professional working for the Knox County elementary schools or community member concerned about childhood hunger.

I understand that I will be asked to attend a discussion meeting with a small group of other elementary school personnel and/or community members. I will participate in this discussion only once, the meeting will be held at a convenient location and will take approximately one hour.

I understand that the group discussions will be audio taped. All information I give in the discussion group will be confidential and my name will not appear on any materials nor will my responses be identifiable in any publications which may result from this research. The audiotapes will be kept under lock and key and they will be erased following transcription. I understand that the risks involved in participating in this project are minimal and that the snacks served have been prepared using safe food handling practices.

I have read the statement above and understand my role in the project and the risks involved. I have had the procedures explained to me. In addition, I am aware that:

1. My name and my comments, opinions will remain confidential;
2. I am entitled to have any further inquiries answered regarding the procedures;
3. I may withdraw my consent and discontinue participation at any time without penalty or prejudice toward me; and
4. In the event of any injury associated with my participation in this study, financial compensation is not available and medical treatment will not be provided free of charge.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Witness: _____ Date: _____

Project Director: _____ Date: _____

Check here if you want to receive a copy of the results. _____

Connie McMichael, Project Director
974-5445

Department of Nutrition, University of Tennessee

APPENDIX I

Information Form Used at Discussion Groups

1. M_____ F_____
2. Are you a (please circle one)
- Elementary Teacher
- School Foodservice Manager (or employee)
- Local Anti-Hunger Advocate
- Elementary School Principal
- Elementary School Secretary
- School Guidance Counselor
3. (a) If you are a teacher, what grade(s) do you presently teach?_____
- (b) How long have you been teaching (altogether)?

- (c) What grades if different from present? _____
4. How long have you worked at present location?_____
5. Would you consider your school to be located in a low-income neighborhood? YES_____ or NO_____
6. At your school, have you ever had a child who was hungry because there was not enough food at his/her home?
YES_____ or NO_____
- Approximately how many children over the past year? _____
7. School Personnel, have you been involved in any type of anti-hunger activities? Explain. (Continue on back of this form.)
8. Local Anti-Hunger Advocate, have you ever worked with elementary age children? In what capacity? (Continue on back of this form.)
9. If you are a local anti-hunger advocate, what types of anti-hunger activities have you been involved in? (Continue on back of this form.)

APPENDIX J

Transcript from Discussion Groups

TRANSCRIPTS

DECEMBER 1, 1993

Moderator #1: I guess we will get started. My name is C. and I'm a graduate student at (the University) working on my masters in Nutrition. This is my major professor P., and this is one of my fellow graduate students L., who will be observing the group discussion outside of the group discussion. And I guess if we could just do a general "Hello, my name is. . ." and identify whether you are a teacher, principal and so on. . . . Then we can get started. Principal; Teacher #1; Food service; Local Anti-hunger Advocate; Teacher #2; Teacher #3; Moderator #2; Teacher #4; School Secretary; Teacher #5. Do you have the recorder?

Moderator #2: Yes.

Moderator #1: Okay. This is just a real laid back group discussion. What we will be talking about today is childhood hunger and about hunger awareness education needs within the school, and I have a series of questions, and the reason that I called each one of you here is because I knew that each person being from a different discipline will have great input into the questions that I have here today. So what I'd like to try to do is after each question, it does not matter what order, just who ever has an idea, just to speak out, and what I am hoping is that each person will have a comment for each question and that each person will have the opportunity to answer the questions as they see. There is no right or wrong answer, it is just how you perceive things, using your imaginations and ideas. Do you all understand? Does everyone follow me? Okay.

Moderator #2: What we hope to come out of this is some ideas about what we might be including in schools about hunger, or for kids who might be a risk of hunger or children who maybe need to learn a little bit more about the rest of the country, and so this is really the ground work. We're doing some curriculum development.

Moderator #1: Okay I'll start. First I'd like to start by asking you about your experiences with hunger and I'd like to open with What does hunger among children mean to you? Does anyone? What does hunger among children, mean to you?

Principal: Failure to grow and thrive.

Teacher #2: If basic needs aren't met such as hunger, then it is very difficult for a child to be able to sit there and learn when they're not sure if their stomach ache is because they're sick or what. So those needs have to be taken care of first before they can be open to learning.

School Food Service: They need to get the right nutrition too. A lot of them have potato chips and stuff like that they eat, but they still don't get the right nutrition.

Advocate: I was reading today about the school lunch program that serves, I guess, about 95% of our schools in the United States, and about 50% of those meals are served either free or reduced price to kids, and the article went on to say that for many of these children it may be the only nutritious meal that they get during the day, and so the importance of the school

50 lunch program just becomes very, very obvious when we look at
 51 the relationship of nutrition to learning, as you were pointing out.
 52 One of the things I have felt in my position at CAC is that in
 53 many areas in (this city) there are families that have to make the
 54 decision between paying rent and buying food, and that there is a
 55 much greater risk of hunger than we would like to admit as a
 56 society. In Knoxville it is probably one out of every four
 57 children that is probably at risk of hunger or hungry.

58 **Moderator #1:** For some of you others, what does childhood
 59 hunger mean to you or risk of childhood hunger mean to you?

60 **Teacher #4:** Maybe scrounging for anything to eat, maybe being
 61 responsible for their own food, getting something to eat.

62 **Secretary:** Sometimes some of the children, the only meals they
 63 have are what we feed them here for breakfast and lunch. They
 64 go to Boys and Girl's Club, they get their dinner there and there
 65 is no responsibility at home for feeding children and maybe no
 66 means at home to feed the children. And I know we have children
 67 that, that is the way they are fed.

68 **Teacher #1:** Okay, it effects their performance in everything.
 69 Sometimes in how they relate to other kids, too, cause they are
 70 not feeling good.

71 **Moderator #1:** So hunger among children could then affect their
 72 social parameters as well as their education.

73 **Teacher #3:** I think it would have to effect things like self
 74 esteem and the way they feel about themselves and the way they
 75 relate to others.

76 **Moderator #1:** Does anyone else have any ideas or opinions or
 77 views on what hunger means among children?

78 **Advocate:** One of the things that I have seen in looking at the
 79 data from last year in terms of the number of kids participating
 80 in the school lunch program is that as you get into the higher
 81 grades the participation drops off.

82 **(Agreement among the group.)**

83 Which suggested that there is a growing awareness of the stigma
 84 of having to get free and reduced meals, and so it really means
 85 that as kids get into their preteens and teenage years they're
 86 even more at risk because they are not getting the food they
 87 need at school.

88 **Principal:** Some of the hunger or poor nutrition may not be
 89 totally the result of poverty, but with a lack of education among
 90 the poor. A boy who was attending another school where I was,
 91 talked about going across the street from where he lived and
 92 getting a couple of hot dogs for supper. I mean he had the
 93 money to get the Hot dogs. The money could have better been
 94 spent on something else if his mother had known to do that. So
 95 it's malnutrition, maybe, that is maybe really more prevalent than
 96 hunger itself.

97 **Teacher #5:** And, too, they may just eat junk food rather than
 98 the nutrition, and that makes sense.

99 **Advocate:** That I think is one of our big problems is
 100 counteracting the messages that kids get from TV because kids
 101 are bombarded everyday with messages on TV that talk about

102 potato chips and Kool-Aid, and Hot dogs, and hamburgers and
 103 cheeseburgers and milk shakes and all things that we have come
 104 to associate with the American culture that tastes so good, but
 105 that we are finding out more and more not what we ought to be
 106 eating, at least all the time. And the message of good nutrition,
 107 its harder, it seems like its harder to get that message to lower
 108 income families than it is to higher income families, and its when
 109 they are already struggling for self esteem and wanting to be like
 110 the rest of the crowd you can understand why they want to eat
 111 the things that make them seem to be "cool". So it gets to be a
 112 problem.

113 **Teacher # 2:** And some of these foods that the children are
 114 eating, like you mentioned Hot dogs, and some of the canned foods
 115 have a lot of MSG in it, and a lot of studies have been found that
 116 that can also contribute to children who have ADD (attention
 117 deficit disorder) and those types of problems. So its the type of
 118 foods that can be linked to their behaviors, and of course that is
 119 going to be linking to their performance in school as well.

120 **Unknown:** Right.

121 **Moderator #1:** Can you think of some experiences or some
 122 situations of hunger among children that you could describe that
 123 you've had here or in the community that you could describe?

124 **Teacher #1:** What I see, when I, I'm kindergarten and you know
 125 the ones that come in complaining that their stomach hurts or that
 126 they're hungry. They are laying their heads down and they just
 127 really don't feel like participating in activities or things we do.

128 **Teacher #2:** We had a little boy last year in kindergarten who
 129 came to my class first thing in the morning, so we picked him up
 130 about 8:00 and we always, from the office, they told us to be sure
 131 and ask him if he's eaten because he usually came to school late,
 132 so he would just come into the building and come straight to my
 133 room. So we usually had to ask him every morning "Have you
 134 had breakfast?" And if he hadn't, instead of coming to our class
 135 we would send him down to the cafeteria, and it was always make
 136 sure that he got food because he was a real tiny little fellow and
 137 we knew that situation. So we just make sure everyday that he
 138 had breakfast.

139 **Principal:** I've done the opposite with a couple of girls who are
 140 fourth and fifth graders and who have been in the habit of being
 141 late to school even after 8:00, and our rules are that we close the
 142 cafeteria at five minutes till 8:00 and they come in and they turn
 143 the tears on real easily "I'm hungry" and they say "I couldn't
 144 help it", and I just, mean old principal, would send them on to
 145 their rooms cause I knew that, I believed that with them if I
 146 always let them go down and eat breakfast no matter what time
 147 they got there in the morning, that would just feed that
 148 tardiness, that tardy habit. And I think that the tardiness was
 149 their, at least as much their fault, if not totally their fault;
 150 sometimes it was the cars. I just made that decision, which is not
 151 a child advocate, hunger kind of a decision, with those two girls.

152 **Teacher #4:** I have a couple who constantly ask "When is lunch?",
 153 "Is it 8:30?", you know. And usually I'll say "Did You eat

154 breakfast?", "No," and its "I forgot" or something so they don't
 155 really come out and say that they, no one fed them or that there
 156 was no food in the house. Oh no, they just say "no" and "I
 157 forgot" or something, but that shows me that they are not
 158 performing to their potential because they're hungry.

159 **Advocate:** Just personally, I find that I get hungry even if I eat
 160 breakfast. You know I get hungry in the middle of the morning.
 161 And I usually bring a snack to work so that I have something in
 162 my drawer to eat on. And one of the things that's being tried in
 163 some areas of the country, actually I think it was some parts of
 164 Canada, where I read about this, that they were trying mid-
 165 morning snacks for kids. And specifically with the idea that even
 166 though they might have eaten early they're still going to get
 167 hungry later on, and this will help them to continue to have
 168 energy. And it has been terribly successful just in terms of the
 169 teachers noticing greater attention spans and kids being more
 170 quiet and being able to concentrate. It's been a very big success
 171 in this one trial.

172 **Moderator #1:** And the snacks were served in the classroom?

173 **Advocate:** Snacks were served in the classroom.

174 **School Food Service:** And it would help those especially who
 175 couldn't eat breakfast.

176 **Advocate:** Exactly. And that way it tended to, it didn't
 177 discriminate between kids who maybe weren't, who paid for and
 178 who couldn't. It was a subsidized program where all kids got it.
 179 And they really looked forward to that snack time.

180 **Principal:** Our kindergartners are having a morning snack. Have
 181 you noticed any difference?

182 **Teacher #1:** I haven't had as many complaining. I have always a
 183 couple that don't bring it and I just keep cereal or crackers or
 184 whatever, but I don't think I've had very many this year that
 185 have complained of being hungry. Which usually even when we
 186 ate at 10:30, you know 9:30 or 10:00 and we have our snack about
 187 9:30, they would say, you know, "When's lunch?" "We're getting
 188 hungry", I don't really, I don't have that this year.

189 **Teacher #3:** They bring their snacks from home, their own
 190 choice?

191 **Teacher #1:** Yes.

192 **Teacher #3:** What types of snacks? Are they nutritious? Are
 193 there any restrictions?

194 **Teacher #1:** Well, we sent a note home and said a "nutritious
 195 snack." Mostly peanut butter and crackers and juice boxes, and
 196 when I do have one that brings in, like after Halloween, one of
 197 them brought in Halloween candy, and I said "You know we talked
 198 about that wasn't a good snack," and to try and bring in
 199 something else so, but they usually have done good.

200 **(Agreement among group.)**

201 **Principal:** Some of them buy from the cafeteria; we've got some
 202 older students who go down and get the money and take their
 203 orders, a small selection of snack items.

204 **Teacher #1:** But we don't eat lunch till 12:00, so we just about
 205 have to have something.

- 206 School Food Service: All of them gets a little something?
 207 Teacher #1: Yes
 208 School Food Service: If you need anything, holler.
 209 Moderator #1: Have any of you others had an experience where
 210 you felt the child was hungry that you could describe?
 211 School Secretary: I have it everyday. They come up complaining
 212 with headaches and stomach aches, and I always take a
 213 temperature first, and then I ask them "Did you eat?" And they'll
 214 say "I haven't eaten anything all day." So I'll take them to (food
 215 service person) and they feed them, and they seem to be able to
 216 stay and make it to lunch time, and she always has toast or
 217 crackers or juice or something like that they can pick to eat.
 218 School Food Service: And they feel better after they eat, don't
 219 they?
 220 School Secretary: Yes.
 221 Teacher #5: It's usually one of the first questions you ask them,
 222 especially if its early in the morning.
 223 School Secretary: Yes. (agreement)
 224 Teacher #5: "Have you had breakfast?"
 225 School Food Service: We've always got something.
 226 Teacher #3: My fifth graders it doesn't happen very often, but
 227 they do seem to be open with it. I mean they will come and say
 228 when they come in "I haven't had anything to eat, I'm hungry."
 229 I mean they will ask. It's not very often, but they will "Could I
 230 go on down and get something?" Even though they know its a
 231 little past the time.
 232 Moderator #1: So do you all notice the experiences that you've
 233 described to be to a certain group of children? Is it always the
 234 same children?
 235 Group consensus: No.
 236 Moderator #1: Are you aware of specific children? You don't
 237 have to mention their names.
 238 Teacher #1: Do you mean the same ones everyday? The one that I
 239 had this year we've talked about.
 240 Principal: But that one could have eaten breakfast here.
 241 Teacher #1: Most of ours could.
 242 Principal: Right. Eighty percent of our students are on free and
 243 reduced lunches.
 244 Teacher #1: But then if they don't come in . . .
 245 Principal interrupts: They don't get any.
 246 Teacher #1: . . .late, then they don't get that.
 247 Moderator #1: Okay, moving on to some educational topics.
 248 Should education about hunger or risk of hunger be included in
 249 elementary schools?
 250 Advocate: You mean education for the children?
 251 Moderator: For the children.
 252 Teacher #1: I think maybe we talk about that when we're talking
 253 about nutrition and good food to eat. I think we talk about how
 254 it makes us feel if we don't eat and what happens to our bodies if
 255 we don't eat right.
 256 Teacher #3: I think that children from this neighborhood pretty
 257 much would be aware that there is hunger because they see

258 people down at the salvation army lined up for food and they see
259 things like that, they especially, the older children, realize that
260 there are these programs that people need and use.

261 **Advocate:** Maybe the focus of the education would be on helping
262 the children become aware of the resources that are available to
263 their families, and they probably are aware that there's hunger
264 and that there's a need, but there may be a feeling that "Gosh its
265 always been this way and you know my family is poor and I some-
266 how don't deserve to eat". And they may be unwilling or not be
267 aware that there are resources where their families can get the
268 food that they need.

269 **Teacher #2:** That's a good point because a lot of the parents
270 aren't receiving the newspaper, they don't know about some of
271 the funds.

272 **Advocate:** Right, that are available, and some of them can't read
273 and so they wouldn't know for that reason as well. So it might
274 be good that the children knew those societies or agencies that
275 would be able to help. And what they could do and how could
276 they help their parents be aware, what do their parents need to
277 do, because in a lot of the cases it might the child sort of taking
278 the parents' hands saying "we need to do this." Especially if it
279 is some of the older kids that have bigger brothers and sisters.

280 **Moderator #1:** Some of you who haven't spoken up, do you feel
281 that hunger education should be included in the elementary school
282 then?

283 **Principal:** I'm sorry, I'm not as close as to what is in our health
284 curriculum as the teachers are, but like (one of the teachers), I
285 feel like that, that is, we have nutrition education in every grade,
286 not so much hunger education, but I would expect that we
287 wouldn't need much more if we needed any at all because we do
288 have nutrition education and that would include the importance of
289 eating well and eating right.

290 **Teacher #1:** But you know how, it seems like no matter how much
291 you educate them, if there's not the food in the home they're not
292 going to get what they need.

293 **(Agreement in group.)**

294 **Advocate:** Uh huh. You know, and it could be approached too by
295 talking to the children in terms of somebody else being hungry,
296 or their friends might be hungry. If you have a friend who is
297 not eating or you know that this friend may not have enough food
298 in the house, here are some ways that your friend's family can
299 get some extra food. And do it so, that way, so that you're not
300 focusing on a particular child or embarrassing that child. But I
301 think that there would be a place for it. I'm not in the school
302 system, so I don't share your perception, but my feeling is that
303 hunger is really not something that we ought to accept in the
304 United States or in the world for that matter. That we have the
305 resources and the ability to eliminate it, and part of that has got
306 to come from education from all levels in how to get the resources
307 to all the people. I think we have a tendency to blame the
308 individual for their circumstances, and you know in some cases it
309 is the individual's fault, but in many cases it, hunger, comes

310 about because of a complex system of social inequities that the
311 person can't help. And we need to do everything we can at all
312 levels to try to reduce that hunger.

313 **School Secretary:** Well, if the parents are not, do not know how
314 to buy things properly, the children will be hungry, the family is
315 going to be hungry because they spend all their money on snack
316 foods and things that aren't nutritious because they don't know.

317 **Teacher #4:** All the food is frozen--like I notice them at the
318 grocery store and it will be like frozen pizza. I think a lot of it
319 is just what's convenient, what's quick for them.

320 **Teacher #2:** A lot these parents don't spend too much time
321 talking with their children anyway, and a lot of them that are
322 working are having several jobs, and they might have a lot of
323 children and they don't really take all that much time to prepare
324 foods or even do the work with their children at home, but if
325 there would be some type of way to contact the parents it might
326 be that. . . . I know of a teacher in another county, I heard her
327 speak at a seminar, and she has a program where she saves all
328 the coupons out of every paper, and every time she sends
329 anything home to the parents she puts some coupons in there of
330 some kind that she gets, and she's constantly sending these
331 coupons out to parents of nutritious foods and that sort of thing.
332 I thought that was a good idea.

333 **Moderator:** Are there any other ideas?

334 **Principal:** I visited at another school, "school to parent" program
335 that was formerly developed. We had one at two schools in the
336 county school system. Two elementary schools, and a part of
337 getting the parents to come to the weekly club meetings was the
338 distribution of food: bread, and other things from a nearby
339 Kroger bakery. One of the teacher's assistants, that was helping
340 the program director, would go by and get, the day before those
341 meetings, and would take bread loaves and other things, and that
342 was a good incentive to get the parents there. They had not had
343 success with other kinds of incentives, but food incentives got
344 the parents there. But that made a big impression on me.

345 **Advocate:** (Agreement by nodding)

346 **Moderator #1:** Do some of you have some other ideas on how it
347 could be included in the elementary schools or in the classroom --
348 hunger education, hunger awareness education. Has everyone
349 spoken on that? Who should be the target audience? If it is
350 children, would a specific grade be more targeted or would it be
351 all grades? We've already mentioned that we might target the
352 parents. Any comments? What about the children, would it be
353 just the ones that were hungry or all the children?

354 **Teacher #1:** I think maybe they all need to be aware, you know
355 even if they're not hungry, they need to be aware that there is a
356 problem in our world and I kind of think it should be all grade
357 levels.

358 **Moderator #1:** Does anyone else have any ideas or does everyone
359 agree on that?

360 **Advocate:** I would certainly agree with that. I think that there's
361 room for that kind of education at all levels. I guess for two

362 reasons: one to help the individual family and to let the parents
 363 know what resources are available, and then to help the children
 364 know that, that this is a serious social problem, that it's part of
 365 life that we need to be working on to try to solve.

366 **Teacher #2:** As a parent of a preschool child I know that at
 367 church and even when the Boy Scouts come by and leave bags to
 368 be filled up with can goods and things like that, I know it's
 369 important for me to have her to help me choose some foods and
 370 for her to know what we are doing and why we're doing it. So I
 371 would think that that would be something that we would want our
 372 children, even preschool, to be aware of and for them to, just as
 373 human beings, to reach out to other people and be willing to help
 374 one another.

375 **Advocate:** Something else that might go along with this is the
 376 teaching of long-term thinking, rather than short-term thinking,
 377 and in planning for the future. Planning for next week, next
 378 month rather than just eating it now. I think we need to
 379 emphasize more in our families and in our schools to postpone
 380 gratification, to put things off a little bit, to reward yourself
 381 later, or if you've got a limited amount of food or a limited amount
 382 of food stamps you try to look ahead to the entire month and see
 383 that it spreads over the entire month. So involved in all this is a
 384 much bigger concept than just eating: it involves planning and
 385 thinking ahead and getting kids to think beyond just the
 386 immediate situation. What are you going to be doing next week,
 387 what are you going to be eating next week or next month, or what
 388 are you going to be when you grow up? All these things are sort
 389 of involved in long-term thinking, which is not something that
 390 human beings do very well; we're short term thinkers for the
 391 most part.

392 **Moderator #1:** I know that question was maybe more geared
 393 toward the teachers in that should education be included in the
 394 classroom and in the school and who should be involved, but (food
 395 service person) do you have any ideas, what is your idea, do you
 396 think?

397 **School Food Service:** Well I think that it should be all of them,
 398 not just part of them, all the children, from kindergarten on up.
 399 I know we, from National School Lunch Week and different things
 400 like that, we put up posters with nutrition and we have a lot of
 401 posters like "Milk, it does the body good" and all that. I think
 402 that it should be all.

403 **Moderator #1:** Who should be involved in the development of
 404 hunger education materials for use in the curriculum? If there is
 405 a curriculum developed for hunger awareness education, who
 406 would be involved in the development of that curriculum?

407 **Teacher #3:** Someone who's aware of the time involvement in the
 408 classroom.

409 (Laughter among the group.)

410 **Teacher #4:** And knows how many things are getting squeezed in
 411 already. Ideally, teachers.

412 (Laughter among the group.)

413 **Moderator #1:** Maybe I could ask where in the existing curricula

should it be included? Does anyone have any ideas where in the existing curricula it should be included?

Teacher #2: I know that you're talking about the children mostly, but you know we have some federal programs like Even Start and some of these other types of things where they're working with the children and they're also working with the parents as well, and teaching the parents how to teach their children at home about books and reading and that sort of thing. And I don't really know if, and there are programs, adult education, where we're helping them to get their G.E.D.'s and high school diplomas, if there are some single parents in there or any parents at all that are going through those programs, that might be a good place to teach them because there the people have the money and they're going to have the say so about where the money goes if you're really going to be doing something about hunger. You know its good for the children to be aware, but you know to actually help the problem. I don't know if some of these children in the lower income homes have that much influence over their parents, so in a lot of these federal programs it might be good to get to those parents who are interested cause that's probably all you're going to reach at first and then maybe they can reach their friends, is to maybe reach them through some type of program like that where they can learn about rationing the food and that sort of thing. But that seems like a good place to start.

Advocate: I don't ever think it's ever too early to start with the kids either because they are going to grow up and be parents one day themselves, so the sooner you start teaching these things hopefully the deeper it will be ingrained. Maybe that's just an optimistic view point. (agreement within the group by unknown person). There is something in the bible that says "Teach a child in the way, the way in which it should go and when he gets old he will return to it." Well the key is when he is old, (laughter among group). So I always take that as comfort when I look at my sons.

Teacher #3: You know I think we can teach and teach and teach, but when it comes right down to the bottom line they're still going to pattern themselves with what they see everyday and what they live with and what they see their parents do. So the educational part for the parent is going to have to be the change, I think. I mean we can influence to a certain extent, but a lot of the influence is going to be what the parent has done in the home.

Principal: You may not want this personal example. With the exception of one teacher who was pregnant a couple of years ago, I'm the only adult that drinks milk for lunch and I drink it everyday. And my mother pounded into me, she didn't pound it in, she wouldn't let me drink, us little girls, drink anything else but milk until we were seniors in high school, and we could only have coffee or tea when we were seniors, after we had drank a glass of milk. That's the kind of influence that I got in terms of nutrition education, and I make sure I eat lunch everyday, and there are some principals that don't get around to it cause you

466 can really get in a hurry and rushed sometimes. And then
 467 there's sometimes I didn't eat till maybe 2:00, but that isn't that
 468 often, maybe twice a year. But that was my mother's influence on
 469 me, plus the nutrition courses in college. That's where it came
 470 from.

471 **School Secretary:** Parents now do not cook. They go to
 472 McDonald's, they go to Pizza Hut and bring home food and eat,
 473 and my children do, that I raised in a different way, they're
 474 guilty of doing that but you know it is just the easiest thing to
 475 do, and I cook and we never go, very seldom do we go to a fast
 476 food restaurant to get something hamburgers or whatever, and
 477 you don't see that much anymore, and people look at me like
 478 "You're an oddity -- you still cook a full meal for your family."
 479 Well I've always done that. And I think sometimes what's going to
 480 happen when I'm gone, who's going to carry that on in my family,
 481 probably nobody, I don't know, you know, if it needs to be
 482 carried -- on.

483 (Laughter among the group.)

484 But that's the way I was raised too, of course we were. We didn't
 485 have a lot when I was growing up and we had to cook, we didn't
 486 have the money to go out and buy fast food and things.

487 **Advocate:** This is part of the cultural problem, I think, that we
 488 see. I was reading some statistics the other day that show that
 489 across the state of Tennessee from, in 1992, retail sales in eating
 490 establishments, eating places, rose by about nearly 8%, whereas
 491 sales in food stores only rose by 1/2 a percent, which suggests
 492 something dramatic is happening in our whole food system, in our
 493 eating system. And it also may have some implications for low
 494 income areas, because what's happening is that the food stores
 495 are moving out of low income areas; there are no big chains in
 496 the low income areas so it becomes harder and harder for poor
 497 people to get lower-priced food. You've got to go out into the
 498 county to get to Krogers or Red Food or Food Lion or whatever,
 499 and so it becomes, the cultural interactions become very
 500 significant in terms of their impact on lower income areas.

501 **Principal:** And a lot of these little "mom and pop" stores or
 502 convenient places have the Hot dogs, like I said this before, when
 503 that boy went across the street and got.

504 **Advocate:** Exactly, and they are usually more expensive.

505 (Agreement among the group.)

506 **Principal:** Oh, yes!

507 **Advocate:** So it's a very difficult problem.

508 **School Food Service:** You take with the mother and daddy both
 509 working a lot of times, they're tired and worn out and don't want
 510 to do what mothers do. They just give them the money to go to.
 511 Now my boys, they didn't like what I cooked, they wanted to go
 512 to McDonald's. And they still do.

513 (Laughter and some agreement among the group.)

514 **Teacher #2:** Mine do too. I'm guilty of doing that too, and
 515 sometimes I feel guilty. Maybe this is what we're sort of talking
 516 about, as my little girl, she is five years old now, but she'll, what
 517 ever I give her now she'll ask if it has protein in it. Well no, it

518 doesn't have much, so I guess she is making me feel guilty
 519 sometimes because "Well that doesn't have much protein in it, we
 520 need to go get something," or sometimes she won't eat whatever I
 521 show to her and she'll talk about milk, she'll say "Isn't milk good
 522 for me, won't it make me big and strong?" So I guess being
 523 aware like that, unless the children can make the parents feel
 524 guilty.

525 (Laughter among the group.)

526 Principal: Whether or not they actually have.

527 What (one of the teachers) said, or somebody said and I saw (the
 528 teacher) nodding, about children. Children, many children in our
 529 school, have no influence on their parents. There is no
 530 conversation to start with, there are only orders given by the
 531 parents to the children and that is the only type of talk that
 532 goes on, and rebellion against that many times. There is not an
 533 interaction of conversation between parent and child, I'm sure in
 534 a high percentage of the cases.

535 Moderator #2: I'd like to interject here to pick up on something
 536 that you said. And I thought about something. We had a speaker
 537 at the University awhile back, and he's been working in inner
 538 city Atlanta to try and increase, to get the children to eat more
 539 fruits and vegetables, and the behavior he worked on was "asking
 540 behavior," to get the kids to go home and ask their parents to,
 541 you know, "When you go to the store would you buy fruits and
 542 vegetables, would you?", you know. And his hope, and he's a
 543 social psychologist rather than a nutritionist, so his hope was that
 544 that would move on into other areas, and that it would maybe, you
 545 know, improve communications; you know, if I could just ask what
 546 y'all think of that, if that might, if that strikes a cord. Is that
 547 something that is in the realm of possible?

548 Principal: Yeah. I had never thought something that's called
 549 "asking behaviors".

550 Moderator #2: It was new to me too, so.

551 Principal: I ask kids to ask their parents to get them an alarm
 552 clock. Tell them (the principal), tell your mother (the principal)
 553 asked you to ask for an alarm clock.

554 Moderator #1: Are there any other comments? Okay, what I seem
 555 to be hearing is that, getting back to the question about who
 556 should be involved in development of a curriculum. It was that
 557 maybe a better idea, and y'all please agree or disagree, a better
 558 idea is to involve it in a curriculum that is already established?
 559 Is that? And not only with the children but to involve parents,
 560 is that what I'm hearing? Are there any comments on that?

561 Okay.

562 (Group agreeing, nodding.)

563 So who would be involved in presenting information to children or
 564 the parents?

565 Teacher #1: You may get some through, you know, local PTA
 566 meetings, as far as giving information to the parents.

567 Moderator #1: And obviously if it's in the classroom, it would be
 568 the teachers with the children.

569 Principal: If some outside agency like CAC, wanted to get

570 information or printed information to parents, as far as I'm
 571 concerned, probably most principals would be glad for that to go
 572 home with the children.

573 Teacher #2: A lot of these people might be on welfare or
 574 something like that; it might be something to be distributed
 575 through some agency like that. Wherever parents are going to
 576 go.

577 School Food Service: Whenever they pick up their stamps or
 578 whatever, you can give them information.

579 Teacher #2: It would really be good to go with the food stamps
 580 wouldn't it?

581 Advocate: Are we still talking about hunger awareness or
 582 nutrition education?

583 Moderator #1: Hunger awareness.

584 Advocate: CAC does try to get out information through the
 585 commodities program and the summer feeding sites and through
 586 the emergency food helpers system network; the bags of food that
 587 we give out we put information about other resources that are
 588 available, so we do a little bit of that. We're kind of, a little bit
 589 limited, well actually quite a bit limited in the amount of materials
 590 we get out and actually go into the schools to go out with each
 591 student. We're talking about the school system, that would
 592 probably be a little over our heads. But we would be glad to
 593 work out any way that we can to help on that kind of outreach.
 594 One thing that I wanted to mention, as a possible way of getting
 595 information out, would be through a nutrition educator, which is a
 596 position that has been advocated by the nutrition counsel, and the
 597 food policy counsel, and some other groups in the city. Basically
 598 this is a position that's been authorized by the school system, but
 599 hasn't been funded, and the idea would be to have a person at
 600 the administrative level who would take responsibility and take
 601 charge of all nutrition education in all of the schools in (this city)
 602 and to coordinate the implementation of the material, and to help
 603 teachers incorporate the material into their classes, and this, if it
 604 ever gets funded, this would be a good place for hunger
 605 awareness also to be incorporated.

606 Moderator #1: Do any of you others have any ideas on how
 607 hunger awareness education could be involved in the elementary
 608 school setting? Or who would be involved in that hunger
 609 awareness education? As (the anti-hunger advocate) mentioned,
 610 possibly a nutrition educator, the teachers, any other ideas?

611 Teacher #4: Might get some volunteers to come in, volunteer
 612 parents. Parents that don't work might be able to approach other
 613 parents more easily and maybe some teachers who would, maybe,
 614 be better aware of what is going on in the community.

615 Moderator #1: Any other ideas? Okay we'll move on then. We
 616 have a couple of more. The information we're talking about, the
 617 program, or the curriculum, what would be the goal? What would
 618 be the main goal or some objectives in educating the children
 619 and/or parents about hunger awareness, hunger education? Is
 620 that clear?

621 Advocate: From my stand point, I think that the main objective

622 would be to try to reduce hunger. That would mean getting the
 623 information out that hunger in our society is not something that
 624 we should accept or take for granted, whether it's in my family,
 625 or your family, or a child's family that comes to school and that
 626 we have. There are social resources that are available to help
 627 counteract that hunger both for immediate emergency purposes
 628 and for long term purposes to help a family climb out of poverty.
 629 I think that would be the ultimate objective.

630 Moderator #1: Does anyone else have any other ideas on what it
 631 would be?

632 Teacher #4: I guess to make children aware of the difference
 633 between, I guess hunger and being hungry, because a lot of them,
 634 maybe they eat breakfast, but maybe they don't eat enough or
 635 they're getting the right food or whatever, but they still think
 636 that they're hungry when they're really not compared to someone
 637 else. They need to distinguish the difference.

638 Moderator #1: In other words, understanding long-term hunger
 639 verses being hungry before lunch time.

640 Advocate: That's a good point.

641 Teacher #1: You know some children, I think, or children that are
 642 never hungry, its hard for them to imagine that there are kids
 643 that are hungry. I know my own personal children probably
 644 could not imagine, they don't know what hunger is. You know
 645 maybe to not only educate in the schools that, you know, that do
 646 have hunger, but just all schools, just to make them more aware
 647 that there is hunger in the United States.

648 Moderator #1: And what hunger is.

649 Teacher #1: Yeah, I don't think that they, a lot of children, do
 650 not know what, or even know that there are other kids that are
 651 hungry.

652 Principal: People may see the starving children in third world
 653 nations, you know, very pitiful pictures that we see, and they'll
 654 distance themselves from that, of course "we don't have anybody
 655 in our country that's starving" but, you know, understand the
 656 gradations between starvation and well being and the hungers in
 657 there.

658 Teacher #4: I guess some of them maybe don't realize that they
 659 are hungry; they'll say "well I don't look like that" or "I don't
 660 live like that," so they don't, they don't eat. . . .

661 Teacher #1: You know we talk about we don't have any, you
 662 know "There's nothing to eat in this house!" And they really
 663 don't know what it means that there's nothing to eat in the house.

664 Moderator #1: Okay does anyone else have any other ideas about
 665 what the main goal or objectives might be? Okay, what types of
 666 activities could the students be involved in, in learning about
 667 hunger, hunger awareness?

668 Teacher #3: Well even when we do our Thanksgiving baskets.
 669 That's an activity that makes them aware; they bring food and
 670 send it to other people. That's one of the things we do.

671 School Food Service: The "Empty Stocking Fund".

672 Moderator #1: They're aware of that? What is the "Empty
 673 Stocking Fund"?

674 Principal: The News Sentinel, before Christmas, fund raising drive
 675 to solicit donations for families who sign up for Christmas baskets.
 676 It's called the "Empty Stocking Fund." They start publicizing for
 677 it right after Thanksgiving, I guess daily, in the paper, you know
 678 to solicit funds, and some schools and of course some classes in
 679 some schools have children that do various activities or just
 680 donate money to send to the "Empty Stocking Fund".

681 Moderator #1: So to make the children aware of these activities in
 682 the community? Is that what I'm hearing?

683 School Food Service: Yes, that is one of the ways they do that.

684 Teacher #2: Or maybe just something like you know "You have
 685 five dollars, what would be the best way to spend it in a
 686 nutritional or sound way?"

687 Teacher #5: Even having the tasting parties that we have, and
 688 getting them use to different, new, vegetables that they wouldn't
 689 try at home.

690 School Food Service: Raw broccoli and cauliflower and all the
 691 different things they get to try. I know a lot of them, they won't
 692 eat the broccoli without the cheese sauce.

693 Moderator #1: What other type of activities could the children
 694 engage in to learn more about hunger? In the classroom, or
 695 within the school, like field trips.

696 Advocate: One of the things that CAC is doing, is, I guess not
 697 directly related to hunger awareness, but it has more to do with
 698 becoming self sufficient and trying to avoid hunger later on, and
 699 that is this summer we are going to be providing field trips to
 700 area farms for kids at the boys' and girls' club, and we're also
 701 going to be starting vegetable gardens at each of the boys' and
 702 girls' clubs' sites so that they can begin to see how to grow their
 703 own food and hopefully take an interest in gardening. Since my
 704 two sons grew up on the farm, I'm not real optimistic about that,
 705 because neither one of them are very interested in gardening, but
 706 its something that we're going to try anyway, to see if it will
 707 catch on.

708 Moderator #1: Does anyone else have any ideas?

709 Teacher #5: The day care, and I think that, uh, take their food
 710 to the salvation army, saw them going down there and carrying
 711 their boxes so I guess they could see, actually see the people that
 712 were there for their meals. This was right before Thanksgiving.

713 Moderator: So that would help them be aware of the hungry
 714 people in our community, not just hungry children, but hungry
 715 adults.

716 Teacher #3: For the upper level kids, you might bring in
 717 resource people who are connected with these special food
 718 programs, to give them the information, talk to them and explain
 719 how it works, and where it is and where they get the food.
 720 There's a great program going on here in (this city) where all
 721 those restaurants are donating all their leftovers and so forth. I
 722 was not aware of that until I had read it in the paper; I had
 723 heard about other places, but I didn't realize it was going on in
 724 (this city), but you know if someone could come into the classroom
 725 that was involved in that and give the information to them.

726 Moderator: You all have listed some good activities, can you think
727 of any other?

728 Teacher #2: You can maybe let the children help to, uh, usually
729 preparing baskets and things like that is done by parents or
730 adults and it could be something for the children to help to do,
731 prepare those and actually to distribute them.

732 Moderator #1: And our last question to wrap it up, how would
733 students' awareness of hunger, how could it be measured, how
734 would we know that the kids are aware of hunger, how could we
735 measure their awareness of hunger in the classroom?

736 Principal: Survey, written, oral some kind of survey, pretest,
737 post test, to me would be the easiest.

738 Teacher #2: Of course observations, you could just observe the
739 children, well that's nutrition, to observe what they eat.

740 Advocate: Several years ago the food research and action center
741 in Washington started what's called a Community Child Hunger
742 Identification Project which several states have undertaken. (This
743 state) is about to undertake such a study and basically they're
744 going to have two samples, one from the rural area and one from
745 the urban area. (This city), I guess, will be included in the
746 urban area. This is not so much a survey of awareness of
747 hunger as it is a trying to document the existence of childhood
748 hunger, but some of questions I think that are used in the
749 survey could be adapted to tap that question whether a child was
750 aware of hunger either in, among his friends or himself.

751 Presumably that study is suppose to start next spring, but we
752 keep moving it back or forward. But there are about eight
753 questions that are considered significant for the identification of
754 hunger, and those questions could be taken and revised slightly.

755 Teacher #4: The only thing, I don't know if its nutrition or
756 hunger education, but it bothers me like when I go through, you
757 know, take the kids through the lunch lines and just getting them
758 to realize how important it is to eat. You know they're not used
759 to getting the nutritional foods at home because they'll go
760 through the line, and they don't want to get anything, and you
761 know that they're hungry because they're the ones who said
762 "When's lunch, when's lunch" and so they're not use to getting
763 the broccoli and just the various things. And you know that
764 bothers me for them to get 2 or 3 items and just sit there.

765 School Food Service: Yeah, they have to have at least 3 items
766 and the cookies doesn't count as an item.

767 Teacher #4: Some of them, that's all they want.

768 School Food Service: Yeah.

769 Teacher #5: Or orange juice.

770 School Food Service: But we, that's what they offer us versus
771 what we serve. We've got so many different things they can pick
772 from. Yeah.

773 Teacher #4: Yeah, because they're, they want this, this.

774 School Food Service: But there are so many things that they can
775 pick from. They've got the two choices of meat and we still have
776 them go through the line that don't. You know, its fine if they
777 don't necessarily get meat.

778 Teacher #4: When they don't get that, I know that's what bothers
 779 me the most.

780 School Food Service: But then a lot of them will get two fruits
 781 and a vegetable and milk. I've had them come through the line
 782 that has 2 or 3 fruits and vegetables and milk. And they will
 783 leave the bread and meat off, which is fine.

784 Advocate: I was just going to ask, do they usually eat what they
 785 pick?

786 School Food Service: Some of them do. Some of them, everything,
 787 but there is still quite a few leaves, a little of it. To get that
 788 many items they can't eat all of it. Maybe they can eat a little
 789 bit of each one of them. Maybe get, some of them come through
 790 the line "Oh that's no good" and somebody else says "Oh yes that
 791 is," and they'll take it. They take it because this one here takes
 792 it and they find out that it's good.

793 Moderator #1: So getting back to the question of how we could
 794 measure students' awareness of hunger. Where does food choices
 795 come in?

796 Teacher #3: Well that would, that would more or less evaluate
 797 their knowledge of nutrition, but I don't know that that would
 798 evaluate their knowledge of hunger.

799 Teacher #1: Maybe instead of this, kind of by observation, if
 800 they come in and say I'm hungry rather than my stomach hurts
 801 or I've got a headache. I think sometimes they don't realize that
 802 its the hunger that makes them feel so bad; maybe, you know, if
 803 they're just realizing what or if they're saying "I'm hungry"
 804 rather than I don't feel good.

805 Moderator: So getting them to understand those two concepts and
 806 how they connect might be a way to measure their awareness.

807 Teacher #1: Right.

808 Moderator #1: Okay, are there any other ideas to measure their
 809 awareness of hunger? Okay, are there any other added comments
 810 that you've been dying to say that maybe didn't apply to the
 811 questions I asked you, but that you think that is important in
 812 dealing with children, and children who are hungry, or hunger
 813 awareness education in the schools? Okay, if not, this concludes
 814 our discussion, and I do want to thank each and every one of you
 815 for coming here today, especially the principal for providing me
 816 with your wonderful staff here.

817 Moderator #2: And to say thank you, I'm going to make a
 818 donation to emergency food out of your honor. We couldn't pay
 819 everybody, so that would be a way of saying thank you.

820 Advocate: I did bring an emergency food pantries guide that's
 821 the latest update of all churches and pantries that provide
 822 emergency foods, the times that they're open.

823 Principal: Yes.

824 Advocate: Yes.

825 School Secretary: I worked at Central this summer, just as a
 826 volunteer, about 3 days a week. It was kind of neat -- one little
 827 girl, a family came by while I was working, and I was taking the
 828 information down and the little girl, with her daddy, she was a
 829 student here, and of course she recognized me and she kind of

830 hung her head as if she were ashamed. She never did look up
831 and say anything to me at all. I carried the food out to the car
832 and helped them load it. She went back to the car and got in
833 and sat with her head down, like this. I guess it embarrassed
834 her to think that I was there and I knew that they needed.
835 Principal: We do have some parents who call or come by and say
836 "I need help." I don't know that they've ever come since I've
837 been here for food, but we did have one this year and some last
838 year that said "If there's anybody that calls and they're giving
839 baskets for Christmas, I would like to be put on the list."
840 Secretary: I had one family who goes to Fulton, apparently they
841 had called up and asked for help and if we had anything for
842 Christmas.
843 Principal: So apparently they do know, some do know that school
844 is a place where people can come and get some help or find a way
845 to get some help.
846 Secretary: Well, in years past, one year I think we gave, just the
847 school alone bought food and distributed something like fifteen to
848 twenty baskets. I think from this school, for Thanksgiving. PTA
849 paid for the meat and the fresh fruits and vegetables and things
850 that went in it, and the children brought the can goods, and we
851 had fifteen to twenty baskets distributed just in our school, and
852 we're, a lot of ours are needy families, but they were willing to
853 help others. I thought that was kind of nice.
854 Teacher #4: I know a lot of ours are too young, but not until I
855 was a sophomore in high school did I really realize that there was
856 hunger, because a club I was in, we did like about fifteen or
857 twenty baskets, and we were in charge of getting the names and
858 the addresses and delivering them to the actual home, and it just
859 really hit home because it was like within driving distance of
860 where you live and its not in another state, or another country.
861 You know something like that might be good, but a lot of ours are
862 probably too young to do be involved in something like that.
863 Teacher #3: Many years ago, about the first week or two of
864 school we use to make a home visit to every one of the students
865 that we had. I sometimes wish that was where we could still do
866 that because, you found out all the things just by being there for
867 a few minutes.
868 Moderator #1: I'm sure you would in their own environment,
869 their own home.
870 Principal: There's nothing to prohibit that, its, its just time
871 consuming.
872 Moderator #1: When was this, are you talking years ago?
873 Teacher #3: Thirty years ago.
874 (Laughter among the group.)
875 Teacher #2: They still do it, the first and second grade teachers.
876 I know it wasn't all the way up, but I know we had those first
877 couple of weeks then when they only came in the morning or half
878 the day. And so part of what we did on those afternoons was try
879 to contact the homes.
880 Moderator #1: Thank You!!!
881

882

February 2, 1994

883 **Moderator #1:** Hi, my name is C. and I've met a few of you
884 already. We're glad to have you here. This is P., assistant
885 professor at (the university) and my major professor, and I've
886 brought two fellow graduate students with me. L. who will be
887 observing the group discussion on the outside and taking some
888 notes and K. Again, we are glad that you are here today, and I
889 hope you all read the little note (placed at each chair) about that
890 there aren't any right or wrong answers in this group discussion.
891 It's just a time to share ideas and experiences and perceptions.
892 So feel free to speak up at any time even if you feel someone has
893 already mentioned or shared some of your own ideas, a verbal
894 agreement, you know, just whatever comes to mind. This
895 shouldn't take too long, and I do have a small gift for you
896 afterwards. Just bear with us and I guess we'll get started.
897 This is a group discussion on childhood hunger and hunger
898 awareness education needs within the elementary school. First of
899 all, I'd like to ask you some questions about your experiences
900 with hunger. What does hunger among children mean to you or
901 risk of hunger among children mean to you?
902 **Principal:** It means that they do not do as well in school because
903 if they are hungry, then they're concentrating on the stomachs
904 instead of concentrating on what we're trying to do.
905 **School Food Service:** They're also not a happy person if
906 they're hungry. They are just not going to be happy they are
907 not going to be content.
908 **Teacher #1:** Just they're nutritional needs aren't being met.
909 **Teacher #5:** Which means physically that they're not, I mean, you
910 can tell by looking at them if they didn't have breakfast in the
911 morning that they're more tired.
912 **Teacher #1:** That's going to affect their mental.
913 **Teacher #3:** Basic needs of, you know, eating and sleeping are
914 not met. You can't do anything else well.
915 **School Secretary:** They sleep half the day, they come into the
916 office with headaches or whatever.
917 **Moderator:** Any other, do you have any other comments about
918 what hunger among children means to you? Or risk of hunger?
919 What would make a child at risk of hunger, possibly?
920 **Teacher #4:** It makes me very sad that in a country that
921 suppose, of plenty and of waste that there are children, for what
922 ever reason, are hungry, whether it is a lack of planning on the
923 part of the parent or just absolute poverty to where they are
924 unable to find food. Maybe I'm not in the real world, but I find
925 that hard to believe. I sometimes maybe have a, is it a callous,
926 that when they come hungry its because of the lack of nurturing
927 on the part of an adult.
928 (Many nods of agreement among the group.)
929 **Teacher #1:** I agree.
930 **Unknown:** Yes.
931 **School Food Service:** Cause a lot of the hunger is not always just
932 not having food; they may keep junk food there. Doughnuts, this

933 that and the other, and not keep what we consider food, like she
934 said they may not be hungry, stomach wise, but their needs
935 aren't being met.
936 **Unknown:** Nutritionally.
937 **Teacher #1:** They may have had a doughnut and a coke for
938 breakfast.
939 **School Food Service:** Uh huh.
940 **Moderator #1:** (Secretary), I think I interrupted you a moment
941 ago, did you still have something?
942 **School Secretary:** We think of the children in Ethiopia, how
943 skinny, when we think of hungry people.
944 **Unknown:** 2 or 3 "uh huh" (agreement).
945 **School Secretary:** And you think your food stamps and
946 everything here in town, nobody should go hungry, but they do.
947 Parents spend it on something else.
948 **Unknown:** and hungry for it.
949 **Moderator #1:** Okay, can you think of some experiences or
950 situation of hunger among children that you could describe? Any
951 personal experiences either within the community or your
952 neighborhood or here within the elementary school?
953 **Teacher #5:** I remember an occasion, and I don't know, well I
954 kind of know the situation at home, but that particular day we
955 went home early for snow. We were getting out about 10:30 and
956 (the principal) came by and let my class know. And the very
957 first thing that a child said to me was "Oh, now I won't get my
958 lunch will I?" And that was the very first thing that occurred
959 to her by her going home early.
960 **Principal:** Well, often times on Friday afternoon, I hate to send
961 some of these children home because I know that we feed them
962 breakfast and lunch here at this school everyday and on Saturday
963 and Sunday we are not providing that, and so, therefore, you
964 know, I'm not sure what they're going home to and what they'll
965 have for breakfast or lunch or dinner, as far as that's concerned.
966 **School Food Service:** Yeah, cause that's hard; we've had kids too
967 come in, they'll say, "Well all we've had was some bologna," you
968 know, "We had bologna, we had this," you know, and you think
969 "did you have any vegetables?" "No." They're really hungry
970 when they come in on Monday morning; you can tell a difference,
971 they're real draggy. But the sad part is there's so many that
972 probably hungry and the parents ought to get them here early
973 enough to eat their breakfast. Something like that, but they
974 don't get 'em here on time.
975 **Moderator #1:** So they miss breakfast?
976 **School Food Service:** Well our principal is different from a lot of
977 the principals. A lot of the principals won't let them come on
978 down, but most of the teachers here will send them on down. I
979 had two this morning that came at 9:00 and ate breakfast.
980 Because they were, uh, one of them said that they came in late
981 and the other little girl was crying and they said "What's
982 wrong?", and she said she didn't feel good, and they said "Well
983 did you have breakfast?" And she said "No." So we fed 'em
984 breakfast, but most schools do not do that. This is an unusual

985 situation here.

986 **Moderator #1:** Do most of you agree that on Mondays you can tell
987 a difference, or that the kids appear to be more hungry when
988 they come in from a weekend at home?

989 **Teacher #1:** I haven't noticed that, but (Food Service) would be
990 more in a position to notice that, by the way they come to get
991 their breakfast.

992 **Teacher #5:** But a lot of kids that I deal with, anytime you put
993 food in front of them, they will eat.

994 **School Food Service:** See you probably got more of them that,
995 some of those that are really hungry and you got the ones I feel
996 sorry for that I want to say, try to sneak stuff under the
997 counter, and stuff that we're not suppose to do.

998 **Teacher #5:** Shh, you're on tape.

999 (Laughter among the group.)

1000 **School Food Service:** I just saw that thing sitting there.

1001 (Laughter among the group.)

1002 **Principal:** She probably thought, not going to incriminate.

1003 (Laughter among the group.)

1004 **School Food Service:** But there is some, but we've got some that
1005 I know, that when they come in, that they're well fed. You can
1006 tell, you know. And you can tell by their selection. But some of
1007 these that are probably more hungry, want that quick, they want
1008 something they don't have to, they want something they can eat
1009 quick. They'll eat the granola, they're the first ones to take your
1010 granola bars.

1011 **Teacher #2:** And they ask for seconds too.

1012 (Agreement among the group.)

1013 **School Food Service:** Yeah, now they want those seconds, "Could
1014 I have another piece of toast?" On Mondays we go through a lot
1015 of toast.

1016 **Moderator #1:** Okay. Can any of you others share some
1017 experiences where you've possibly seen a hungry child or child
1018 that you think might be at risk of being hungry?

1019 **Teacher #2:** At the other school that I worked in there was an
1020 incidence where this parent was getting ready to have a baby, so
1021 she took her boys and a neighbor took care of them while she
1022 was away at the hospital having her baby. This child was very
1023 hyperactive, he couldn't sit still, and he wasn't very clean and I
1024 assume that he was eating, but undoubtedly he must not have
1025 been because the time while they were with the neighbor she
1026 cleaned them up, she fed them, they were totally different little
1027 boys. And I could tell just as soon as, when the mother returned
1028 that they were back home and it reversed itself.

1029 **Advocate:** I have a different perspective: you guys get to see
1030 hands on, hungry children, Share and (this city) harvest which is
1031 what I do, and it's the fact, like you mentioned, that takes the
1032 food that's wasted and then we distribute it to agencies. So we
1033 don't see the children coming to the food bank, but we do know
1034 they go to our agencies, but three weeks ago, actually it was
1035 before Christmas, went up to (C.) County and we take our food up
1036 there and (this) County, hungry people, as sad as it is has more

resources than people in the rural county. So we take our truck and I went up there with our agency coordinator and got to see the hands on feeding and the line that forms when Share's truck gets there with the children, and we had milk one time, and a lady had the empty bottle, and the minute the milk came, poured it in the bottle and stuffed it in the child's mouth. But the good thing about it is that this is donated food that some of the waste that goes on in this country goes into, hopefully, food banking or some type of other type of network to get to the hungry people.

Teacher #4: I have seen people at our church, our associations at the Baptist centers in the lower income areas, having that Kroger or some of the other stores, would give day old bread and where people come to get bread or whatever is there for their families. So I know that, which makes me feel like that the resources are there for people who are able to, who will take advantage of them, who will. And I feel like that even as rural as we are that there are resources for people who need help with food.

Principal: Lots of times, though, even with that, you know like we've had commodities that have been given away to people and lots of times I think they either don't want to prepare the food or sometimes they don't even know how to prepare the food, and so, therefore, this doesn't need to just be education with children, but parents are going to have to know how to.

Teacher #1: Absolutely.

Principal: I mean, you know, the dry milk to me is just totally unacceptable, but I can put some chocolate in it and drink it, you know, that kind of thing, but you know if you don't mix it right at all then it is just totally, you know, you are just totally unable to drink it. And so therefore just knowing how to mix up that milk. If you got that in commodities is something that these people need to know.

Advocate: Well there's real responsibility for parents who have children, and the most lower incomes don't take that responsibility in the sense of education.

Teacher #1: Thank You.

(Laughter and agreement among the group.)

Teacher #5: But don't you think that's partly because of what we as a society have done, have picked up that responsibility, especially the schools, I mean, you know everything coming down the pipe ends up being the school's responsibility, just like feeding them breakfast and lunch, which I begrudge that, you know, because I know that without that these kids are not going to be ready to sit and learn.

Advocate: Yeah, right.

Teacher #5: But at the same time, when does it become the parent's responsibility.

Advocate: Right, I agree, yeah, totally. There's an education problem.

Moderator #1: Can some of you describe some of your experiences, or how you perceive hunger in your school? I think a couple of you have already touched on that.

Principal: Do you mean how much or what percentage of children,

1089 or what do you really mean by that question?
 1090 Moderator #1: Just experiences, you know I think we've already
 1091 shared some like she said about Monday mornings children
 1092 appearing more hungry, and, you know, is it within every class
 1093 room within every grade I guess just a little more
 1094 description is what I'm asking.
 1095 School Food Service: I don't think there's that many that are
 1096 really hungry here, its just a small percentage that you notice
 1097 and you worry about the smaller percentage, that's who you
 1098 worry about.
 1099 Teacher #5: I don't think that there is a child in this building
 1100 that do not, that their family is not capable of having food in
 1101 their home; I think there are poor choices made.
 1102 School Food Service: Uh huh, right, and too there's got, and
 1103 when you have less money you have to work harder at stretching
 1104 your food money.
 1105 Teacher #1: Uh huh.
 1106 School Food Service: And the "quickie food" you know is
 1107 something that
 1108 Teacher #1 interrupts: Is expensive, the "quickie food" is
 1109 expensive. I mean you know a bag of pinto beans is cheap!
 1110 (Laughter among the group).
 1111 Principal: The dry bag of pinto beans with rice.
 1112 School Food Service: And a bag of pinto beans has more
 1113 nutrients.
 1114 Teacher #1: But, right very nutritious, but it has to be prepared.
 1115 Moderator #2: Are there times during the month you notice more,
 1116 at the end of month?
 1117 Teacher #1: That again would be something that the food service
 1118 would be more aware of.
 1119 School Food Service: See I really haven't paid that much
 1120 attention about a time frame.
 1121 Teacher #5: I have heard a couple of my kids says "Mamma said
 1122 food stamps would come today, and that's good, we get to buy
 1123 food" that kind of a comment.
 1124 (Agreement from a couple of group members: uh huh.)
 1125 Teacher #1: I do think most of the problems here are not lack of
 1126 food but poor choices about what they feed the children.
 1127 School Secretary: Uh huh, potato chips and cokes and stuff, no
 1128 fruit or vegetables or anything.
 1129 School Food Service: Now this is not a poor child, but somebody
 1130 ask me the other day, he says "When are you going to have
 1131 something else to drink?" I says " What do you mean?" He says
 1132 "Besides milk and juice, can't you have something like a coke?"
 1133 (Laughter among the group.)
 1134 School Food Service: I said "No." "Can't you have coke or
 1135 sprite?" "No, I can't have a coke or sprite, forget that." So
 1136 you know, that's what their routine is, coke and sprite. You get
 1137 one of these students that says "I'm tired of that" and I said "I'm
 1138 sorry".
 1139 Teacher #4: Well I know working in Bible schools in the
 1140 (residential housing projects) area that if you had good

1141 refreshments, you were going to have big crowds.
 1142 (Laughter and agreement among the group.)
 1143 Teacher #5: I'm sure that's right.
 1144 Advocate: That's true.
 1145 Principal: I'm sure that's true.
 1146 School Food Service: You could probably check other Bible
 1147 schools.
 1148 Teacher #4: You could just
 1149 (Unknown interruption: "So they almost live . . .")
 1150 Teacher #4: It was almost like you know, as the week progressed,
 1151 and the refreshments got better "Were you here yesterday?" You
 1152 know, because it was just, they were just coming in to abscond
 1153 with as much, and they would show up at refreshments time and
 1154 want to leave, you know. And I, there again, I don't know how
 1155 hungry they are, but I do know that there were some women who
 1156 purposely took bananas and thing like that so that there was
 1157 some fruit, and we tried to think of those things too as we were
 1158 preparing, but that they had something besides junk, but bananas
 1159 and fruit were really well received. They were treats.
 1160 School Food Service: Because they aren't use to 'em. I know at
 1161 our children's church we have refreshments, and one little girl,
 1162 they quit coming, cause we just have chips at parties, because I
 1163 don't think they're all that good for 'em. And she, somebody
 1164 asked her and she says "Well they quit having chips!"
 1165 (Laughter among the group.)
 1166 School Food Service: So at church "Let me know when you start
 1167 having chips."
 1168 (Laughter among group.)
 1169 Moderator #1: Can any of, do you have any other experiences
 1170 that you can think of children in the school?
 1171 School Secretary: Sometimes we get a lot of headaches and kids
 1172 come in the office with headaches and stuff and I'll ask them if
 1173 they had breakfast. "No." So we go down to food service to eat
 1174 breakfast and they'll lay down for a little while and then they're
 1175 fine. So they probably watch TV all night and have not eaten
 1176 anything.
 1177 School Food Service interrupting: That's what's so sad.
 1178 School Secretary continues: You know, I mean going all night and
 1179 then coming to school, they're starved to death, probably.
 1180 Moderator #1: Are you saying that these children might be going
 1181 without supper?
 1182 School Secretary: Could be, you never know.
 1183 School Food Service: Not, or have something doesn't stay with
 1184 you, a sandwich doesn't stay with you.
 1185 School Secretary: Hot dogs and stuff like that.
 1186 School Food Service: Uh huh.
 1187 Teacher #4: Or it may have been their responsibility to find their
 1188 own food.
 1189 Teacher #1: Uh huh.
 1190 (Agreement and nodding among the group.)
 1191 School Food Service: Now, I think there are some here that have
 1192 that. Not many, a few. Now one family, I think they have to take

1193 care of themselves and that's the ones you worry about.
 1194 Teacher #4: That's what we do at my house on Sunday nights.
 1195 (Laughter among the group.)
 1196 Principal: I think we're having a little confession time. Let me
 1197 tell you you're boys don't look undernourished.
 1198 (Laughter among the group.)
 1199 Principal: They've found a pretty good diet!
 1200 School Secretary: You've taught them well.
 1201 Moderator #1: Okay, does anyone have anything to add? Okay
 1202 we'll go on to some educational-type topics. Do you think
 1203 education about hunger and risk of hunger should be included in
 1204 the elementary schools?
 1205 Teacher #4: Well nutrition is included.
 1206 (Agreement among the group: Uh huh.)
 1207 Teacher #4: So I don't know that we particularly, point out, you
 1208 know have hunger; we have food drives, PTA food drives, but I
 1209 don't think we particularly point out the hungry masses so much
 1210 as we do "These are the things that are good for you to eat"
 1211 and you need to make; these are the choices that you need to
 1212 make." But that's a part of every curriculum on every grade
 1213 level as well as (school food service person, the cafeteria)
 1214 promoting it through the cafeteria. So its something that's
 1215 addressed every year.
 1216 School Food Service: Its just part of the basic education.
 1217 Teacher #4: And I know, you know that at different times
 1218 teachers, I've heard that "Well you haven't eaten that, so I don't
 1219 think you need an ice cream" or "You need to eat more of this
 1220 before you eat your cookie." That they are encouraged even in
 1221 the cafeteria to make, after they've even gotten their tray before
 1222 they move on to their dessert, that they need to eat things that
 1223 are healthy.
 1224 School Food Service: These kids here, now they, they are
 1225 unusual, they eat their vegetables, they eat their fruits. Yeah,
 1226 they really love, they'll eat the green vegetables. They'll eat
 1227 oranges and they love grapes.
 1228 Advocate: Can I move my kids over here (to this school)?
 1229 (Laughter among the group.)
 1230 School Food Service: But I mean they come back, like today, for
 1231 broccoli, mixed vegetables, but I mean kids, usually don't, I mean,
 1232 at most places, take the mixed vegetables -- you make a pound
 1233 and that's all you need -- but they'll eat them here, you know,
 1234 and the broccoli, they'll eat it. California Blend, they eat it
 1235 pretty good, they eat salads, they'll come up for seconds for
 1236 salad. Now if you put pickles out, that not even good for you
 1237 but they'll eat pickles all day.
 1238 (Laughter among group.)
 1239 Teacher #1: It's cucumbers.
 1240 School Food Service: But, uh they eat, they like nutritious food,
 1241 the majority of them I think if it was offered to them at home,
 1242 they would take it, if they do like they do here.
 1243 Moderator #1: Okay, so I'm hearing that hunger is being
 1244 addressed within nutrition, or food choices? How is that?

1245 School Food Service: Cause you even start it in kindergarten,
 1246 don't you?
 1247 Teacher #2: Oh, yes. Yes, in fact we just finished our nutrition
 1248 unit and we give out snacks. They say "(Teacher), cookies are
 1249 not good for you."
 1250 (Laughter among group.)
 1251 Teacher #2: "No, but didn't we eat vegetables today at lunch?" I
 1252 said "Well, its okay do just a little bit." It was like they got me
 1253 good on that.
 1254 School Food Service interrupting: They catch on.
 1255 Teacher #2: Yes indeed, so its like this time around we are going
 1256 to do a whole lot of more nutritional snacks. I'm going to have to
 1257 advise their parents that they have called me on the carpet about
 1258 giving out cookies, and I think we had a soda-pop that day and I
 1259 thought oh God, we usually have apple juice, but they are well
 1260 aware of what's going on. At this particular time anyway. At the
 1261 beginning of school its kind of hard to tell who's eating what
 1262 cause no five year old really likes vegetables, so its just hard to
 1263 say.
 1264 Teacher #5: Potato Chips.
 1265 Teacher #2: Yeah, well that's true but nothing grainy.
 1266 Advocate: Ketchup for vegetables.
 1267 (Laughter among the group.)
 1268 Teacher #5: Depends on what brand it is.
 1269 Principal: You know in the school lunch program, which is a good
 1270 training program for learning to eat things because peer pressure
 1271 becomes such a very big thing with these kids that if I'm sitting
 1272 by somebody who's eating their salad then I may eat my salad too,
 1273 and then I may find out that "gosh this is pretty good" and all
 1274 and therefore I can.
 1275 (Agreement among the group: Uh huh.)
 1276 Teacher #1: Or they will be buddies and they'll say "I'm going to
 1277 get a salad, get a salad too" and then they'll start it that way
 1278 so. I've seen that quite a bit.
 1279 Principal: And I know that I learned to eat a lot of things in the
 1280 school lunch program that I would not have had at home, and one
 1281 thing in particular that I remember and that has been low many
 1282 years ago when I was in the school lunch program, but, uh, we
 1283 had hominy and I had never had hominy at my house, you know,
 1284 my mother had never fixed hominy, but I learned to like it as a
 1285 part of the school lunch program; now you know there are people
 1286 around this table that are going ewh!
 1287 (Laughter among the group.)
 1288 School Food Service: I like it.
 1289 Principal: You're a hominy person?
 1290 School Food Service: I love it.
 1291 Principal: But I would never have because mother never served
 1292 that at home but uh. So that I think too that's the way kids learn
 1293 to enjoy or to have things, that you know they have it at school
 1294 and maybe that's not something they do for them at home. So its
 1295 a learning experience.
 1296 School Food Service: Especially the little ones though, when they

1297 come through that's one of the things they do. They have to
 1298 have one vegetable for sure, probably two, and their fruit and
 1299 they'll send them. C. sends them back and whoever's there "You
 1300 got to get something else, got to get something else." "I don't
 1301 like it" and they'll say "Well you got to take just one bite." You
 1302 know , and they'll, and that one bite may make the difference.
 1303 They may throw it away, but we tried. But we'll see them and
 1304 say "ewh I like that!" You know if you can convince them that
 1305 you like it.

1306 **Moderator #1:** What about hunger, like children doing without
 1307 food? Should hunger awareness education be taught in respect to
 1308 not food choices, but children without food. I mean, do you think
 1309 that these kids here, or children in the community, are aware of
 1310 other children that are doing without food?

1311 **Advocate:** Uh huh, I do, I mean I think we're getting there. I
 1312 know that every school, I'm just sitting here thinking, I've got a
 1313 great idea, I should get all PTA's to have one big concerted food
 1314 drive and we could help them with that. Um, cause I know where
 1315 my children, my child goes to school, I have a second grader,
 1316 they talk about it in the food drives, I bet every school has food
 1317 drives.

1318 **(Agreement among the group: Uh huh.)**

1319 **Advocate continues:** And um it's really promoted that there are
 1320 children out there who are not as blessed as you, that don't have
 1321 the things that you have, and I know, we take the kids at my
 1322 church, we take them down to the union area rescue mission to
 1323 serve, just to make sure, cause I come from (the west part of this
 1324 city) and you know how spoiled those kids are out there. Um,
 1325 they're just little brats, I mean, and I don't mean that negatively,
 1326 I mean that they have so much and nothing is appreciated so from
 1327 a very young age, I know I, and my friends that have children
 1328 this age try to let them know that they are just really very lucky
 1329 to be where they are and that they don't have to be hungry and
 1330 that they get so much everywhere they go.

1331 **Moderator #1:** In the classroom is it included in the classroom,
 1332 hunger awareness?

1333 **Principal:** In the food drive that she is talking about, that is
 1334 done per class; I mean that the box is actually in the classroom
 1335 and so that teachers give that sort of spiel to the kids
 1336 concerning hunger and other children that may need that. So
 1337 that is done in each classroom.

1338 **Teacher #1:** I don't think we sit down and actually take that as a
 1339 main topic or a unit, but it's included in, like the principal said,
 1340 when we have a food drive that's addressed, when we do our
 1341 needs and wants. You got Thanksgiving, and on the lower grades
 1342 we always do the unit on needs and wants, and they have to
 1343 know what's the difference between needs and wants and that
 1344 kind of thing gets addressed then, but uh, not as a unit itself on
 1345 hunger. I don't think any of these children have any real concept
 1346 of what hunger is. I mean they may say "I'm hungry, is it time
 1347 for lunch?" but they don't know what starvation is, they don't
 1348 know what hunger really is, I mean they may see the pictures of

1349 it and they may, well, like we don't.
 1350 Teacher #5: I was going to say I don't think any of us do.
 1351 (Agreement and talking among the group.)
 1352 Teacher #5: We have no idea.
 1353 Principal: As we sit here after having those snacks.
 1354 (Agreement and laughter among the group.)
 1355 Moderator #1: Do y'all have anything to add to that?
 1356 Teacher #2: You know, when you do see a child that you think
 1357 may fit that category, isn't it hard to approach a parent? You
 1358 know its like that would be very awkward for me to say. "Well,
 1359 your son looks like he's hungry every day, do you feed him
 1360 breakfast?" Or just how, what type of an approach are we as
 1361 teachers suppose to do when we do see a child like this?
 1362 School Food Service: That's like I got some of them that's on free
 1363 or reduced and I'll try to pull them aside during lunch and I'll
 1364 say "Do you know that since you get lunch free, you get
 1365 breakfast free; does your mamma know that?" Or if its reduced
 1366 I'll say, "Did your mamma know that for breakfast, that you can
 1367 get breakfast for just thirty cents?" Because you know just in
 1368 case because not everybody understands, cause it's called a free
 1369 lunch program and that could have a big, because not that many
 1370 free eat at breakfast.
 1371 Moderator #1: If there was a target audience or a group of
 1372 children, or is there a group of children that might understand
 1373 the concept of hunger better than another group, like if there
 1374 was a hunger awareness education curriculum, would there be a
 1375 group of kids that would be able to understand it better?
 1376 Teacher #4: You mean age wise?
 1377 Teacher #1: You mean age, that was I mean
 1378 Moderator #1: Age, uh huh, or grade.
 1379 Teacher #1: Probably the older, you're going to but
 1380 Advocate: Older, yeah.
 1381 Teacher #1: You now I think like we know with everything, you
 1382 start that awareness as young as you can and then as, hopefully
 1383 as you get it with them every year that the awareness becomes
 1384 clearer and clearer and clearer, you don't just wait until they're
 1385 fifteen and such and such.
 1386 Moderator #1: Does anyone else have any comments on that?
 1387 Okay. If there was a curriculum to be developed, who should be
 1388 involved in the development of hunger education material for use
 1389 in a curriculum?
 1390 Teacher #5: Anybody but politicians.
 1391 (Laughter among the group.)
 1392 Advocate: I think you really need to find somebody who's been
 1393 hungry and I don't mean for one meal, I mean hunger, starvation.
 1394 School Food Service: And starvation.
 1395 Advocate: Yeah or not knowing where their next meal was coming
 1396 from or not, you know, that mentality is so hard for most of us
 1397 who luckily have jobs and can relate to, and you know, what I'm
 1398 doing now I see it, and its so scary for them, and that fear of,
 1399 you know, "Am I going to be able to make it to the next meal or
 1400 whatever."

1401 Teacher #1: I think a nutritionist should be on there.
1402 Advocate: Oh absolutely.
1403 Moderator #2: Could I interject something, I just. There was a
1404 study done or a project done a couple of years ago called
1405 Childhood Hunger Program and, actually, it's being replicated, it's
1406 going to be done in (this state) right now. One of the things
1407 they tried to identify were the warning signs, like we know the
1408 six warning signs of cancer and something like that. And they
1409 identified some warning signs of things like, do parents skip
1410 meals so that children can have food or, you know, just feeling
1411 them out about the amount of food at the end of the month, or
1412 what are some of the other, Moderator #1?
1413 Moderator #1: Um children skipping a meal, parents skipping
1414 meals, not having enough money to buy food for a meal at the
1415 grocery store.
1416 Moderator #2: Or when parents like might, say, suggest that the
1417 kids go over to a neighbor's house at meal time. And there were
1418 these eight different questions, and they're sort of like the early
1419 warning signs, and I don't know if that might spark something,
1420 you know, can we do something about those early warning signs,
1421 you know, not just waiting till we get to malnutrition, but backing
1422 it up a little bit. Is there something that we could, anything we
1423 could do in the classrooms that might help get kids connected or
1424 sensitize other children?
1425 Teacher #4: But part of this, wouldn't it be of breaking the
1426 cycle? Again we have, we've got food, we've got programs, how
1427 in hunger awareness, how do we break the cycle, how do we
1428 either make those people what, aware of what's going on, aware of
1429 places to get food, or how can we help them develop budgets, to
1430 look at the money they have and how can they feed their family.
1431 What's going to go the farthest? I don't think that any of us
1432 have every day of our lives had everything that we've wanted.
1433 We have gotten to where we are because we have learned to plan,
1434 we've learned to do without, we've learned where if I buy chicken
1435 right now while it's on sale, that I'm going to have chicken this
1436 week and next week. That we, so hunger awareness, it has to be
1437 some kind of breaking the cycle and developing some kind of
1438 education plan where those people that are in charge of these
1439 children.
1440 Teacher #1: Right.
1441 Teacher #4 continues: That we're changing a mind set from
1442 spending the cash in hand for whatever is right here next to me
1443 to how can I best use the resources I have?
1444 Teacher #1: I think when we start thinking about breaking cycles
1445 we automatically look to the education in the schools. Well, we're
1446 missing the, you know the cycles being set at home. The parents
1447 are going to have to be trained, they're going to have to be
1448 retrained. We don't break the cycle by teaching the children.
1449 Advocate: That's right.
1450 School Food Service: In that, and somebody said if I had a child,
1451 let me calmness, up until they're five years old I've got them
1452 trained. I mean it start from the time they're in a womb, what

- 1453 you're feeding that child.
- 1454 Teacher #1: Right, and no matter what.
- 1455 School Food Service continues: What you're feeding that child,
- 1456 what your feeding yourself, it starts there.
- 1457 Teacher #1: No matter what we do here at school with them, what
- 1458 they see and hear at home is a lot more influence. You know we
- 1459 might be able to make them aware, but we just don't have the
- 1460 influence that mamma and daddy do.
- 1461 School Food Service: You can't change that kid's life time.
- 1462 Teacher #1: No.
- 1463 Moderator #1: So maybe hunger awareness education should start
- 1464 with the parents instead of in the classroom. Is that what I'm
- 1465 hearing?
- 1466 (Agreement among the group: uh huh.)
- 1467 Moderator #1: Does everyone agree?
- 1468 Teacher #4: We want uh, you know, because we've got a captive
- 1469 audience in the classroom then we just want "oh well here's
- 1470 something else you can teach those children".
- 1471 Teacher #5: Right.
- 1472 Teacher #4: But because most of them do not have the resources
- 1473 to implement, you know we can tell them all day long, you need to
- 1474 eat five vegetables or fruits everyday. Well if they go home and
- 1475 all that's home is potato chips, cokes, and whatever...
- 1476 Teacher #1: Peanut Butter
- 1477 (Agreement among the group.)
- 1478 Teacher #4: Yeah, peanut butter, well peanut butter is good, but
- 1479 even too much
- 1480 School Food Service: Bologna, peanut butter
- 1481 Teacher #1: Right, right.
- 1482 Teacher #4: You know, you still have to have the balance thing,
- 1483 but if they don't have the resources to implement what we're
- 1484 teaching then, you know.
- 1485 Teacher #1: Though they know, if they don't, are not able to
- 1486 implement it, that's slowly going to go by the wayside, they may
- 1487 be concerned and that might hit them, and that may strike a cord
- 1488 with them but as they slowly become frustrated in trying to do
- 1489 what we're trying to teach them because mamma and daddy aren't
- 1490 doing it or mamma and daddy aren't teaching them, it goes by the
- 1491 way side.
- 1492 Teacher #2: I'm going to tell you what happened during snack
- 1493 time on Wednesday. We have to bring a quarter from home so
- 1494 that we can have ice cream. This one little boy never did for
- 1495 three whole months, and I got kind of upset because for three
- 1496 whole months he never did. So when I first got here I was
- 1497 telling a teacher "No they have to realize that, no wait a minute, ,
- 1498 that you shouldn't give them everything because they have to
- 1499 realize that somebody has to pay for it." Well I had forgotten
- 1500 about that so I was mentioning it to her and she said "Remember,
- 1501 let him skip one time and see what'll happen," and I thought oh,
- 1502 no I can't do that.
- 1503 (Laughter among the group.)
- 1504 Teacher #2 continues: You know, and then I remembered when I

1505 first got over here (to this school) that's what we had to do in
 1506 the school that we were in, so it was like "Okay," she said "Okay
 1507 then, have some crackers for him on Wednesday, that way he
 1508 won't go hungry." So sure 'nough I did. On that Wednesday
 1509 everybody ate ice cream except for him. That next Wednesday, he
 1510 had a dollar.
 1511 (Laughter among the group.)
 1512 Teacher #2 continues: The next Wednesday, another quarter and
 1513 another quarter, and another quarter. So they don't understand
 1514 until it actually happens to them.
 1515 Teacher #1: (In unison) Happens to them.
 1516 Teacher #2 continues: But it has to be somebody with compassion
 1517 and somebody that says okay "go do it, go do it!" You know it
 1518 could be working up two people to do that cause it's really hard
 1519 not to be compassionate to those children, but they must learn
 1520 that lesson! To break that cycle.
 1521 School Food Service: But it's hard to do it to a child.
 1522 Teacher #2: Yes.
 1523 School Food Service: Because you think they can't handle it.
 1524 (Laughter among the group.)
 1525 Teacher #1: But you aren't doing them any favors, you know.
 1526 Teacher #2: But he has become responsible, he sure has.
 1527 School Food Service: It really, it's the best thing to do, but its
 1528 hard when somebody says "Can I have that?" to say "No".
 1529 Teacher #2: But then when I substituted with something, then it
 1530 was easier for me to do that just to see if he would bring the
 1531 quarters in, and he has.
 1532 Teacher #4: I have wondered at some of these places where
 1533 adults get food, or where they go if there is, if that's not the
 1534 place to say "Well you know on the third of the month when they
 1535 get their check that they . . .", okay lets make, to teach them
 1536 how to make a menu, or to teach them to look at the paper, see
 1537 what's on sale, okay? Now what can you buy with what you've
 1538 got, because
 1539 Teacher #1: You would be surprised at how many adults have no
 1540 idea how to budget their money. I know a lady who's fifty-six
 1541 years old, and she was complaining to me, in one of our
 1542 conversations about having to pay her car insurance. "It comes
 1543 in this month, this big lump, and I don't have that this month",
 1544 and I said, "Did you ever think about taking an envelope and
 1545 putting, every month, a little bit in it, so that when that comes,
 1546 you'll have that money?" That had never crossed her mind. So,
 1547 that was a prefect example, she had no idea how to make sure she
 1548 had that money when her car insurance came due, and she's fifty-
 1549 six years old.
 1550 Moderator #1: In this, if we are teaching the parents then, with
 1551 this hunger awareness education, if we're teaching the parents,
 1552 we were talking briefly, we've kind of gotten off the subject,
 1553 about who would be involved in the development. I think someone
 1554 mentioned, it needed to be someone that was hungry, you
 1555 mentioned that it should be a nutritionist, do y'all . . . ?
 1556 Teacher #3: Teachers.

1557 School Secretary: Maybe a nurse.
 1558 Moderator #1: Okay, anyone else?
 1559 Teacher #4: Someone who's aware of the resources that are
 1560 available and someone who has . . .
 1561 School Food Service: Uh huh, yeah.
 1562 Teacher #1: Uh huh, yeah.
 1563 Teacher #4 continues: . . . they know how to teach budgeting, to
 1564 teach meal planning, probably a home economist would probably,
 1565 that would be under the trained work.
 1566 School Food Service: Might be a social worker, well I don't,
 1567 trained to do some of that though, aren't they?
 1568 Teacher #5: They do everything.
 1569 Teacher #1: They would know where the resources are.
 1570 (Agreement among the group.)
 1571 Teacher #4: The resources, resources are, but you know, I know
 1572 we get cynical at times because like you (teacher #2) you kept
 1573 giving this child a quarter everyday to buy his, when all the
 1574 time, he was able to do it, then all the sudden you're out, you
 1575 know, how many bucks because that person wouldn't take the
 1576 initiative to do it on their own. But I do know that there are
 1577 people who are absolutely without funds and without, and they do
 1578 not know where to turn and that we, those are the people that I
 1579 want to help, that I want to find, make me aware of how I can
 1580 help.
 1581 Advocate: It is very tough, in what I do, to go out and speak to
 1582 people, and I am so "anti-politics" getting in the way of feeding
 1583 the hungry because we just get caught up in red tape, but there
 1584 are so, unfortunately, but children who are hungry, and I mean,
 1585 we're trying to do it; logically there is wasted food, we take it,
 1586 we give it to agencies but that doesn't mean that I have a
 1587 warehouse of peanut butter, beans and rice and nutritious stuff, I
 1588 have a warehouse of cookies, and crackers and snacks. You know
 1589 that's what's donated more than anything cause its hard to screw
 1590 up meat and its hard to screw up, you know and so um its very
 1591 difficult to be politically the way I feel, but then go out and try
 1592 to help the cause of hunger, you know in the community, and we
 1593 do cover sixteen counties, its not just (this county) that we
 1594 distribute to.
 1595 Moderator #1: Okay, who would be in charge of implementing the
 1596 curriculum on the hunger education? I think you mentioned at
 1597 the, where they get the food stamps, a person there. Can you
 1598 think of?
 1599 Teacher #4: Well I want to say not the schools.
 1600 (Laughter and agreement among the group.)
 1601 Teacher #5: We get dumped on with everything.
 1602 Teacher #4: But if we're dealing with adults, I think it could go
 1603 through Adult Literacy, it could go through
 1604 Principal interrupts: Even Start.
 1605 Teacher #4 continues: Even Start, uh even the Head Start
 1606 program where parents . . .
 1607 Teacher #1 and others: Uh huh.
 1608 Teacher #4 continues: . . . are coming in, but Even Start

1609 particularly where parents are coming in and working with their
 1610 children, that those, where there are parents is where the, to me,
 1611 is where the education needs to take place, and sometimes I really
 1612 think, and I don't know how to do it, but its taking them "in
 1613 hand" and going with them.
 1614 Teacher #1: Uh huh.
 1615 Teacher #4: Its taking them "in hand" and being the role model,
 1616 the one-on-one involvement that says "Look, I'll show you how to
 1617 do it and go with them because even here at school when we're
 1618 working with children, until we have modeled it and worked our
 1619 way through it and they've been given lots of practice, it doesn't,
 1620 I mean you don't throw it out one time or hand them a booklet
 1621 and say "go home and read this." They don't learn that way.
 1622 You give 'em lots of experiences, and you walk them through it,
 1623 and you nurture 'em through it. I don't know if you can do that
 1624 with adults, but to me that's the way you teach.
 1625 Teacher #1: Uh huh.
 1626 Moderator #1: Okay. What kind of objectives, I think we've kind
 1627 of already covered them too as far as meal planning
 1628 Teacher #1 interrupts: Budgets.
 1629 Moderator continues: Do some of you others have some ideas?
 1630 Teacher #1: Priorities
 1631 (Laughter among the group.)
 1632 Secretary: There's a lot of coupons they can use.
 1633 Teacher #1: Yeah.
 1634 Teacher #5: Yeah.
 1635 School Food Service: Yeah cause they need to learn how to use
 1636 the paper to hunt their bargains and cause there are so many
 1637 stores that are just right there right together, and you could
 1638 make a little circle, something like that.
 1639 Moderator #1: Any other ideas?
 1640 School Food Service: But it is like how to use their commodities.
 1641 Cause like, okay like, a lot of 'em, like my family now, a lot more
 1642 families are using rice more. Well a lot of these people don't want
 1643 the commodity rice. There are certain things that they don't want
 1644 because they don't know what to put with it. Well like now,
 1645 we've, we hadn't done it in a while, we would serve the sweet and
 1646 sour chicken. Well the first time, they didn't take it, the kids
 1647 that liked it, eat it good. So the next time we served more. And
 1648 the kids here will eat rice, but a lot of schools, they don't eat
 1649 rice, there's so much that they don't eat because, like the
 1650 principal said on powdered milk, they don't know how to mix it.
 1651 Now they like cheese, they love that cheese, and the peanut
 1652 butter, but the other things they don't know what to do with it
 1653 when they get it.
 1654 Principal: And see rice is not the easiest thing in the world to
 1655 cook.
 1656 (Agreement and laughter among the group.)
 1657 Principal continues: It is not, I mean, I've had many of failure
 1658 with rice, with cooking rice, I can do minute rice real well but uh
 1659 just cooking rice is
 1660 (Agreement among the group.)

- 1661 **School Food Service:** Well it's not that easy -- you have to get
 1662 or you could have it gummy, and now that's not good.
- 1663 **Moderator #1:** I hear then that there are activities they could do
 1664 by going to the grocery store, working, with someone, out a
 1665 budget, am I hearing this? Okay. How would you measure their
 1666 awareness, or how would you measure the level of comprehension
 1667 of hunger and budgeting, if you had a curriculum for the adults?
 1668 How could you measure their awareness?
- 1669 **Principal:** If they can successfully go out and buy groceries and
 1670 make those meals for their family, you know.
- 1671 **Teacher #1:** Yeah, teach 'em and in six months check it again, can
 1672 they do it then, on their own? Can they do it?
- 1673 **Principal:** Six months sounds good.
- 1674 **School Food Service:** Its like in, okay in food service you set
 1675 goals, every year before school starts, you have to set three
 1676 goals and in three months time you check and see what you're
 1677 doing on those goals. Three more months, you check it again.
 1678 You have follow-ups.
- 1679 **(Agreement among the group.)**
- 1680 **Moderator #1:** So you would teach 'em to set goals and then look
 1681 to see if they've met those goals?
- 1682 **School Secretary:** Uh huh.
- 1683 **Moderator #1:** Okay.
- 1684 **Teacher #2:** Sitting in the classroom when the children come in
 1685 well fed.
- 1686 **Teacher #1:** Or help, I think a lot of people don't know how to
 1687 set goals, help them learn how to set a goal for themselves.
- 1688 **Teacher #4:** Yeah
- 1689 **Teacher #5:** A realistic goal.
- 1690 **(Agreement among the group: Uh huh.)**
- 1691 **Teacher #1:** Yeah right, a realistic one. That may be the
 1692 problem, they don't have a realistic
- 1693 **Teacher #2:** But these people that we're talking about, they
 1694 probably don't have good self esteem anyway. They didn't do
 1695 very well in school.
- 1696 **Teacher #3:** And how are you going to motivate them to stick
 1697 with it? That's what I'm thinking. I mean you can do this and
 1698 they might stick with this for a little while, but you can't make
 1699 them do it.
- 1700 **Teacher #5:** Well I think there are people out there though,
 1701 (teacher #3), that genuinely want the help, and there are those
 1702 that do not, and you can, and it doesn't matter what you do it
 1703 will not work, unless they go without for a while and then it
 1704 might, but there are some that really
- 1705 **(Much discussion among group)**
- 1706 **Teacher #1:** But those who genuinely want to, I think, don't know
 1707 where to turn or what to do.
- 1708 **Teacher #5:** Right.
- 1709 **Teacher #1:** And are willing, or would love for someone to show
 1710 them how.
- 1711 **Teacher #2:** And that's the key, showing them how.
- 1712 **Teacher #5:** I think that (teacher #4) is right: you have to take

1713 them in hand, one-on-one, and actually show it to them.
 1714 **Moderator #1:** Okay, I want to thank you for your time and I
 1715 want to give a special thanks to (food service). I know that she
 1716 had to change her arrangements and reschedule an appointment
 1717 and I appreciate you doing that. Cause each one of you had a lot
 1718 to say, being, from different disciplines, and really a lot of good
 1719 input. Thank You.

1720

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1721 **Moderator #1:** My name is CM and I'm working on my Masters in
 1722 Nutrition. I've completed all of my school work except for my
 1723 thesis, and this discussion group is part of my thesis research.
 1724 This is (P), assistant professor at (the university), as well as my
 1725 major professor, and then I brought two fellow graduate students,
 1726 (L) and (K), who will be observing outside the group and taking
 1727 some notes about the discussion. I have a series of questions
 1728 here and it's my hope, uh, each person will have some comment
 1729 for each question. The reason that I asked each of you to be
 1730 here is because I think different disciplines will compliment, and
 1731 there'll be some good discussion, and each person from the
 1732 different disciplines, the principals, the teachers, school food
 1733 service and so on, will all be able to give a lot of information, and
 1734 so after I ask each question, not have, everyone may not have an
 1735 answer, hopefully you do, and if someone else has already made a
 1736 comment similar to what you wanted to make, if you just want to
 1737 make a verbal agreement or whatever, that's fine. There are no
 1738 right or wrong answers and that's what I want to stress here; so
 1739 there is no right or wrong answers, it's just a time for sharing
 1740 ideas and being innovative. So I guess we'll get started now.
 1741 This is dealing with childhood hunger in elementary schools.
 1742 What does hunger among children mean to you?
 1743 **Teacher #3:** Not having enough food at home to eat.
 1744 **Moderator #1:** Okay, not enough food at home to eat.
 1745 **Teacher #2:** And I think of them going to bed hungry at night.
 1746 **Advocate:** And in terms of school, I don't think they learn very
 1747 well when they're hungry.
 1748 **School Food Service #1:** I think in school sometimes we see
 1749 hunger because we've failed to have the time to educate them as
 1750 to what they need to eat. I often see them grab up their ice
 1751 cream and their dessert, eat it, and leave the lunch room because
 1752 they're full after that, and they haven't eaten the things that will
 1753 last 'em till the end of the day.
 1754 **Principal:** So not only are they hungry, but they're not, don't
 1755 have the proper nutrition.
 1756 **School Food Service #1:** Right, they, and you know, this is a
 1757 child for you, if you've got that ice cream that might look better
 1758 than meat loaf or even the pizza does, you know, if you're in
 1759 kindergarten.
 1760 **School Secretary:** That's where the education comes in.
 1761 **School Food Service #1:** Uh huh, and it's not that we don't want
 1762 to, it's a time factor. I know here they're lined up from the

1763 steam table to the door at any given time and sometimes by the
 1764 time they get up there they really only have time for their ice
 1765 cream, almost, don't they (principal)?
 1766 Principal: Well, they are suppose to have time to eat. We would
 1767 never tell a child to get up if they haven't finished eating.
 1768 School Food Service: Uh huh, but I mean maybe we are offering
 1769 more than they have time to eat, I don't know. Do we have more
 1770 on there than they have time to eat?
 1771 Principal: What do you think (food service #2)?
 1772 School Food Service #2: Well no, children, you got to consider the
 1773 time span that we have to eat and all the talking that children do.
 1774 (Laughter among the group.)
 1775 School Food Service #1: Is that it?
 1776 School Food Service #2: That's what I think, they have enough
 1777 time, its just if they choose to eat in the time, yeah.
 1778 Moderator #1: So we've talked about what hunger means among
 1779 children to you, what about risk of hunger, is there a difference
 1780 there? What does risk of hunger among children mean to you?
 1781 Advocate: I would think that has to do with situations in which
 1782 there is uncertainty about whether there's enough resources to
 1783 purchase the needed food for the home, I'm thinking more in the
 1784 home context than the school context.
 1785 Principal: Do you think that there are families who do not know
 1786 how to get food from the resources that are available?
 1787 Moderator #1: What do y'all think? I mean, and that would be
 1788 adding on to what she said about risk of hunger.
 1789 Principal: Right, right.
 1790 Advocate: I think that's probably true its hard from the
 1791 standpoint of the network of emergency food providers to think
 1792 that true because there are so many of them in (this city), but
 1793 there's not any public publication that list them, so I definitely
 1794 think that, especially if it's a family that hasn't experienced this
 1795 before, if they have a sudden emergency that causes them to be
 1796 without food, that it's hard for them to maybe even find out
 1797 where to go in some cases.
 1798 School Food Service #2: Okay, knowing all the places that they
 1799 do have to go to get food. You know I think pride also gets in a
 1800 lot of way as far as not going to these places.
 1801 Teacher #1: I think also the risk increases, for me when I see
 1802 them, I have a concern that the risk goes greater in the summer.
 1803 You know when they are required to be in school, maybe they'll
 1804 have breakfast, and they'll have lunch, but then in the summer,
 1805 they're kind of free, on their own a lot of times, and that's the
 1806 concern, and I see the risk probably goes up a lot higher in
 1807 summers.
 1808 Teacher #3: But you're not talking about economical reasons why
 1809 they're hungry, or just in general you're not talking about lower
 1810 income verses middle income or higher income, are you?
 1811 Moderator #1: Well, we're trying to encompass it all. That's what
 1812 y'all are here to tell me, how you perceive hunger, does hunger
 1813 have economical, are there economical issues involved in a child
 1814 who is hungry or at risk of hunger; are you following me, did I

1815 answer your question?
 1816 Teacher #3: Uh huh.
 1817 Teacher #1: Sometimes I think it's more habit than, you know,
 1818 they wait too late to feed them before they go to bed at night, or
 1819 they don't get them up early enough to feed them breakfast, or
 1820 that's what I see more than.
 1821 Advocate: Uh huh.
 1822 School Food Service: Uh huh.
 1823 Principal interrupts: More than not having it.
 1824 Teacher #1 continues: Now, where we're at I see more of it's
 1825 scheduling and that kind of thing.
 1826 Moderator #2: Does anyone see anything like a trend over the
 1827 month, maybe for families that are using food stamps, maybe
 1828 towards the end of the month? Do you see anything different in
 1829 some children? Or Monday versus Friday after they've had 5
 1830 school lunches?
 1831 Teacher #1: Well I have 50% of my children are on free lunch, so
 1832 it's hard for me to notice.
 1833 Moderator #2: Uh huh.
 1834 School Food Service #1: That's because they're going to have
 1835 breakfast and lunch if they choose to. I know here there are
 1836 many children who could take advantage of breakfast, that don't
 1837 come, I mean they'll eat lunch that could come in at breakfast if
 1838 the parents perhaps would get them here in time to eat breakfast.
 1839 Principal: We have a few at breakfast crowd. And we have a
 1840 good participation in all of our meals
 1841 School Food Service #1: Uh, huh, Right.
 1842 Principal: Did she tell you she fed 521 kids at lunch the other
 1843 day?
 1844 School Food Service #1: Close to 600 on a lot of days.
 1845 School Food Service #2: Uh huh.
 1846 Advocate: In reference to the question you raised, when I was
 1847 working with tutoring programs in two inter-city elementary
 1848 schools, we always served refreshments before they started their
 1849 work, and we could sometimes tell, in certain children, that on
 1850 Mondays they just got their hands on all they could get them. So
 1851 Monday did seem like they hadn't eaten well over the weekend.
 1852 Teacher #3: I don't see much hunger in my classroom because I'm
 1853 the resource teacher and they come, you know, for an hour at a
 1854 time, and I also use like pretzels and animal crackers, you know,
 1855 for counting, for math, and when they finish they can eat that, so
 1856 they're not really hungry.
 1857 Moderator #1: Okay, does anyone else have anything they want to
 1858 add? Okay. Can you think of some experiences or situations of
 1859 hunger among children that you could describe or describe how
 1860 you perceive hunger in your school or in the community, just any
 1861 real-life experiences you've had and if you could describe those.
 1862 School Food Service #2: A couple of summers ago I worked in a
 1863 summer camp where they provided the summer meals, and when we
 1864 were working in, like, a project area and kids would come, the
 1865 kids that didn't go to the camp would come at that time to
 1866 literally beg for food. I don't know, well this is back to the

1867 summer time, so I don't know if a lot of those parents were
 1868 working so I don't know if the kids were provided with meals
 1869 while the parents are working or . . .
 1870 Moderator #1: Okay, did I understand you right, you're saying
 1871 that some of the people that weren't involved in the summer camp,
 1872 some of the kids, would come at lunch time.
 1873 School Food Service #2: Only at lunch time, uh huh.
 1874 Moderator #1: So all the sudden you have more kids than you
 1875 were teaching?
 1876 School Food Service #2: Yeah, uh huh.
 1877 Teacher #3: Some kids will say that they have a stomach ache,
 1878 and if you give them a couple of crackers or something, it seems
 1879 to sooth it, so I think that they are getting the hunger they feel,
 1880 I don't know sometimes you can experience hunger somewhere else
 1881 other than your stomach, is that true?
 1882 Moderator #2: Uh huh.
 1883 Teacher #3: So I think that they associate a stomach ache, maybe
 1884 sometimes, with hunger.
 1885 Advocate: I guess I've had some experiences a little different
 1886 than some of you around the table because I've been, for several
 1887 years I was associated with running a food pantry, and one thing
 1888 I noticed was the small children coming with their parents who
 1889 would want to get in the bag and get the food before they could
 1890 get out the door, and I always felt like the parents were
 1891 embarrassed, and they were trying to, some of 'em would go ahead
 1892 and give them something but some of them wouldn't and they
 1893 would sometimes seem to be really eager to get that food, and it
 1894 made you feel bad. Uh, I thought of something else but it
 1895 slipped.
 1896 Moderator #1: If it comes back you
 1897 Advocate: Okay.
 1898 Teacher #2: I had a child one time who began crying early in the
 1899 morning and I said "What's wrong?" and he said "Well I didn't
 1900 have any supper last night and I didn't have any breakfast this
 1901 morning." And this was before our breakfast program here at
 1902 (this school) and so I got him some milk and he drank it and he
 1903 was fine and we worked on that, and trying to see what was
 1904 wrong and how they could get help. I think its like some of you
 1905 all have mentioned, sometimes its pride, and I think sometimes
 1906 they don't know how to go about getting the help that (the
 1907 school), the principal, the secretaries are maybe aware of how
 1908 they can get help.
 1909 Teacher #1: I think, too, it's not just there's not food in the
 1910 house, there's a thousand other things going on that, they're
 1911 losing their home, Dad's out of work, Dad just left, Mom's losing
 1912 her job, I mean there's so many things to contribute to just,
 1913 instead of just not putting a meal on the table that, and I think
 1914 their life sometimes is so chaotic that they haven't organized to
 1915 the point of "Oh, we're going to have supper now!", or whatever
 1916 they're doing.
 1917 (Agreement among the group: Uh huh.)
 1918 Moderator #1: Those are your experiences then, or that you have

1919 recognized children where other social problems are going on?
 1920 Teacher #1: Uh huh, right. There's usually a great amount of
 1921 stress going on in the family, so.
 1922 Teacher #2: And, too, their priorities sometimes are mixed up, this
 1923 is just a few people. They'll have cable TV, they'll be driving
 1924 nice big cars, this is just a few incidences I've noticed, but yet
 1925 they won't have food on the table, and so it's hard to decide if
 1926 they don't have money or what. I've noticed that, just a few
 1927 incidences.
 1928 Moderator #1: Do any of you have other experiences that you
 1929 have or that you'd like to share with us, with hungry children?
 1930 Food Service #1: We had one incident before the breakfast
 1931 program started, and I think all of our schools do have the
 1932 breakfast program now, where we had one youngster that we did
 1933 breakfast for because, if we didn't, he showed up and he ate as
 1934 the food was being brought back, the left overs off the plates as
 1935 it was being brought back to the dish room, and I think you have
 1936 to really be hungry to eat someone else's left overs. But we
 1937 feeding him a bowl of cereal and a carton of milk and a little bit
 1938 of fruit each morning, he made it through the day and was able
 1939 to eat his own lunch then. Skinny little boy, he wasn't
 1940 overweight or anything, but uh this is the only child that I can
 1941 remember in 25 years of food service, hungry enough to eat
 1942 someone else's scrapes, and he did, he'd eat out of it even if they
 1943 had eaten out of the bowl, if we did not see him in time to get
 1944 him something clean to eat. That has to be real hunger.
 1945 Principal: I know if uh, sometimes the children come in late (the
 1946 secretaries) will ask them if they've had breakfast and if they say
 1947 "No," they take them to the cafeteria.
 1948 (Agreement among the group: Uh huh.)
 1949 Principal continues: You know if they, they are aware that
 1950 children are sent to school without breakfast, but they come in
 1951 late, I've heard them ask many times "Have you eaten?" "Have
 1952 you had Breakfast?" And if not they'll take them in there and
 1953 (food service) will feed them.
 1954 Food Service #1: And they behave better the rest of the day to
 1955 lunch time too.
 1956 Food Service #2: Uh, huh.
 1957 Secretary: Definitely.
 1958 Teacher #1: Oh yeah, you know, a lot of times when my children
 1959 are having a bad morning I'll say "Did you have breakfast?"
 1960 "No," and we eat real early, so we sort of make it, but it makes a
 1961 big difference in their day if they eat breakfast. Just milk for
 1962 breakfast, it makes a difference.
 1963 Food Service #1: Uh huh, it does.
 1964 Teacher #3: With my own children at home I know that they
 1965 probably experience some hunger because I have to leave home at
 1966 least 20 till 7:00 to make it here by 7:15, and I don't always have
 1967 time to monitor what they eat. Uh, my son is able to get his own
 1968 cereal, but the little girl, she won't eat cereal in the mornings, so
 1969 you have to fix her something different like a bagel or toast or
 1970 something like that and uh, some mornings they just don't get to

1971 finish it, their bus comes at 7:00. They use to go to day care
 1972 before that until, till the bus stop was in front of my house. But
 1973 it's just time. Both parents are working and you know you just
 1974 don't have that time to really give them the proper well balanced
 1975 breakfast that they need. And lunch times for him is uh, I think
 1976 at 12:30, and that's pretty late for a fourth grader, I think. Uh,
 1977 he goes to lunch and the little girl, she has time to eat a snack,
 1978 but sometimes I just, I don't have time to just make sure she has
 1979 got that snack in her bag or trying to find an appropriate snack
 1980 instead of a brownie, she needs maybe pretzels or something like
 1981 that. It's just the times.

1982 **Moderator #1:** I think someone else mentioned time being an issue.
 1983 **(Agreement among the group: Uh huh.)**

1984 **Moderator #2:** I think someone else mentioned that.
 1985 **(Agreement among the group: Uh huh.)**

1986 **Moderator #1:** Does anyone else have any experiences.

1987 **Principal:** I think ignorance of nutrition, is part of the reason
 1988 children go hungry too. A lot of parents do not know that this
 1989 candy bar is going to go pretty quick and an apple, piece of
 1990 fruit, you know, something else would last longer. I just think
 1991 the parents are not really into nutrition.

1992 **School Secretary:** I had a summer experience in the Montgomery
 1993 village where we fixed food daily for children, and I, we had the
 1994 same experiences (food service) had; when it came time for, they
 1995 did not come for the bible stories and the games and anything
 1996 else, but when it came time to eat, we had more kids than we
 1997 knew what to do with.

1998 **Advocate:** And I'm thinking of an intercity church that started an
 1999 evening program that began with a meal and then activities for
 2000 the children, and we felt like a lot of those children came more
 2001 for the meal than anything else, and occasionally you would see
 2002 some that really ate a lot and really seemed to be hungry. Of
 2003 course I mean there's a difference, in normal hunger, I guess, and
 2004 hunger that's deeper.

2005 **Principal:** (Advocate), would you say that that was just a misuse
 2006 of resources that the family had or that they did not have the
 2007 resources for food?

2008 **Advocate:** I don't know, I, you know, I didn't know the families
 2009 they came from that well, but I'd say it's partly the other,
 2010 depending on the family.

2011 **Moderator #1:** Okay. Now I'd like to move into some questions
 2012 about hunger awareness education. Should education about
 2013 hunger and risk of hunger be included in the elementary schools?

2014 **Teacher #2:** Would you repeat your question?

2015 **Moderator #1:** Okay. Should education about hunger and risk of
 2016 hunger be included in the elementary schools and if so, how?

2017 **Principal:** I'm confused about what you mean by education.

2018 **Teacher #2:** I am too. Do you mean among the children, the
 2019 parents, the teacher, who.

2020 **Moderator #1:** Well, what do you think.

2021 **Teacher #3:** Well it could be included into the growing healthy
 2022 unit that you have, it could be included in that. To educate the

2023 parents you could have meetings set up for PTA meetings, that
 2024 kind of thing, and talk about nutrition in, these are some of the
 2025 ways that I think. And I think that we are making them aware
 2026 here at (this school) because we have, like, contest, kids eat the
 2027 most breakfast, you know, how many kids eat the most breakfast
 2028 out of the classroom, that kind of thing to promote.
 2029 Teacher #2: Oh, I guess we do that, don't we, really.
 2030 School Food Service #1: If the parents, I guess if the parents, if
 2031 someone way, like (the principal) said about the candy bar and
 2032 the apple. If they could see where they could take their fifty
 2033 dollars worth of food stamps and get so much more food if what
 2034 they got with it was, the nutritious, you know, instead of
 2035 something that can be put in the microwave or, you know, or that
 2036 can be eaten just right out of the box. This is, but nation wide,
 2037 as far as . . .
 2038 Principal: I think that's more of it, too, because you can hear
 2039 people, get behind others with food stamps and they're buying all
 2040 this fancy food. and here we are with our grits and gravy food.
 2041 Unknown: Uh, huh.
 2042 (Laughter among the group.)
 2043 Principal continues: And so they really are not making wise
 2044 choices. Maybe they have enough food stamps, they don't have
 2045 to, but they'll buy expensive stuff and fancy stuff that the rest
 2046 of us don't buy.
 2047 Food Service #1: I think a lot of it is a matter, too, of not
 2048 knowing how to prepare.
 2049 Principal interrupts: That's right, I think so too, I think that has
 2050 a lot to do with that.
 2051 (Group Agreement - Uh huh.)
 2052 School Food Service #1 continues: What you can do with a pound
 2053 of beans or pound of ground meat, where they know what to do
 2054 with a banquet thing, you know, that you just heat, but that last
 2055 one meal where the other might last two or three meals.
 2056 Advocate: They really don't have enough food stamps to buy like
 2057 that, and what happens is, that at the end of the month they
 2058 come to food pantries if they've bought like that.
 2059 School Food Service #1: Uh huh, right.
 2060 Moderator #1: So I think I've heard, um, and if anyone has
 2061 anymore input please feel free. That the teachers, that it is, to
 2062 an extent hunger awareness education is done through the contest
 2063 using the breakfast program, but that it might can be addressed
 2064 within the PTA through the parents. Is that correct?
 2065 Teacher #1: Well, it could be, but the parents that you need to
 2066 address won't be there and the parents who don't need to hear it
 2067 will be.
 2068 (Agreement among the group.)
 2069 Advocate: That's right.
 2070 Teacher #2: That's very true.
 2071 Teacher #1: And that's the truth.
 2072 (Laughter among the group.)
 2073 Teacher #1: You know, you'd have to do something besides PTA
 2074 because they will not be there.

2075 Teacher #3: Well that's just what the school could do, so

2076 Advocate: I think one place to do it is in preschool day cares.

2077 We gave a nutrition program for the parents of our preschoolers

2078 in the child care program and it was one of the most popular

2079 things we ever did. I was really amazed because, when the

2080 director said she was going to do it, I thought no one will come

2081 to that. But they focused on how to get children to try new

2082 foods and things like that as well as the nutritious value of

2083 things, and the parents really responded to it. So, and you can

2084 get parents out better with younger children sometimes than you

2085 can with the older ones.

2086 (Agreement among a couple of group members: Uh huh.)

2087 Advocate continues: And the younger ones are more open to

2088 learning about trying new foods too. So I think preschool are a

2089 good place to do nutrition and hunger education.

2090 Moderator #1: Okay. So you may have already answered this

2091 with another question, but should it be included in the classroom?

2092 Teacher #3: It already is, through that growing healthy program.

2093 Teacher #1: Yes, certainly.

2094 (Agreement among the group: Uh huh.)

2095 Teacher #1: I know we do nutrition starting in health. You know

2096 we talk about healthy foods or healthy snacks and what's

2097 something healthy to snack. So it's started there. And they'll go

2098 home and say "My teacher said this candy bar's not good for me,"

2099 or whatever, so we do stuff

2100 Moderator #1: What about hunger, like topics of hunger -- is that

2101 already in the classroom?

2102 Teacher #3: Hunger, what?

2103 Moderator #1: Talking about hunger and the problems uh, with

2104 hunger in the society, is that already in the classroom?

2105 Principal: No

2106 Teacher #2: No

2107 Teacher #1: No

2108 Principal #1: I don't think most people perceive that to be a

2109 problem. I think our support level is high enough that people

2110 don't have to go hungry like they use to.

2111 Principal continues: You know back in the depression, some of

2112 those old days, people couldn't help it, I mean there was just

2113 enough, enough food to go around, but I think now, now with our

2114 support system, the food stamps and the WIC and uh, you know, a

2115 lot of the support systems that we have, the level is high enough

2116 that people should not have to go hungry.

2117 Teacher #3: I don't hear it talked about as much in public

2118 schools, but in our Synagogue, my place of worship, we address

2119 hunger all the time.

2120 Teacher #2: We do at my church at (C.) Baptist Church (in a

2121 city), we have a pantry closet which we keep stocked and people

2122 come in off the street that are hungry and we feed them, but . . .

2123 Principal interrupts: We do too.

2124 Teacher #2 continues: I'm sure you knew.

2125 Principal: We'll I'm just saying that, uh

2126 Teacher #2 continues: That there is no reason that they have to.

2127 Principal: Uh, huh, right.
 2128 Moderator #1: So are you saying that children are being taught
 2129 about hunger outside the school, maybe in the church setting?
 2130 (Agreement among the group: Uh huh.)
 2131 Teacher #2: Yes.
 2132 Principal: Taught maybe that there is food there, is that what
 2133 you're saying? I don't know that I agree, I don't know that I
 2134 understand what you summarized just then. That they're teaching
 2135 about hunger in the churches?
 2136 Moderator #1: Right, or addressing hunger, teaching the children
 2137 that you know there are hungry people out there, or you know, if
 2138 you're hungry, people out there, or you know, if you're hungry
 2139 you can
 2140 Teacher #2: Yeah, I guess we do.
 2141 (Agreement among the group.)
 2142 Principal: Yeah, because they bring food you know, sometimes
 2143 they ask to bring food and, right.
 2144 Secretary: Right, children are encouraged to bring it (food) in
 2145 and participate.
 2146 Principal continues: Yeah, I think they are.
 2147 Moderator: Okay, um if there was a hunger awareness program
 2148 set up to teach kids more about hunger and the fact that there
 2149 are hungry people in the community, um, who would be the target
 2150 audience, would it just be children within one grade, or can
 2151 younger children perceive what hunger is, or would it just be for
 2152 kids that are experiencing hunger, or would it be for all children?
 2153 Teacher #3: I think it would be for all children, from age, from
 2154 the time that they would be able to understand or to see what
 2155 hunger is really, to see what hunger is really to see it from
 2156 reality. Like if you had a, like a fair or something and you
 2157 wanted to show hunger, you could just show people on the street,
 2158 you know, hungry or uh, that's what I'm getting at.
 2159 School Food Service #2: I would like to ask a question. I, I just
 2160 don't conceive people being that hungry here, and I look at TV
 2161 and see overseas people starving to death, but we do have our
 2162 means of getting food, and I just, I know kids are hungry, I
 2163 think a lot of kids come into school hungry, just parents that
 2164 won't get up, fix meals like they should be fixed, but as far as a
 2165 problem with having something to eat I just don't see
 2166 Unknown: Starving.
 2167 School Food Service #2: Starving, I just don't see very much of
 2168 that.
 2169 Teacher #1: And too, if we suspect it, I know (the secretary), we
 2170 send our social worker out or you know what do you think is
 2171 going on here, you know it's, you can spot it pretty quick. I
 2172 think, or do you think, something is not right here, and to deal
 2173 with it individually, it has to be real apparent.
 2174 School Food Service #2: Uh huh, uh huh, uh huh.
 2175 Moderator #2: There have been a number of surveys done around
 2176 the country and, in fact, one is being done right now in
 2177 Tennessee, and its, they're called the CCHIP surveys, and it
 2178 stands for Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project, and

2179 uh, what they did was they developed a series of eight questions,
 2180 and its getting at sort of the dysfunctional behaviors that you
 2181 referred to before in that maybe someone isn't biologically,
 2182 something from malnutrition like we might see in Ethiopia. or in ah
 2183 Sudan. But rather if, if they're seeing some the dysfunctional or
 2184 stress behaviors before they get overt malnutrition that that is a
 2185 place where we can intervene, and things that kids can relate to
 2186 like um, you know, is there ever not enough money to buy food in
 2187 the house? Or, you know, do your parents ever send you over to
 2188 other families', other neighbors' homes at meal time, um, or do you
 2189 run out of food at the end of the month? There's a series of
 2190 questions that actually, um, they're going to be going around
 2191 Tennessee and asking them, so we'll be able to see what risk of
 2192 hunger is in Tennessee. And the other studies that have been
 2193 done nationally, um, you know in places like Long Island and
 2194 rural Alabama, and Pontiac, Michigan, and Detroit, about one in
 2195 four children are at risk of hunger, and the idea is that that
 2196 might interfere with learning maybe in a subtler way, the way
 2197 maybe if a family was dealing with a lot of stress, um, and I don't
 2198 know if that

2199 Principal: What are you talking about, the risk of hunger, are
 2200 you talking about long-term or temporary, I mean I'm hungry
 2201 now

2202 Moderator #2: Could be temporary

2203 Principal continues: but I'm hungry for supper, from you know,
 2204 that kind of thing

2205 (Laughter among the group.)

2206 Moderator #2: Yeah, I'm talking about long term

2207 Principal continues: I'm just saying, okay

2208 Moderator #2: In that context I'd say its long term, over a month,
 2209 over a month, a month period.

2210 Principal: Okay, okay long enough to affect them mentally
 2211 and

2212 Moderator #2: Or if a parent skips a meal so that their children
 2213 can have some food whether it's, you know, nutritious food or not
 2214 nutritious food.

2215 Principal: Right, right.

2216 Moderator #2: Those are some of the things that might subtly
 2217 impair functioning, whether it's learning in school or at any level
 2218 so. Is that something that y'all might be able to, you know, do
 2219 you think that might be something worth talking about in school?

2220 Advocate: I guess the way I feel about that is that in the
 2221 intercity, here in (this city), one in every three children is below
 2222 the poverty level and that is very high percentage of the
 2223 children, and, therefore, I think if you discuss that. Let me put
 2224 it this way, it would take a great deal of sensitivity to discuss it
 2225 with the children without further stigmatizing the ones who have
 2226 a problem, uh because its already, it's not, I don't think it's that
 2227 way in the elementary school, but when they get to high school,
 2228 the ones who uh get free lunches, even with some of the
 2229 precautions that have been taken to keep it from being a stigma,
 2230 it still is a stigma.

2231 Unknown: Right, uh huh.

2232 Advocate continues: And so I, I don't know how you could do

2233 that in the classroom without, it may be possible, but I just think

2234 it would be real hard to deal with it in the classroom without

2235 making some children feel bad or labeling them, or making them

2236 think well I'm one the hungry ones.

2237 Principal: You know children will go hungry rather than admit

2238 they're on free lunch.

2239 They would rather be hungry, that pride.

2240 Advocate: And they do in high school, they do.

2241 Principal continues: Uh huh, I think you're exactly right. They'll

2242 go hungry first.

2243 Advocate: Uh huh.

2244 Moderator #1: Okay. Um if it was presented in a classroom, a

2245 discussion about hunger or what hunger is or risk of hunger is,

2246 who should present that to the children?

2247 Teacher #3: Probably the teacher, along with her health lessons,

2248 and if its not part of the curriculum already, then maybe she can

2249 have the school nurse uh, talk about hunger, or a guest speaker.

2250 Moderator #1: Uh, okay, what kind of guest speaker?

2251 Teacher #3: Uh, the first graders have a lot of guest speakers

2252 during the first six weeks in their classrooms, so someone like

2253 you (nutrition graduate student) from the University who could

2254 come out and do a little presentation on hunger.

2255 Teacher #2: Right, uh huh.

2256 Teacher #1: The resources that know what's going on.

2257 Moderator #1: Like . . . ?

2258 Teacher #1: We can't know it all, I hate to tell you all this, but I

2259 mean if we were to present it we would not have all the statistics

2260 and the programs. You know what I mean? Like you're in that

2261 field and you would be much more knowledgeable of it than we

2262 would, I think.

2263 School Food Service #2: And I'm sure you're much more aware of

2264 hunger . . .

2265 Teacher #1: Right.

2266 School Food Service #2: . . . than we ourselves are.

2267 Teacher #1: Right

2268 Moderator #1: Okay, so someone in the community then, we're

2269 talking about someone in the community.

2270 Teacher #1: Right.

2271 School Food Service: Uh huh.

2272 Moderator #1: What, who in the community?

2273 Teacher #3: Like yourself. Like you're a graduate student, and

2274 you're doing your data collecting right now, you may want to, you

2275 know, talk to one of the first grade or second grade teachers and

2276 then you say "Look I want to present this program to your

2277 class." So you would be a good resource, and probably that's

2278 how they get a lot of their people to come, by calling (the

2279 University) and asking for volunteers. That's how I get mine or

2280 we can call the health department and see if someone will come

2281 out and talk to 'em.

2282 Teacher #1: I know when we have guest speakers, it's much more

2283 effective for children than if I sit up there and go "Okay, today
 2284 we're going to talk about . . .," you know if it's something like
 2285 this, they are much more receptive to this person, you know, this
 2286 is what they do, that kind of thing. I think its much more
 2287 effective.

2288 Teacher #3: Like when you want to talk about gun control, or
 2289 drugs, you get a police officer. There's more, it goes over a lot
 2290 better.

2291 Teacher #1: Right

2292 Teacher #2: Uh huh.

2293 Advocate: Uh huh. There is some other resources in the
 2294 community like anti-hunger groups that are working on those
 2295 issues that could be guest speakers.

2296 Teacher #3: Uh huh.

2297 Advocate continues: There's an Emergency Food Helpers group
 2298 that is made up of people that work in pantries and associated
 2299 with programs like that, and then there is Bread for the World
 2300 that lobbies the US Congress on hunger issues, and there is a
 2301 local chapter of that.

2302 Moderator #1: Anyone, any other ideas?

2303 Teacher #3: Well, maybe someone from the local shelter could talk
 2304 'em, be from the shelter.

2305 Moderator #1: Someone that works from the shelter?

2306 Teacher #3: Someone that works at the shelter or over the
 2307 shelter, director or someone like that.

2308 Moderator #1: She's (advocate) with the (city) Cooperative Parish,
 2309 is that correct?

2310 Advocate: Not now, I was.

2311 Moderator #1: Oh, okay.

2312 Advocate: I work with the United Methodist Church.

2313 Teacher #3: Oh, okay.

2314 Principal: I know uh, when we have chili suppers and things like
 2315 that, and we have cakes and lots of different, we always take it
 2316 to one of the, either the rescue mission or salvation army or some
 2317 place and they're always very glad to get it, uh cause there is
 2318 hunger, street, I think the street people are hungry but that's
 2319 not what we're talking about now. But, uh, I think nutrition is as
 2320 important as anything for us to talk to the children about. I
 2321 don't think that that's ever brought up, that was a big thing, you
 2322 ate nutritious meals.

2323 Unknown: Uh huh.

2324 Principal continues: But now you can eat whatever you want so
 2325 long as don't go hungry. There's no planned meals, there's no
 2326 fruit and vegetables, you know, something with carbohydrates and
 2327 all that. That's just not, just not the mode, I mean its what's
 2328 easy, fix you a sandwich and if you're lucky you've got tomatoes,
 2329 lettuce, meat and two slices of bread and you've got, you know
 2330 something from different food groups. But you know it's, I just
 2331 think nutrition is, ah, is not a part of people's planning in their
 2332 meals anymore.

2333 Moderator #1: So what would be some goals and objectives for
 2334 this person, coming from the community, since that's where we

2335 kind of decided on, uh, what would be some goals and objectives
 2336 for these people to get across to the children?
 2337 Principal: That's a good question.
 2338 Teacher #3: One goal would, to give the definition of hunger, uh
 2339 make them fully aware of what it is. Another goal is, is how to
 2340 avoid being hungry. I guess that's another objective uh, another
 2341 one would be educating them on how to purchase food, that's a
 2342 long-term goal in its self there.
 2343 Moderator #1: Do y'all have some other ideas?
 2344 Principal: How many kids you know want a dime to go get an
 2345 apple?
 2346 (Laughter among the group.)
 2347 Teacher #2: Yeah, what did we all put on this plate?
 2348 School Food Service: Yeah, what did we all go for?
 2349 Teacher #3: Chocolate.
 2350 Moderator #1: So can y'all think of some other goals and
 2351 objectives besides those that she mentioned?
 2352 Teacher #1: I think one, course now would be much younger
 2353 children, of course I'm talking maybe third graders, they, teach
 2354 them ways they can be helpful at putting a meal on the table. I
 2355 mean when you've got two parents coming in at the end of a day,
 2356 or one parent, they're dead, they're tired, and if that child
 2357 knows, they, if I slice this up, this would go great with what,
 2358 whoever is preparing the meal, you know, I think that would be
 2359 better now....
 2360 Moderator #1: Or set the table?
 2361 (Agreement among the group.)
 2362 Teacher #1: Or set the table, you know whatever just, that that
 2363 would be something that would be helpful cause so many parents
 2364 are going as many different directions as the children, I think.
 2365 Advocate: I certainly hope not.
 2366 (Laughter among group.)
 2367 Principal: I think that they should be taught that they are
 2368 primarily responsible for choosing healthy foods. Their parents
 2369 can not be with them when they go through that line or when
 2370 they go to the store all the time, so they need to make healthy
 2371 choices. I think an important thing for them to understand, that
 2372 responsibility, for that is as soon as they're able.
 2373 Moderator #2: Another.
 2374 School Food Service #2: And you.
 2375 Moderator #2: No, no go ahead, go ahead.
 2376 School Food Service #2: I can go to the store and buy groceries
 2377 and the things my children ask when I come in, or say, "Mamma,
 2378 you didn't buy any snacks!" You know, so children don't know
 2379 how to eat, they eat what they like.
 2380 Moderator #2: Along those lines, I know one thing that we're
 2381 trying to do, you know in the five-a-day fruits and vegetables,
 2382 we're trying to promote, what we're calling, and I don't know if,
 2383 how it fits in education needs but, promoting "asking behaviors"
 2384 in children to get them to go home and ask their parents to buy,
 2385 you know, "Would you buy apples, and would you buy fruits and
 2386 vegetable?" or maybe you know, they're, you know if they're

- 2387 running out of food maybe, you know, there is this church
 2388 nearby, um and in some cases maybe they'll even deliver. You
 2389 know to promote these "asking behaviors," what do you, what do
 2390 you think of that? Does that sound like something?
- 2391 Teacher #1: I know with younger children you can do that and
 2392 teach them that what you are doing is real important. But
 2393 younger children, they are willing to do, they're like "Let me in
 2394 that kitchen!" You know, they really are that way. So I think
 2395 the younger you can start them.
- 2396 Principal: I think when you're asking them to do that, you're
 2397 helping them to manage their situation and to become less of a
 2398 victim.
- 2399 Moderator #2: Uh huh, uh huh.
- 2400 Principal: I think that's real important for them.
- 2401 Moderator #1: Are there any other activities that y'all can think
 2402 of? I know we are running out of time, any other activities that
 2403 the kids could engage in? Well, actually we've talked about some
 2404 goals and objectives. What would be some activities for kids, too?
- 2405 Teacher #3: To learn how to, just role playing, uh. Role playing
 2406 like a model meal, role playing their part on how to set the table
 2407 and that kind of thing. Game boards on putting together food, I
 2408 don't know, trivia questions, and things like that about what
 2409 make, you know, like a well balanced meal, uh making recipes.
 2410 Something like that.
- 2411 Teacher #2: Our second grade class did something one time, um
 2412 with fruits and vegetables we got from the cafeteria, we cut them
 2413 up and ate them and talked about how we could eat that for a
 2414 snack instead of candy and chips and things like that. So we
 2415 actually ate them, cut them up together, and ate them.
- 2416 School Secretary: They could be encouraged to, if they had the
 2417 means to share with others when they did not have food.
- 2418 Teacher #3: There are a lot of games, you can play?
- 2419 Moderator #1: So maybe, maybe, are you saying maybe getting
 2420 food together for someone else, as an activity?
- 2421 School Secretary: Uh huh. Uh huh.
- 2422 Moderator #1: Okay, anyone have any other ideas about
 2423 activities? Okay, if not, the last question I have is, uh, how
 2424 could students' awareness of hunger be measured? How could we
 2425 know whether the activities or, you know, have really helped them
 2426 to understand?
- 2427 Teacher #3: Well, you could watch them for a week and watch
 2428 their energy level, uh you can maybe serve breakfast one morning
 2429 in your classroom or something like that, and then uh, then the
 2430 next morning not serve anything, just kinda collect your own data
 2431 at the end of the week, uh just to see how they respond with a
 2432 full stomach versus not giving them that breakfast the next
 2433 morning.
- 2434 Moderator #1: Anything else?
- 2435 Teacher #1: Have them pack their lunch, and see what they
 2436 bring.
- 2437 (Agreement and laughter among the group.)
- 2438 Unknown: And that would be funny.

2439 Unknown: Yeah it would be, wouldn't it?

2440 Moderator #1: Okay, that concludes our discussion. Thanks for
2441 coming.

APPENDIX K

Condensed Data:

**Issues, Categories, Subcategories, Components,
and Representative Statements**

I. ISSUE: PERCEPTIONS OF CHILDHOOD HUNGER

A. Category: Causes of hunger

1. Subcategory: Neglectful parenting

a. Component: lack of responsibility

Representative Statements:

62...some of the children, the only the meals they have are what we feed them here for breakfast and lunch.

64...there is no responsibility at home for feeding children...

323...they don't really take all that much time to prepare foods...

508...the mother and daddy both working a lot of times, they're tired and worn out and don't want to do what mothers do. They just give them the money to go to...

922...lack of planning on the part of the parent...

926...the lack of nurturing on the part of an adult.

929...I agree.

972...parents ought to get them here early enough to eat their breakfast.

1050...makes me feel like that the resources are there for people who are able to, who will take advantage of them, who will.

1068...there's real responsibility for parents who have children, and most lower incomes don't take that responsibility in the sense of education.

1071...Thank you.

1114...but it has to be prepared.

1700...there are people out there though, that genuinely want the help, and there are those that do not, and you can, and it doesn't matter what you do it will not work,...

1817...I think it's more habit than, you know, they wait too late to feed them before they go to bed at night, or they don't get them up early enough to feed them breakfast, or that's what I see more than.

1823...More than not having it.

1837...could come in at breakfast if the parents perhaps would get them here in time to eat breakfast.

1922...their priorities sometimes are mixed up,...

b. Component: misuse of resources

Representative Statements:

313...Well, if the parents are not, do not know how to buy things properly, the children will be hungry,

947...Parents spend it on something else.
1108..."quickie food" is expensive.
2043...they really are not making wise choices.
2056...They really don't have enough food stamps to buy like that and what happens is, that at the end of the month they come to food pantries if they've bought like that.
2059...Uh huh, right.

c. Component: poor food choices

Representative Statements:

318...it will be like frozen pizza. I think a lot of it is just what's convenient, what's quick for them.
1099...I don't think there is a child in this building that do not, that their family is not capable of having food their home; I think there are poor choices made.
1125...not lack of food but poor choices about what they feed the children.
1240...they like nutritious food, the majority of them I think if it was offered to them at home, they would take it, if they do like they do here.
2330...I just think nutrition is, ah, is not a part of people's planning in their meals anymore.

d. Component: family dysfunction

Representative Statements:

320...these parents don't spend too much time talking with their children anyway,...
528...many children in our school have no influence on their parents...
532...There is not an interaction of conversation between parent and child,...
1909...I think, too, its not just there's not food in the house, there's a thousand other things going on that, they're losing their home, Dad's out of work, Dad just left, Mom's losing her job,...

2. Subcategory: Uniformed parents

a. Component: food preparation

Representative Statements:

1057...they don't even know how to prepare the food,...
2047...it is a matter, too, of not knowing how to prepare.
2049...That's right, I think so too, I think that has a lot to do with that.

b. Component: nutrition

Representative Statements:

106...And the message of good nutrition, its harder, it seems like its harder to get that message to lower income families than it is to higher income families...
1987...I think ignorance of nutrition is part of the reason children go hungry too. A lot of parents do not know that this candy bar is going to go pretty quick and an apple,...

3. Subcategory: Lack of financial resources

Representative Statements:

53...families that have to make the decision between paying rent and buying food,...
65...no means at home to feed the children.
923...absolute poverty to where they are unable to find food.
1103...when you have less money you have to work harder at stretching your food money.
1483...but if they don't have the resources to implement what we're teaching then,...
1577...people who are absolutely without funds and without, to they do not know where to turn...
1782...uncertainty about whether there's enough resources to purchase the needed food for the home,...

4. Subcategory: Stigma and pride

Representative Statements:

83...growing awareness of the stigma of having to get free and reduced meals, and so it really means that as kids get

into their preteens and they're even more at risk because they are not getting the food they need at school.

1905...sometimes its pride,...

2226...I don't think it's that way in the elementary school, but when they get to high school, the ones who uh get free lunches, even with some of the precautions that have been taken to keep it from being a stigma, it still is a stigma.

2237...You know children will go hungry rather than admit they're on free lunch...They would rather be hungry, that pride.

2240...And they do in high school, they do.

2241...I think you're exactly right. They'll go hungry first.

5. Subcategory: Students choose to skip meals

Representative Statements:

244...But then if they don't come in...late, then they don't get that.

245...They don't get any.

1834...they're going to have breakfast and lunch if they choose to.

B. Category: Indicators of hunger

1. Subcategory: Performance indicators

Representative Statements:

36...If basic needs aren't met such as hunger, then it is very difficult for a child to be able to sit there and learn...

68...it effects their performance in everything.

127...laying their heads down and they just really don't feel like participating in activities or things we do.

152...constantly ask, "When is lunch?"...

157...they are not performing to their potential because they're hungry.

903...if they are hungry, then they're concentrating on the stomachs instead of concentrating on what we're trying to do.

912...affect their mental.

914...can't do anything else well.

1746...I don't think they learn very well when they're hungry.

1958...a lot of times when my children are having a bad morning I'll say "Did you have breakfast?" "No,"...

2. Subcategory: Physical symptom indicators

Representative Statements:

35...Failure to grow and thrive.

125...complaining that their stomach hurts or that they're hungry.

211...I have it everyday. They come up complaining with headaches and stomach aches,...

910...if they didn't have breakfast in the morning that they're more tired.

915...They sleep half the day, they come into the office with headaches...

981...little girl was crying and they said "What's wrong?", and she said she didn't feel good and they said "Well, did you have breakfast?" And she said "No."

1171... Sometimes we get a lot of headaches and kids come in the office with headaches and stuff...

1877...Some kids will say that they have a stomach ache, and if you give them a couple of crackers or something, it seems to soothe it,...

3. Subcategory: Children taking responsibility for their own food

Representative Statements:

60...Maybe scrounging for anything to eat, maybe being responsible for their own food,...

1139...I know working in Bible schools in the (residential housing projects) area that if you had good refreshments, you were going to have big crowds.

1187...it may have been their responsibility to find their own food.

1864...working in, like, a project area and kids would come, the kids that didn't go to the camp would come at that time to literally beg for food.

1994...they did not come for the bible stories and the games and anything else, but when it came time to eat, we had more kids than we knew what to do with.

2000...we felt like a lot of those children came more for the meal than anything else,...

4. Subcategory: Psychosocial indicators

Representative Statements:

69...how they relate to other kids, too,...

73...effect things like self esteem and the way they feel about themselves and the way they relate to others.
905...not a happy person if they're hungry.....not going to be content.

C. Category: Definitions of hunger

1. Subcategory Food insecurity (limited access to food)

Representative Statements:

154...they don't really come out and say that they, no one fed them or that there was no food in the house.

226...My fifth graders it doesn't happen very often, but they do seem to be open with it. I mean they will come and say when they come in "I haven't had anything to eat, I'm hungry." I mean they will ask.

290...it seems like no matter how much you educate them, if there's not the food in the home they're not going to get what they need.

957...first thing that a child said to me was "Oh, now I won't get my lunch will I?" And that was the very first thing that occurred to her by her going home early.

961...we feed them breakfast and lunch here at this school everyday and on Saturday and Sunday we are not providing that,...

1121...I have heard a couple of my kids says "Mamma said food stamps would come today, and that's good, we get to buy food" that kind of a comment.

1743...Not having enough food at home to eat.

1745...going to bed hungry at night.

1795...if they have a sudden emergency that causes them to be without food,...

1801...risk increases, for me when I see them, I have concern that the risk goes greater in the summer.

1848...we always served refreshments before they started their work, and we could sometimes tell, in certain children that on Mondays they just got their hands on all they could get them. So Monday did seem like they hadn't eaten well over the weekend.

1887...I was associated with running a food pantry, and one thing I noticed was the small children coming with their parents who would want to get in the bag and get the food before they could get out the door, and I always felt like the parents were embarrassed,...

1898...I had a child one time who began crying early in the morning and I said "What's wrong?" and he said "Well I didn't have any supper last night and I didn't have any breakfast this morning."

1933...he ate as the food was being brought back, the left

overs off the plates as it was being brought back to the dish room,...

2. Subcategory: Poor quality of food

Representative Statements:

41...They need to get the right nutrition too.

88...Some of the hunger of poor nutrition may not be totally the result of poverty, but with a lack of education among the poor.....it's malnutrition, maybe, that is maybe really more prevalent than hunger itself.

97...they may just eat junk food rather than the nutrition,...

908...they're nutritional needs aren't being met.

931...a lot of the hunger is not always just not having food they may keep junk food there...

1006...these that are probably more hungry, want that quick, they want something they don't have to, they want something they can eat quick.

1222...they need to eat things that are healthy.

1749...we see hunger because we've failed to have the time to educate them as to what they need to eat.

1755...don't have the proper nutrition.

D. Category: Hunger not perceived as a problem

Representative Statements:

1096...its just a small percentage that you notice and you worry about...

2108...I don't think most people perceive that to be a problem. I think our support level is high enough that people don't have to go hungry like they use to.

2159...I just don't conceive people being that hungry here, and I look at TV and see overseas people starving to death,...

II. ISSUE: HUNGER EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL/CLASSROOM

A. Category: It already exists

Representative Statements:

252...I think maybe we talk about that when we're talking about nutrition and good food to eat. I think we talk about

how it makes us feel if we don't eat and what happens to our bodies if we don't eat right.

256...I think that children from this neighborhood pretty much would be aware that there is hunger because they see people down at the salvation army lined up for food...

1208...we have food drives, PTA food drives,...

1216...It's just part of the basic education.

1335...teachers give that sort of spiel to the kids concerning hunger and other children that may need that. So that is done in each classroom.

1338...I don't think we sit down and actually take that as a main topic or a unit, but it's included in, like the principal said, when we have a food drive that's addressed, when we do our needs and wants.

2025...we are making them aware here at (this school) because we have, like, contest, kids eat the most breakfast, you know, how many kids eat the most breakfast out of the classroom, that kind of thing to promote.

B. Category: It ought to be included somewhere else

1. Subcategory: Parent education through community programs

Representative Statements:

422...there are programs, adult education, where we're helping them to get their G.E.D.'s and high school diplomas, if there are some single parents in there or any parents at all that are going through those programs, that might be a good place to teach them because there the people have the money and they're going to have the say so about where the money goes if you're really going to be doing something about hunger.

569...If some outside agency like CAC, wanted to get information or printed information to parents,...

573...welfare or something like that; it might be something to be distributed through some agency like that. Wherever parents are going to go.

577...Whenever they pick up their stamps or whatever, you can give them information.

585...commodities program and the summer feeding sites and through the emergency food helpers system network; the bags of food that we give out we put information about other resources that are available,...

1532...at some of these places where adults get food, or where they go if there is, if that's not the place...

1603...through Adult Literacy,...

1604...Even Start.

1605...Even Start, uh even the Head Start program where

parents...

1608...Even Start, particularly where parents are coming in and working with their children,...

2. Subcategory: Religious institutions

Representative Statements:

1321...I know, we take the kids at my church, we take them down to the union area rescue mission to serve,...

2118...in our Synagogue my place of worship, we address hunger all the time.

2120...We do at my church...

2123...We do too.

3. Subcategory: Parent education through PTA

Representative Statements:

565...local PTA meetings, as far as giving information to the parents.

2022...To educate the parents you could have meetings set up for PTA meetings,...

C. Category: Do not include it in school classroom

Representative Statements:

407...Someone who's aware of the time involvement in the classroom.

410...knows how many things are getting squeezed in already. Ideally, teachers.

1075...everything coming down the pipe ends up being the school's responsibility...

1468...because we've got a captive audience in the classroom then we just want "oh well here's something else you can teach those children".

1599...Well I want to say not the schools.

1601...We get dumped on with everything.

D. Category: Nutrition education already exist

Representative Statements:

285...we have nutrition education in every grade not so much hunger education but I would expect that we couldn't need much more if we needed nay at all because we do have nutrition education...

1205...Well nutrition education is included.

1208...but I don't think we particularly point out the hungry masses so much as we do "These are the things that are good for you to eat" and you need to make; these are the choices that you need to make." But that's a part of every curriculum on every grade level as well as (the school food service person; the cafeteria) promoting it through the cafeteria.

1269...the school lunch program, which is a good training program for learning to eat things...

1292...the way kids learn to enjoy or to have things, that you know they have it at school and maybe that's not something they do for them at home. So its a learning experience.

III. ISSUE: TARGET POPULATION FOR HUNGER EDUCATION

A. Category: Parents

Representative Statements:

325...there would be some type of way to contact the parents...

337...getting the parents to come to the weekly club meetings...

432...it might be good to get to those parents who are interested cause that's probably all you're going to reach at first and then maybe they can reach their friends,...

449...they're still going to pattern themselves with what they see everyday and what they live with and what they see their parents do. So the educational part for the parent is going to have to be the change,...

1437...some kind of breaking the cycle and developing some kind of education plan where those people that are in charge of these children.

1440... Right.

1446...cycles being set at home. The parents are going to have to be trained, they're going to have to be retrained. We don't break the cycle by teaching the children.

1449...That's right.

1457...what they see and hear at home is a lot more

influence. You know we might be able to make them aware, but we just don't have the influence that mamma and daddy do.

1485...if they don't, are not able to implement it, that's slowly going to go by the wayside, they may be concerned and that might hit them, and that may, may strike a cord with them but as they slowly become frustrated in trying to do what we're trying to teach them because mamma and daddy aren't doing it or mamma and daddy aren't teaching them, it goes by the way side.

B. Category: All ages

Representative Statements:

354...they all need to be aware, you know even if they're not hungry, they need to be aware that there is a problem in our world and I kind of think it should be all grade levels.

360...I would certainly agree with that. I think that there's room for that kind of education at all levels.

371...we would want our children, even preschool, to be aware of and for them to, just as human beings, to reach out to other people and be willing to help one another.

397...should be all of them, not just part of them, all the children, from kindergarten on up.

2153...I think it would be for all children, from age, from the time that they would be able to understand or to see what hunger is really, to see what hunger is really, to see it from reality.

C. Category: Younger children

Representative Statements:

438...start with the kids either because they are going to grow up and be parents on day themselves,...

1381...you start that awareness as young as you can and then as, hopefully as you get it with them every year that the awareness, becomes clearer and clearer...

2076...one place to do it is in preschool day cares.

2395...the younger you can start them.

D. Category: Both parents and children

Representative Statements:

277...it might be the child sort of taking the parents' hands saying "we need to do this".
417...federal programs like Even Start and some of these other types of things where they're working with the children and they're also working with the parents as well,...

E. Category: Older Children

Representative Statements:

1379...Probably the older,...
1380...Older, yeah.

IV. ISSUE: WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN DEVELOPMENT OF HUNGER EDUCATION

A. Category: Community advocates

Representative Statements:

1559...Someone who's aware of the resources that are available...
1561...Uh huh, yeah.
1562...Uh huh, yeah.
1563...they know how to teach budgeting, to teach meal planning, probably a home economist...
1566...a social worker,...

B. Category: Health professionals

Representative Statements:

1401...I think a nutritionist should be on there.
1402...Absolutely.
1557...Maybe a nurse.

V. ISSUE: WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN PRESENTING HUNGER EDUCATION

A. Category: Community advocates

Representative Statements:

2256...The resources that know what's going on.
2294...anti-hunger groups...
2297...Emergency Food Helpers group...
2299...Bread for the World that lobbies the US Congress on hunger issues and there is a local chapter of that.
2303...someone from the local shelter...

B. Category: Teachers

Representative Statements:

613...maybe some teachers who would, maybe, be better aware of what is going on in the community.
2247...the teachers, along with her health lessons...

C. Category: Health professionals

Representative Statements:

594...getting information out, would be through a nutrition educator...
2248...she can have the school nurse uh, talk about hunger,...
2252...so someone like you (nutrition graduate student)...
2280...call the health department...

VI. ISSUE: WHAT SHOULD BE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF HUNGER EDUCATION

A. Category: Goals

Representative Statements:

622...to try to reduce hunger.
2340...how to avoid being hungry,...

B. Category: Objectives

1. Subcategory: Nutrition education for children

Representative Statements:

375...the teaching of long-term thinking, rather than short-term thinking, and in planning for the future. Planning for next week, next month rather than just eating it now.

684..."You have five dollars, what would be the best way to spend it in a nutritional and sound way?"

757...getting them to realize how important it is to eat.

2354...putting a meal on the table,...

2367...they should be taught that they are primarily responsible for choosing healthy foods.

2. Subcategory: Hunger education for parents

Representative Statements:

1630...Priorities.

1632...There's a lot of coupons they can use.

1633...Yeah.

1634...Yeah.

1635...they need to learn how to use the paper to hunt their bargains...

1687...help them learn how to set a goal for themselves.

3. Subcategory: Definition of hunger

Representative Statements:

632...to make children aware of the difference between, I guess hunger and being hungry,...

655...understand the gradations between starvation and well being and the hungers in there.

658...I guess some of them maybe don't realize that they are hungry;...

2338...give the definition of hunger...

4. Subcategory: Hunger awareness -- hunger is a problem

Representative Statements:

354...they all need to be aware, you know even if they're not hungry, they need to be aware that there is a problem in

our world...

363...help the children know that, that this is a serious social problem,...

646...to make them more aware that there is hunger in the United States.

1319...promoted that there are children out there who are not as blessed as you, that don't have the things that you have,...

5. Subcategory: Awareness of food resources

Representative Statements:

261...Maybe the focus of the education would be on helping the children become aware of the resources that are available to their families and they probably are aware that there's hunger...

273...So it might be good that the children knew those societies or agencies that would be able to help. And what they could do and how could they help their parents be aware,...

304...we have the resources and the ability to eliminate it, and part of that has got to come from education from all levels is how to get the resources to all the people.

1428...make those people, what, aware of what's going on, aware of places to get food,...

VII. ISSUE: ACTIVITIES FOR HUNGER EDUCATION

A. Category: Hunger related activities

Representative Statements:

668...Thanksgiving baskets. That's an activity that makes them aware; they bring food and send it to other people.

671..."Empty Stocking Fund".

709...The day care and I think that uh, take their food to the salvation army, saw them going down there and carrying their boxes so I guess they could see, actually see the people that were there for their meals.

716...bring in resource people who are connected with these special food programs, to give them the information, talk to them and explain how it works, and where it is and where they get the food.

731...prepare those and actually to distribute them.

2156...if you had a, like a fair...

B. Category: Nutrition education-related activities

Representative Statements:

687...tasting parties...

2087...the younger ones are more open to learning about trying new foods too.

2405...Role playing like a model meal, role playing their part on how to set the table and that kind of thing.

2407...Game boards on putting together food,...

2408...trivia questions, and things like that about what makes, you know, like a well balanced meal, uh making recipes.

2414...we actually ate them, cut them up together, and ate them.

VIII. ISSUE: EVALUATING HUNGER AWARENESS

Representative Statements:

736...Survey, written, oral some kind of survey, pretest, post test, to me would be the easiest.

738...observations, you could just observe the children,...

799...kind of by observation, if they come in and say I'm hungry rather than my stomach hurts or I've got a headache...

1669...If they can successfully go out and buy groceries and make those meals for their family, you know.

1671...teach 'em and in six months check it again, can they do it on their own? Can they do it?

1684...Sitting in the classroom when the children come in well fed.

2427...could watch them for a week and watch their energy level,...

2431...see how they respond with a full stomach versus not giving them that breakfast the next morning.

2435...Have them pack their lunch, and see what they bring.

IX. ISSUE: SENSITIVITY IN APPROACHING CHILD AND PARENT

Representative Statements:

294...You know, and it could be approached too by talking to the children in terms of somebody else being hungry, or their friends might be hungry. If you have a friend who is not eating or you know that this friend may not have enough

food in the house, here are some ways that your friend's family can get some extra food. And do it so, that way, so that you're not focusing on a particular child or embarrassing that child.

1357...isn't it hard to approach a parent?

1360...what type of an approach are we as teachers suppose to do when we do see a child like this?

2172...to deal with it individually, it has to be real apparent.

2224...it would take a great deal of sensitivity to discuss it with the children without further stigmatizing the ones who have a problem,...

X ISSUE: WORKING THROUGH THE SCHOOL TO ADDRESS HUNGER

Representative Statements:

843...So apparently they do know, some do know that school is a place where people can come and get some help or find a way to get some help.

2169...if we suspect it, I know (the secretary), we send our social worker out or you know what do you think is going on here, you know its, you can spot it pretty quick.

VITA

Connie Frances McMichael was born in Birmingham, Alabama on December 16, 1965. She attended elementary school at Huffman Elementary (Birmingham) and graduated from Huffman High School in May, 1984. The following August she entered Jacksonville State University in Jacksonville, Alabama and on December 16, 1988 received her Bachelor of Science in Dietetics. She then worked at Holy Name of Jesus Medical Center in Gadsden, Alabama, and continued her career as a Nutrition Associate for the State of Alabama, WIC program in Etowah County (Gadsden, AL). In August of 1991 she started graduate school at The University of Tennessee and was awarded a Maternal and Child Health Traineeship in Public Health Nutrition. As partial fulfillment of her masters degree, she completed a block field experience in Fairbanks, Alaska where she worked with Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc. and the Athabascan Indians of Interior Alaska. In August, 1994 she graduated from The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, with a Master of Science in Nutrition and a minor in Public Health Nutrition.

She is continuing her career, with the State of Alabama Department of Health in Montgomery, Alabama, as the Area Nutrition Coordinator for Public Health Area V northern counties.