

Food Insecurity and Financial Wellness Workshop for Residents of Norwalk



Monarchs
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INTRODUCTION

Project Purpose & Description

The Food Insecurity and Financial Wellness workshop is a collaboration with LBS Financial and the Falcons Nest at Cerritos College to bring awareness of food insecurity, teach single-adult residents budgeting skills to take control of their finances, and inform residents of local resource agencies that provide a variety of food assistance. The workshop is designed to increase knowledge and skills to combat food insecurity among adult residents in Norwalk, CA.

Social Problem & Target Population

Food insecurity is a significant issue in Norwalk, CA, particularly in single-adult-led households with rising food costs causing financial hardship.

Scope of Social Problem

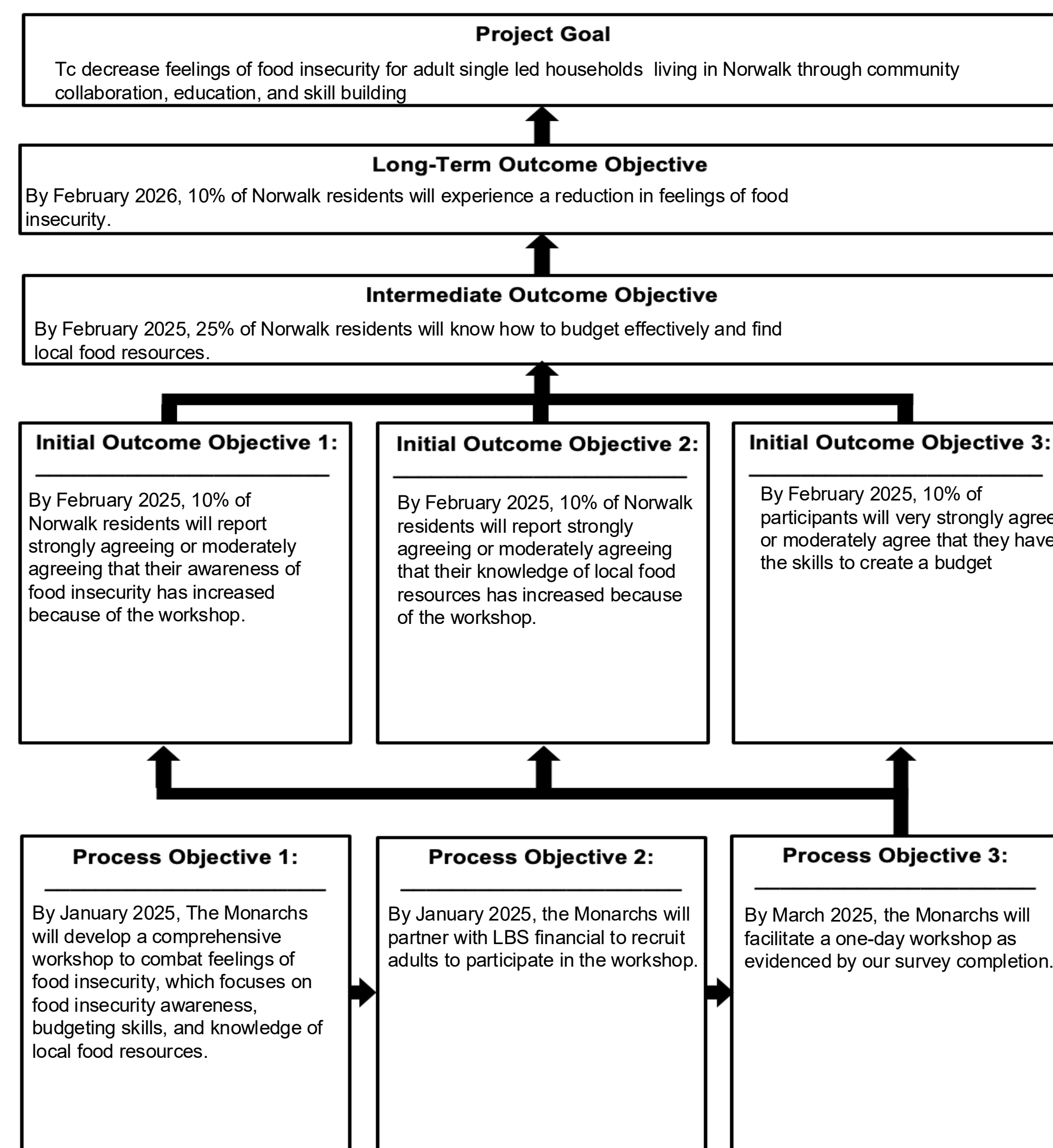
Through community observations, interviews with adult residents, and secondary data analysis it was identified that Norwalk is being affected by food insecurity.

- Food insecurity has remained at or about 12% nationally for the past decade (Gundersen & Ziliak, 2017)
- In 2023, food insecurity in Los Angeles County was at 30% (University of Southern California Dornsife Center for Economic and Social Research, 2023)
- 50.3%, of adults who experienced food insecurity between April to July 2020 had children in their households and 35.6% were single parents (Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, 2021)
- “Since our relocation to Norwalk over two years ago, I have become increasingly concerned about the challenges facing our community. There are several vacant lots where grocery stores and other food establishments have closed, which significantly impacts our local environment. Additionally, the rising prices of groceries and hygiene products are becoming increasingly burdensome, even for families with moderate incomes.” (Female, Asian & White, community member)

Alignment to Specialization

These outcomes demonstrate the workshop's alignment with the Adult and Aging and Integrated Health specialization, highlighting the significance of equipping adults with practical tools to address systemic barriers, enhance health outcomes, and promote economic resilience.

PROJECT OVERVIEW, OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES



METHODS

The Monarchs provided a Food Insecurity and Financial Wellness workshop to 11 participants over the age of 18 at Cerritos College. The Monarchs removed 4 surveys due to incomplete status and analyzed 7 eligible surveys. A 13-item pre- and post-survey questionnaire was developed to assess changes in food insecurity knowledge, budget knowledge, and knowledge of food insecurity resources. The questionnaire obtained demographic data on age and marital status to obtain accurate information on target population of single adult led households. Questions pertaining to Objectives 1, 2, and 3 utilized a 5-point Likert scale scoring. Data from the Qualtrics surveys was exported digitally to SPSS version 29.0.2.0 to analyze descriptive statistics.

RESULTS

Participant Characteristics

Table 1. Participant Characteristics (N=7)

Demographic Factors	N=7	Percentage (%)
Race or Ethnicity		
Black or African American	2	28.57
Hispanic or Latino	4	57.14
I prefer not to answer	1	14.28
Gender		
Male	2	28.57
Female	4	57.14
I prefer not to answer	1	14.28
Marital Status		
Single/Never Married	7	100

Demographic Factors (Continuous)	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Age	7	26.14	5.42	19	35

Descriptive, Interential, and/or Qualitative Results

Table 2. Post Survey Responses to Outcomes Questions

As a result of today's workshop...	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Disagree or Agree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I know the most common causes of food insecurity?	0% (N=0)	0% (N=0)	0% (N=0)	42.85% (N=3)	57.15% (N=4)
2. I know if I am eligible for CalFresh?	0% (N=0)	0% (N=0)	28.57% (N=2)	14.28% (N=1)	57.15% (N=4)
3. I have the skills to create a monthly financial budget?	0% (N=0)	0% (N=0)	0% (N=0)	28.57% (N=2)	71.43% (N=5)

Objective 1

A paired-samples t-test was calculated to compare the total mean score of the pre-test to the total mean score of the post-test. The total mean score of the pretest was 2.86 (sd = 1.069), and the total mean score of the post-test was 4.43 (sd = .535). A significant increase from pretest to post-test was found ($t(6) = -3.267, p < .001$), demonstrating an increase in knowledge/skills after implementing the intervention.

Objective 2

A paired-samples t-test was calculated to compare the total mean score of the pre-test to the total mean score of the post-test. The total mean score of the pretest was 2.86 (sd = 1.773), and the total mean score of the post-test was 4.29 (sd = .951). A significant increase from pretest to post-test was found ($t(6) = -2.705, p < .001$), demonstrating an increase in knowledge/skills after implementing the intervention.

Objective 3

A paired-samples t-test was calculated to compare the total mean score of the pre-test to the total mean score of the post-test. The total mean score of the pretest was 2.71 (sd = 1.496), and the total mean score of the post-test was 4.71 (sd = .488). A significant increase from pretest to post-test was found ($t(6) = -3.464, p < .001$), demonstrating an increase in knowledge/skills after implementing the intervention.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to share our sincere appreciation for Oscar Velasco, Jeanora Price Cerritos College Equity Center, and Pamela Sepulveda Falcons Nest.

CONCLUSION

Analysis of Findings

The Monarchs' Food Insecurity and Financial Wellness Workshop offered valuable education to adult participants, particularly those from single adult-led households. The workshop demonstrated encouraging improvements in knowledge related to budgeting, food insecurity, and available resources; however, there were a few limitations to note. First, the small sample size (n=7) restricted the generalizability of the findings. Second, the lack of long-term follow-up made it challenging to evaluate any sustained behavior change.

Limitations & Improvements

A few limitations should be noted. First, the small sample size (n=7) may limit the generalizability of the findings. Second, the absence of long-term follow-up makes it difficult to assess any sustained behavior change. Recommendations for improvement are to incorporate a follow-up assessment 4 to 6 weeks after the workshop to evaluate knowledge retention and behavioral changes related to budgeting and food resource utilization. This assessment could be conducted via email or phone and may involve a brief survey or check-in interview. This approach not only enhances data quality and outcome measurement but also reinforces learning and encourages sustained engagement, thereby supporting long-term impact and future program development.

Recommendations & Implications

Practice - Community workshops should continue to serve as an effective means of providing education on financial and food insecurity. To improve sustainability, future workshops should consider incorporating one-on-one follow-up sessions with credit union specialists or peer support groups to reinforce learning and promote long-term behavior change.

Policy - The findings underscore the importance of implementing local policies that incorporate financial wellness and food resource education into adult education programs. Additionally, providing funding for campus-based support such as the equity center can help institutionalize these initiatives and ensure continued access.

Research - More research with larger and more diverse groups, plus some long-term tracking, is really needed to evaluate the lasting effects. Also, adding qualitative interviews could give us great insights into what participants go through and the challenges they face, helping us create better and more sustainable solutions..

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)

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Contributions

Provided the financial literacy presentation during the workshop, including practical budgeting tips and financial tools
Contributed pizza for all participants

Offered resources Falcon's Nest, & Franco's Market, CalFresh outreach provided snacks

Hosted event space and technology

References

Gundersen, C., & Ziliak, J. P. (2017). Food Insecurity Research in the United States: Where We Have Been and Where We Need to Go. *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*, 40(1), 119–135. <https://doi.org/10.1093/aep/ppx058>

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