

# Nourishing All Kids: 1095 Coalition Spring Forum Report

March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016 / 2 – 4 PM / Concrete High School Commons

## Overview

The Nourishing All Kids Spring Forum was organized by the 1095 Skagit Coalition, who's **vision** is that all children in Skagit County will be fully nourished so that they will grow and prosper, and **mission** is to collaborate, coordinate, and communicate with families and community partners to ensure that every child in Skagit County eats 3 nutritious meals, 365 days of the year.

This forum served as a platform to increase awareness of the exciting and important food access programs underway in the county that target youth specifically, and also as a call to action to support and expand these efforts with time, talent and resources. Local residents were able to share information, best practice, and provide tools and inspiration for emerging programs committed to fully nourishing children.

It was decided by members of the 1095 Steering Committee that this forum would focus specifically on Skagit County Backpack Programs, Summer Meal Programs, and Farm to School Programs. These projects are fundamentally linked to the coalitions' mission and vision, as well *End Childhood Hunger*, *Washington's 10 -point strategic plan*, which served as a foundation of the August 2011 Childhood Hunger event that led to the 1095 initiative, and became the core of early galvanizing an active response of what can be done in Skagit. This plan includes the relevant goals:



1. All children eat a healthy, appealing breakfast and lunch at school.
2. Children and youth eat healthy meals in their communities throughout the summer.
3. Food banks and meal programs are readily available and provide nutritious food to those who need to supplement their families' food options.
4. Children and families have the knowledge and skills to make healthy food choices through effective nutrition education.

The forum was well attended, with 43 attendees from a cross-section of organizations, including school districts, social service agencies, farms, and hospitals. Some attendees had participated in previous 1095 Coalition forums, but the majority of them had not.

## Presentations

Each program category (Backpack, Summer Meal, Farm to School), was allotted 20 minutes to present on their projects. The forum was organized to allow for all presenters to present within the first hour,

have a brief break, then re-convene into self-selected round tables to discuss a program of choice further.

The first category to present was Backpack Programs, with Carrie Worra of **Food To Go** in Anacortes and Becky Schlaht of **Helping Hands Food Bank** in Burlington sharing the stage and their respective programs. Both had excellent PowerPoint presentations highlighting their programs, and shared photos of volunteers and community members served by their programs.

The second category to present was Summer Meal Programs. Jan Curry from **WSU Extension Skagit County** discussed various summer meal sites that the extension office services, and Marla Reed from the **Concrete School District** and Rachel Sacco from **United General District 304**, tag-teamed a presentation on Concrete's Summer Learning Adventure Camp. This camp is targeted primarily at students from low-income families, and provides meals five days a week for campers.

The third and final category, Farm to School, was also presented by both Marla Reed and Rachel Sacco. The Concrete School District received a USDA Farm to School Planning grant in 2013 which served as the



launching point for their Farm to School program, bringing fresh, local food directly to students in school via the cafeteria, field trips and classroom programming.

After a short break and light refreshments provided by Steering Committee member Jerry Shackette, forum attendees broke off into round table discussion based on their program interest. Here, participants were able to delve into a more in depth question-response with presenters and their unique programs.

### **Discussion, Evaluation and Next Steps**

Before adjourning the forum, the roundtables re-convened and were asked to share highlights discussed at the individual tables. From the joint Farm to Table/Summer Meals table, participants shared that they'd learned the largest barrier to a Farm to School program, as identified by Marla Reed, is budget. However, communities can get schools on board by introducing small changes first, such as a Harvest of the Month calendar, and keeping processing out of the cafeteria for as long as possible.

At the Backpack Program Table, participants shared the differences between programs out of food banks versus private organizations, such as the purchasing power of food banks. Participants noted an importance in teaming up and working together in order to maximize food available while minimizing budgets.

Upon conclusion of the forum, 28 attendees completed. Based on a scale of 1 [low] to 5 [high] the mean data collected revealed that participants gained the most knowledge and information from the Farm to School Program presentation (mean 4.71) and reported a definite increase in awareness of food access programs for children and families (mean 4.66). However, participants also rated the applicability of this

knowledge and information in their own work lowest of all categories (mean 4.11). These findings may indicate a necessity for a more comprehensive tool kit for programs discussed above versus simply sharing of information.

Attendees also indicated that their preferred method to stay engaged with communication updates was an email distribution list or Facebook page. The 1095 Coalition Steering Committee may take this into consideration when moving forward with the dissemination of coalition updates, meetings and information.

In conclusion, the forum successfully provided a community platform to share and collaborate on important Skagit County programs seeking to alleviate childhood hunger and improve nutrition and access for low-income residents. As Karen Parnell artfully noted in her inclusion of a quote by a South Bronx school teacher, “It is easier to raise healthy kids than fix broken men and women”, and so the 1095 Coalition will continue to strive to ensure that all children are eating three nutritious meals every day, 365 days of the year.

## Nourishing All Kids: 1095 Coalition Spring Forum Attendees

Last Name	First Name	Organization
Minnerath	Ashley	Cascadian Farms
Hansen	Christina	
Curry	Jan	WSU Ext
Goforth	Jenny	WSU/Finney Farm
Shackette	Jerry	Friendship House
Parnell	Karen	Community Action
Bell	Marjie	United General 304
Sacco	Rachel	United General 304
Schlaht	Rebecca	Helping Hands Food Bank
Mathis	Kari	Food To Go
Wora	Carrie	Food To Go
Harrington	Beverly	Burlington Rotary
Bitzenburg	Cole	Community Action Skagit
Baker	Tanna	SVC/CA
Rumpff	Naomi	Mount Baker Pres
Young	Annah	North Cascades Institute
Hidahl	Lyle	WRAEF
Jarmin	Susan	Concrete School District
Miller	Jason	Concrete Herald/ Mayor
Stannert	Kelsey	DSHS
Bachman	Andrea	Butterfly Effect
Bachtel	Shannon	WSU Skagit Ext
Bjorklund	Cynthia	Childs Creek Farm
Buller	Jodie	KSVR/ MV Farmer's Market
Ferency	Zoey	Helping Hands Food Bank
Hawkings	Barbara	Concrete School District
Henry	Brandy	Finney Farm
Joens	Linda	Concrete Elementary School
Metcalf	Mitch	United General 304
Mondello	Sue	Butterfly Effect
Morgareidge	Stephanie	United General 304
Muia	Amy	Butterfly Effect
Reed	Marla	Concrete School District
Seguin	Betty	
Tate	Tina	
Manzanera	Jorge	Butterfly Effect
Baronich	Emily	North Cascades Institute
Bauer	Desiree	Concrete School District
Watrous	Chaun	Concrete School District
Aiken	Tasha	Concrete School District
Weber	Jill	
Beals	Em	5bs Bakery
Bryant	Tessa	WSU Skagit Ext.

