

VISTA Assignment Description (VAD)

Title: Childhood Hunger Programs VISTA Member

Sponsoring Organization: Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin

Project Name: Second Harvest Foodbank Capacity Building

Project Number: 20VSNWI002

Project Period: 08/16/2020 - 11/06/2021

Site Name: Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin

Focus Area(s)

Primary: Healthy Futures

Secondary:

VISTA Assignment Objectives and Member Activities

Goal of the Overall VISTA Project: This VISTA project will develop long-term solutions to alleviating poverty through building the capacity of volunteers, particularly those from the communities we serve, to lead programs, build partnerships, expand reach, and serve as ambassadors for our anti-poverty work. VISTA members will build and strengthen volunteer-led programs that are essential in food bank and partner operations, food sourcing, rural and neighborhood-level food distribution, client and collective statewide voice, and public-facing ambassadorship. VISTA members will perform assessments, expand partnerships, develop materials, and pilot programs; their service will benefit over 100,000 food insecure community members across Southern Wisconsin.

Objective of the Assignment

Analyze best ways to build capacity of child food insecurity interventions in a 16-county area of southern Wisconsin. There are many school pantries, kids cafes, and backpack programs that provide school year and summer nutrition for kids, but there is little understanding of which programs are best suited for which partners. This VISTA member will help to assess the capacity, needs, and opportunities for utilizing various federal (Child Adult Care Food Program) and local resources at different sites.

Member Activity (04/01/2021 - 11/05/2021): Activity 1: Research. Working with the Food Bank's research analysis team, develop and implement a tool to assess capacity, limiting factors, growth opportunities, and impact of child hunger programs in the 16 county region. Survey or interview partners, and identify best practices used nationally. Assess what capacity is needed by partners and by the Food Bank to administer the Child Adult Care Food Program.

Member Activity (04/01/2021 - 11/05/2021): Activity 2: Develop Criteria. Based on the tool developed above, create criteria for program expansion, including a go/no-go tool for starting or expanding backpack, kids cafe, school pantries, and other program models, as informed by evidence-based best practices.

Member Activity (04/01/2021 - 11/05/2021): Activity 3: Expand Evaluation. Determine key metrics to be used by partners to assess the reach and impact of child hunger programs and work with Food Bank staff to develop evaluation frameworks and tools.

Objective of the Assignment

Improve the integration of health care programs and child nutrition. The VISTA member will identify opportunities to expand child nutrition opportunities and promote child nutrition resources, including age-appropriate nutrition education, programming. They will work to enhance integration of child nutrition into existing programs (such as diabetes & wellness programs) as well as clinical settings (food insecurity screenings at hospitals and clinics).

Member Activity (04/01/2021 - 11/05/2021): Activity 1: Community Assessment. Working with health care programs coordinator, map out (using a SWOT analysis or other tool) existing and potential partner sites for child nutrition interventions, aiming for a system-wide look at whether there are needs and opportunities. Assess the degree to which child nutrition interventions are integrated into each site or program.

Member Activity (04/01/2021 - 11/05/2021): Activity 2: Create Recommendations. Prioritize recommendations for further integration of child nutrition interventions among health care sites and within health care programming. Create a guide for what resources, support, or other additional capacity would be needed to implement these recommendations at each site. Gather materials that are relevant for each site.

Objective of the Assignment

Expand eligible persons understanding of and participation in FoodShare (Wisconsin's name for SNAP benefits). The Food Bank assists eligible community members in understanding the process for and signing up for FoodShare. This VISTA will support opportunities for increasing outreach that helps people know that they may be eligible for FoodShare and facilitates them through the sign up process.

Member Activity (04/01/2021 - 11/05/2021): Activity 1: Create Outreach Plan. After assessing the efficacy of existing FoodShare support efforts, create an outreach plan for how best to engage more eligible persons in signing up for FoodShare.