

EXTENSION SNAPSHOT

Fulton-Mason-Peoria-Tazewell Unit

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Illinois Extension

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Trauma & Food training held through Food Pantry Network

When working in the charitable food system, one often focuses on a very important goal – nourishing neighbors in need. However, the needs of guests may go beyond physical nourishment. Food Pantry Network-HOI provided professional development to pantry managers and volunteers to help them better understand how past and present traumas can affect people's health and wellness.

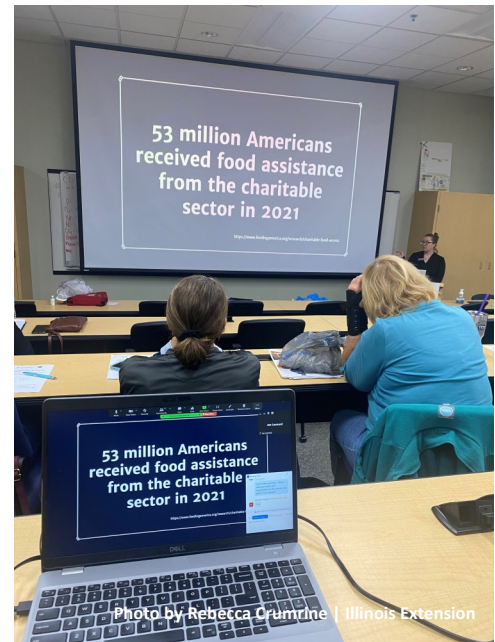
Locally, University of Illinois Extension SNAP-Education Educator Rebecca Crumrine helps provide support to charitable food partners and one important piece of this work is to co-lead Food Pantry Network—HOI (FPN). "The need to better understand the connection between trauma and food was discussed at an FPN advisory board meeting," explained Rebecca Crumrine. "FPN is a great avenue for this type of professional development for any organization working in the charitable food system."

A Trauma & Food training was presented by Illinois Extension SNAP-Education Educator Staci Coussens during the Food Pantry Network - HOI meeting held in October. The training helped to better define what trauma is, the effects of trauma, how to shift one's thinking, and how to apply the approach to programs.

"There is a great want and need in our community to recognize the ties between mental and physical wellness in our pantry guests," stated Rebecca Crumrine. "The relationship that people have with food & physical activity can be greatly impacted by their experiences. We wanted to help our partners better understand how to strengthen the work they do in the community by using a more trauma-informed lens."

The training was made available both in-person and via Zoom at Advanced Medical Treatment Center in Peoria. The group of 33 participants included pantry managers, food bank employees, pantry volunteers, health department employees, hospital employees, and school district employees. During the training, participants engaged in activities and shared current practices to help them make relevant connections with what they learned. Following the training one attendee shared with Rebecca their plans to review the information with their entire staff.

Training like these are one aspect of Rebecca Crumrine's role as SNAP-Ed educator. Rebecca collaborates with partners such as food pantries, schools, and health departments. Her work helps to impact families where they eat, learn, live, shop, and play so the healthier choice can become the easier choice to make.



Professional development offered through Food Pantry Network—HOI helped 33 participants better understand how past and present traumas can affect people's health and wellness. Participants were able to think about their approach to programming through a trauma-informed lens.

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