

Addressing Stigma & Creating Welcoming Spaces: A Discussion

The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts: 2021 Agency Conference

Facilitated by:

Morgan Ovitsky, Be Well Berkshires/Mass In Motion

Panelists:

Deacon John Leary, Blessed Sacrament Church,
Greenfield, MA

Jenny Schwartz, People's Pantry, Great Barrington, MA

Kirsten Levitt, Stone Soup Café, Greenfield, MA

Mary Lou Guarnera, Neighbors Helping Neighbors, South
Hadley, MA

Norms & Social Contracting

- All attendees will be muted while panelists are speaking
- Ask questions and clarifications using the chat feature
- During the Q & A portion, we will ask questions from the chat, and you will have the option to un-mute yourself
- Come on the learning journey with us
- Understand that your practices can always grow and change
- Feel free to steal ideas and make them yours

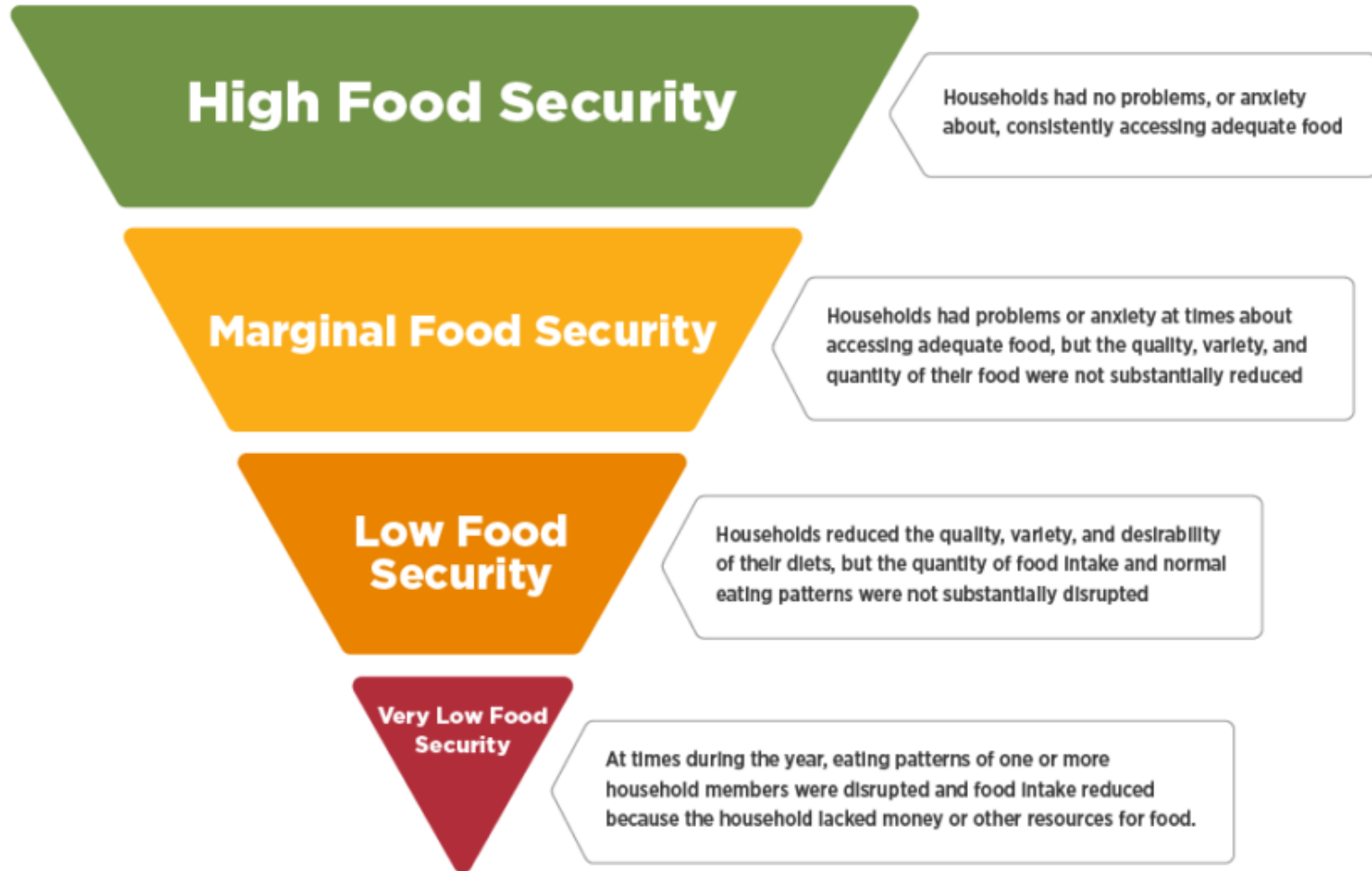
Learning Objectives

- We hope that this workshop will:
 - **CREATE** conversations within your organizations and with your community
 - **INSPIRE** you and your organization to make changes that destigmatize access to food and resources
 - **MOTIVATE** you to collaborate with other food/resource programs in order to create a greater change

What Is Food Insecurity?

- The State of being without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable and nutritious food
 - It affects those who live both above and below the poverty line
 - There is no single age or race of those facing food insecurity yet disproportionately affects BIPOC
 - Food insecurity is often not isolated and is a systemic issue that may go hand in hand with factors like poverty, disability, race, age and immigration status.
 - There is a wide range of food insecurity

Ranges of Food Insecurity



Anyone Can Become Food Insecure:

- “Poverty is fluid in the United States. At a moment’s notice, anyone can find themselves in a life-changing situation such as job loss, reduced wages, a disability diagnosis, divorce or natural disaster. It can take just one crisis to push a family over the edge: an injury that makes it impossible to work, a death in the family, a car breaking down or even the birth of a baby. All of these can be traumatic economic events for a family with little or no savings, putting many Americans at risk for food insecurity.”

Challenging the Stigma of Food Assistance, January 2017 Clancy Cash Harrison

What is Stigma?

➤ Definition of stigma

- 1a: a mark of shame or discredit : STAIN
- bore the stigma of cowardice
- 1b: plural usually stigmata : an identifying mark or characteristic
- specifically : a specific diagnostic sign of a disease

What does Stigma Look , Sound, Feel and Taste Like?

- ➔ For a 34 year old non english speaking Latinx mother?
- ➔ For a 75 year old man using a walker?
- ➔ For an 18 year old transgender college student?

Panelists

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