



Cultural Insights and Barriers to Learning in Nutrition Counseling

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Objectives of This Talk

01

Discuss cultural insights in nutrition counseling.

03

Explore solutions through community-based interventions.

02

Address barriers in the Black community regarding food assistance, cooking habits, and dietary changes.



01

Cultural Pride & Nutrition Assistance (WIC/SNAP)

Challenge: Many in the Black community feel stigma using food assistance programs.



- ❖ Acknowledge the cultural emphasis on self-reliance.
- ❖ Emphasize that seeking assistance is a proactive step toward health and well-being.
- ❖ Highlight the confidentiality and discretion of these programs.
- ❖ Note that in grocery stores, most people are focused on their own tasks and often do not notice others using assistance benefits.
 - “If someone does notice, so what? Health comes first.”
- ★ **Solution:** Normalize discussions about food assistance and educate on benefits.

02

Pride in Traditional Cooking & Taste Preferences



Challenge: Traditional recipes are cherished, and there may be resistance to modifying them for health reasons.



- ❖ Validate the significance of traditional foods in cultural identity.
 - ❖ Suggest small, gradual modifications to enhance nutritional value without compromising taste.
 - ❖ Provide examples:
 - Use smoked turkey instead of ham hocks in greens.
 - Bake or grill proteins instead of frying.
 - Incorporate herbs and spices to reduce salt usage.
- ★ **Solution:** Frame changes as enhancements rather than restrictions.



03

Effective Communication in Nutrition Counseling

Challenge: Building trust is essential when counseling and making clients feel heard.



- ❖ Use open-ended questions to explore dietary habits and preferences:
 - "Can you share some of your favorite family recipes?"
 - "What challenges do you face when making dietary changes?"
- ❖ Practice active listening and empathy.
- ❖ Collaborate to set realistic, culturally appropriate goals.
- ❖ Tailoring communication to individual cultural backgrounds enhances effectiveness in dietetics.
- ★ **Solution:** Create a safe space where clients feel comfortable discussing concerns.

04

Role of Community Institutions in Supporting Dietary Changes



Challenge: Traditional recipes are cherished, and there may be resistance to modifying them for health reasons.



- ❖ **Churches:** Leverage their central role to host nutrition workshops or healthy cooking classes.
- ❖ **Schools:** Implement culturally inclusive nutrition education to influence children's and families' eating habits.
- ❖ **Community Centers:** Organize events celebrating healthier versions of traditional dishes.
- ❖ **Farmers Markets:** Improve access to fresh produce; initiatives like accepting SNAP benefits can enhance accessibility.
- ★ **Solution:** Leverage existing community networks for lasting change.

Healthy Corner Store Initiatives

Location: Atlanta, Georgia

- A community-based participatory approach was used to improve access to healthy foods in African American communities.
- Collaborations with local corner stores led to the introduction of healthier food options.
- Customers showed willingness to purchase healthier items, especially when: Freshness was prioritized.
- Positive relationships with store owners were established.



Rollins, L., Carey, T., Proeller, A., Adams, M. A., Hooker, M., Lyn, R., Taylor, O., Holden, K., & Henry Akintobi, T. (2021). Community-Based Participatory Approach to Increase African Americans' Access to Healthy Foods in Atlanta, GA. *Journal of Community Health*, 46(1), 41–50. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10900-020-00840-w> 11

Partnerships with Community Institutions

Location: Cook County, Illinois

- A local health department collaborated with community institutions to increase access to healthy foods.
- Partnerships included: Local governments, Nonprofits, and Faith-based organizations
- Corner store recruitment helped introduce more healthful food options.
- Result: Increased availability of healthy foods across multiple municipalities, highlighting the vital role of community institutions.



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RESOURCES

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THANKS!

Do you have any
questions?

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