Building Capacity for Advocacy for Local Food Systems Change: An Ethnographic Study Documenting the Process of Change in South Carolina Communities

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BUILDING CAPACITY FOR ADVOCACY FOR LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS CHANGE: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY DOCUMENTING THE PROCESS OF CHANGE IN SOUTH CAROLINA COMMUNITIES

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in
Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior
Norman J. Arnold School of Public Health
University of South Carolina
2015

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to dedicate this work first and foremost to my committee members, who have guided me greatly throughout this process while allowing me the intellectual freedom to pursue innovative research ideas. Particularly, many thanks to Dr. Sonya Jones for her mentorship and guidance over the last four years and for allowing me to work with such a great team on the COPASCities project. I also want to thank the research community groups that opened up their minds and meetings to me to allow me to do this work. Last but not least, I want to thank my family and friends for surrounding me with support, love, and understanding throughout this process.
Abstract

The Guide to Community Preventive Services currently does not have sufficient evidence to recommend any nutrition strategies for obesity prevention. Nonetheless, food systems changes are recommended for childhood obesity prevention by the C.D.C., U.S.D.A., and many thought-leading organizations. Creating healthy food communities will require physical and social environmental changes. Community-based groups need to build their capacity to frame community health issues as physical and social environmental issues. This research partnered with community-based groups to build their capacity for advocacy by using media framing research and strategic communications training. Specifically we: 1) conducted a media content analysis about food systems, childhood obesity and the link between them; 2) increased community-based groups’ understanding of collective action framing and the social determinants of health through planning an issues campaign; and 3) provided research, tools, facilitation, and technical assistance to community based groups as they planned issue campaigns. In our first manuscript, we described the process of increasing the advocacy capacity of a community-based group using the tenets of collective action framing theory; described a media content analysis and how we applied to practice through communications trainings; and finally, how one community group grappled with re-framing food systems change issues. In our second manuscript, we described the process of raising the consciousness of a food system advocacy group, how we facilitated the definition of group values, and tied their values to social justice and the advocacy work.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Center .................................................. Center for Research on Nutrition and Health Disparities
COPAS-Cities ............................................. Childhood Obesity Prevention in South Carolina Communities
CDC .......................................................... Center for Disease Control and Prevention
G.M.O. .......................................................... Genetically Modified Organism
M.F.A .......................................................... Midlands Food Alliance
P.A.R .......................................................... Participatory Action Research
R.W.J. Foundation ........................................... Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
S.C .......................................................... South Carolina
S.D.O.H .......................................................... Social Determinants of Health
S.N.A.P ....................................................... Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
T.O.H .......................................................... The Organic Helpers
U.S.D.A .......................................................... United State Department of Agriculture
U.S.C .......................................................... University of South Carolina
W.H.O .......................................................... World Health Organization
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The Guide to Community Preventive Services currently does not have sufficient evidence to recommend any nutrition strategies for childhood obesity prevention (Guide to Community Preventive Services, 2014). The World Health Organization (W.H.O.), Center for Disease Control and Prevention (C.D.C.), and leaders in public health research recommend focusing on policy, systems and environmental changes that support healthy weight in childhood as the most promising public health approach to childhood obesity prevention (Brennan, Castro, Brownson, Claus & Orleans, 2011; Koplan, Liverman & Kraak, 2005; Marmot, Friel, Bell, Houweling & Taylor, 2008; Swinburn, 2009; Wilkinson & Marmot, 2011; People, 2011).

To date, community-based trials have been effective at reducing the prevalence of obesity. Each of these trials has in two common strategies: community engagement and capacity-building (Economos et al. 2007; Sanigorski, Bell & Kremer, Cuttler & Swinburn, 2008; Taylor et al., 2007). None of the trials described what capacity building or engagement strategies were used in detail. In this study, we provided rich detail about the process of engaging those groups within communities at greatest risk of childhood obesity to build their capacity to re-frame the debate around childhood obesity.

The research described in this dissertation is part of a study (Childhood Obesity Prevention in South Carolina Communities (COPASCities)) that seeks to build the
capacity of community leaders to create food systems change. COPASCities has worked in partnership with communities to identify capacity building needs, promote community organizing as the approach for food systems change, and document the process of change through ethnography. In this dissertation, I described the communications needs and capacity building efforts of community partners using collective action framing theory. To create systems-level changes, effective community advocates for childhood obesity prevention need to be able to assign responsibility for obesity on a food system that promotes high-energy consumption, lack of corporate and community responsibility for food accessibility and affordability, and social policies that discourage the production of low-energy dense foods in regional and local distribution systems (Gollust, Lantz, & Ubel, 2009; Freudenberg, Bradley, & Serrano, 2009; Dorfman, Wallack & Woodruff, 2003; Kim & Willis, 2007).

The intended impact of the research was to build the capacity of two community-based groups to advocate, through social action, for healthier and more sustainable foods that will be more accessible and affordable, leading to healthier communities. By using collective action framing, community-based groups can learn to communicate what the problem is, why it matters, and build consensus about the solution in concrete terms that will create the change that is needed (Dorfman, 2003; Lakoff, 2008). The research’s central hypothesis was if the advocacy capacity of community-based groups is built, community stakeholders would be able to re-frame the debates surrounding childhood obesity as physical and social environmental issues, not individual lifestyle issues; and become better advocates for the changes needed to their local food system. The research’s objectives and activities are:
1. Evaluate the current South Carolina (S.C.) media environment and public opinion about food systems and childhood obesity and provide framing reports to community-based groups

1.1. Complete a media coding analysis of newspapers, television outlets, and advocacy groups, including social media outlets, as well as a literature review about best practices and recommendations

1.2. Develop a collective action and social determinants of health framing report deliverable to community-based groups to guide the messaging in advocacy efforts

2. Catalyze and describe the process through which communities re-frame the debate from the individual level to the physical and social environmental changes needed to their local food system

2.1 Build capacity to advocate for food systems changes using the framing research report, tools, training, and facilitation throughout the advocacy campaign planning process
CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

Epidemiological Background

Childhood obesity prevalence rates have grown. In the United States, 17% of children ages 2-19 are obese (Ogden, Carroll, Kit & Flegal, 2014). In S.C., 15.2% of children ages 2-5 are overweight and 12.8% are obese (SCYRBS, 2011). Of the S.C. adolescents in grades 9-12, 15% were overweight and 16.7% were obese (SCYRBS, 2011). The cost of medical expenses related to obesity in S.C. was $1.06 billion in 2003 (Finkelstein, 2004). An estimated $1.2 billion dollars was spent due to obesity in S.C. in 2009, with a projected increase to $5.3 billion dollars in 2018. If the rising trajectory of obesity prevalence could be stopped, S.C. could save $858 per adult in 2018, a total of $3 billion (Finkelstein, 2004). Life expectancies for the current generation of children are shorter than their parents if the obesity rates continue as researched (Olshansky et al., 2005). Obese children are more likely to become obese adults (Serdula et al., 1993) and having an obese parent increases the risk of children being overweight or obese (Garn et al. 1976; Whitaker, Wright, Pepe, Seidel & Dietz, 1997).

Some populations have higher obesity rates than others. Obesity rates increased 10% for American children between the ages of 10- to 17-years-old between 2003 to 2007. However, the obesity rates for lower-income children increased by 23% during the same time period, giving lower-income children more than two times higher odds of
being obese than children from higher income households. (Singh, Siahpush & Kogan, 2010). Residents of rural areas and lower socioeconomic statuses are more likely to be obese (Patterson, Moore, Probst & Shinogle, 2004; Baker, Schootman, Barnidge & Kelly, 2006). In addition to lower-income people having the same individual-level challenges around obesity as higher-income people (e.g. diet and sedentary behavior), lower-income people also have additional physical and social environmental challenges to being healthy. These include an unhealthy food environment (Zenk, 2005; Beaulac, 2009); a lack of safe, walkable neighborhoods and opportunities to be active (Sallis & Glanz, 2009); cycles of food deprivation and overeating due to lack of resources to buy food (Olson, Bove & Miller, 2007); and high, chronic levels of stress (Block, He & Zaslavsky, Block, Ding & Ayanian, 2009).

*The Current Food System*

The community food system has an impact on obesity rates and may help explain the disparities between populations (Sallis & Glanz, 2006). For example, food deserts are in poorer areas, where there is little access to healthy foods (Beaulac, Kristjansson, & Cummins, 2009; Cummins, 2007; Wrigley, 2002; Zenk, Schulz, Israel, James, Bao & Wilson, 2005). Food deserts are a combination of physical and social environmental factors in lower-income neighborhoods that affect residents’ access to healthy foods and fresh fruits and vegetables, such as a lack of grocery stores and an abundance of convenience stores and fast food restaurants (Sallis & Glanz, 2006; Morland, Wing, Diez Roux & Poole, 2005; Beaulac et al., 2009; Block, & Kouba, 2006). Effects of a food desert are further compounded by access issues such as lack of transportation to grocery stores (Macintyre, 2007).
The R.W.J. Foundation, the C.D.C., and other leading health organizations and advocacy groups recommend food systems changes as a promising childhood obesity prevention strategy (Sobush et al., et al., 2009; National Policy, 2011; Action for Healthy Kids, 2011; R.W.J. Foundation, 2011; Marmot et al., 2010). These organizations support a list of recommended food systems strategies (Brennan et al., 2011) including establishing more farmers’ markets, increasing the number of grocery stores in food deserts that provide healthy, affordable foods, (Story, Kaphingst, Robinson-O'Brien & Glanz, 2007) and regulations on food marketing to children and the food industry (Swinburn et al., 2011).

Major food system changes and inequalities have occurred over time due to technological advances, economic and social changes, and food and agricultural policies (Story et al., 2007). Technological advances and new farming practices to eradicate hunger have increased the abundance of food and may have more of an impact on obesity rates than subsidies (Rickard, Okrent, & Alston, 2013). Additionally, social changes such as lower wages and less time to cook, has created a food system based on cheap price and high convenience (Story, et al. 2007). Nutrition policies implemented after World War II had the goals of increasing production and efficiently of the food system. However, there are currently few subsidies to produce fruits and vegetables that are nutrient-dense, with most subsidies earmarked for soybean and corn crops, used to produce caloric-dense food (Story et al., 2007). Reforms for agriculture policies are to increase access to local food production through federally-funded programs, increase healthy food options to those on food assistance programs, and funding to encourage farmers to produce healthier,
diversified crops (Grandi & Franck, 2012), while reducing the prices through subsidizing healthier food (Wendt & Todd, 2011).

While these nutrition policies were intended to provide income support for farmers and fight hunger, it has created a food system where food production, processing, and marketing is consolidated. Four companies in the United States process 85% of beef and one company controls 40% of the milk supply (Food & Water Watch, 2010). In 2001, 95% of U.S. food is processed and marketed by agribusiness (Hendrickson, Heffernan, W. D., Howard, & Heffernan, J. B., 2001). In the United States, 10 food companies control over half of all food sales, with 75% of sales being processed foods (Stuckle & Nestle, 2012). Global capitalism has created a society where food production and consumption has sped up and space has been compressed, so that distance of space masks the centralization of control of the food system (Hendrickson & Heffernan, 2002).

We define these few large actors who control production, processing, and marketing in the food system as “Big Food.” These companies and corporate interests gained power and have been able to maintain it through a variety of strategies. Big Food includes global food and beverage companies, seed companies, and grocery store chains that control global food chains (Stuckle & Nestle, 2012). Currently Big Food controls the various stages of the food system. Big Food favors a food system that is globally-based and is run by a few corporate interests that are looking at profit, not the well-being of society (Hendrickson & Heffernan, 2002). Big Food has gained power by shortening the time between production and consumption. “This reorganization of time and space indicates a great deal of power on the part of just a few actors that are able to benefit from the restructuring of the food system,” (Hendrickson & Heffernan, 2002). The line
between public/private entities has been blurred, with fewer people involved in the food system decision making process. Thus Big Food maintains power within the global food system (Hendrickson & Heffernan, 2002).

The current food system controlled by Big Food has consequences. Only 2% of the current U.S. food system represents food that is defined as healthy, fair, green, and affordable according to food system advocacy groups (Khanna, 2012). Advocates for food system changes say: “It is almost impossible for the typical American to get a meal that doesn’t involve real threats to health and to the environment, as well as labor exploitation,” (Khanna, 2012). In addition to the health-related consequences of the current food system, other consequences include economic inequalities such as fair trade and wages, poor working conditions, forced migration (Maloni & Brown, 2006; Martin, 1991); ecological catastrophe including manure disposal, soil and water damage, deforestation (Fox, 1997); and alienation and disconnection between the between people, food and farmers (Wells, Gradwell & Yoder, 1999). The global food system is failing to nourish people, with 1 billion hungry and 2 billion overweight, reflecting both sides of malnutrition (Patel, 2008). Figure 2.1 below illustrates the consequences of our current food system (Khanna, 2012).

“Underlying both is a common factor: food systems are not driven to deliver optimal human diets but to maximize profits. For people living in poverty, this means either exclusion from development (and consequent food insecurity) or eating low-cost, highly processed foods lacking in nutrition and rich in sugar, salt, and saturated fats (and consequent overweight and obesity),” (Stuckler & Nestle, 2012).
Big Food’s Power within the Food System

Big Food has power within the food system by being a consolidated, concentrated entity, with a very narrow focus on profits (Henrickson & Heffernan, 2002, Moschini & Lapan, 1997, Lesser, 1999); privatizing safety standards (Henson & Reardon, 2005, Opara & Mazaud, 2001, Regattieri, Gamberi, & Manzini, 2007); ensuring influence over governmental entities (Stuckler & Nestle, 2012, Henrickson & Heffernan, 2002 Brownell & Warner, 2009); engineering food to be addictive (Moss, 2013), as well as launching successful marketing to children (Harris, Pomeranz, Lobstein & Brownell, 2009).

As Big Food becomes more concentrated and consolidated, access to capital and energy is only given a few companies whose interest is maximizing profits, making it a vertical monopoly in for each stage in the food system (Henrickson & Heffernan, 2002).
Big Food’s most recent growth is concentrated in developing countries, where people’s diets are switching from traditional foods to processed foods (Stuckler & Nestle 2012). Research and developments in agriculture have greatly advanced the field, but intellectual property rights, such as seed patents, have contributed to further concentrating the food system into the hands of a few corporate entities (Moschini & Lapan, 1997). Intellectual property rights, for example, has allowed for Monsanto to control a vast share of the seed market (Lesser, 1999).

Private food safety and quality standards that favor industrialized standards over local standards have emerged as the dominant form of food system regulation. This is because of weakness in the public food safety regulatory institutions (Henson & Reardon, 2005). Since food systems are more global, the blanket privatization of standards favors industrialized standards over local or regional standards in developing countries and has the potential to further marginalize these markets (Henson & Reardon, 2005). As the food system becomes more global, it becomes less transparent, creating problems with traceability (Opara & Mazaud, 2001). Little is known about the origins of food. As people become more concerned about food safety, animal welfare, and the ecological and sustainability of their food system, the global food system chains fail to make food origin transparent (Opara, & Mazaud, 2001). This is a safety concern when a food-borne illness breaks out. It is hard to trace the origin because rarely there are samples of the original food left to test and it is difficult to know at what stage of processing was the food contaminated (Regattieri, Gamberi, & Manzini, 2007).

Big Food has an influence on governments and non-governmental entities setting health policies (Stuckler & Nestle, 2012). Big Food maintains control over regulators in
several ways. Economic power has translated into political power (Henrickson & Heffernan, 2002). Currently, the food industry is promoting “self-regulation” in an effort to curb efforts for governmental regulation. For example, the American Beverage Association voluntarily reduced sales of traditional carbonated soft drinks in schools in 2006. However, sports drinks were not part of this regulation and had surpassed traditional soft drink sales in growth, making this “self-regulation” favorable to the companies (Brownell & Warner, 2009). The food industry continues to control the regulators by making large donations to politicians; hiring lobbying firms to block governmental regulation at the federal, state, and local levels; encouraging relationships and appointments within governmental agencies, such as the Federal Food and Drug Administration; funding consumer groups and professional organizations; and pressuring United States officials who are involved with international agencies (i.e. World Health Organization) to push industry-friendly policies (Brownell & Warner, 2009).

Big Food has also engineered food to make people hungrier and more addicted to processed food, as well as pre-packaged for convenience. For more than 30 years, Big Food companies have hired food engineers to make processed food to have “product optimization” or a bliss point, where the complex formulas encourage overconsumption, can make people hungrier, and addictive (Moss, 2013). Additionally, Big Food companies continue to fight over the “stomach share” of America and have targeted factors in their distribution, packaging, and marketing related to food choice, such as demographics, time pressures, convenience food, and income (Freshlogic, 2010). Food is more convenient, readily available, with larger portion sizes and more meals eaten away
from home (Story et al., 2007); therefore, encouraging more consumption of pre-packaged food processed by Big Food companies.

Part of the tactics for increasing Big Food’s stomach share has been through food marketing that targets children. Food marketing has a significant impact on children, with channels expanding into markets that children are highly exposed to, such as video games, the internet, and in product placements (Harris, Pomeranz, Lobstein & Brownell, 2009). Children in the United States view about 5,500 food advertising messages a year for high-calorie, low-nutrient products (Harris, Pomeranz, Lobstein & Brownell, 2009). Currently, the argument against regulating food marketing toward children is personal freedom, a free market with protected speech, along with an industry promise to self-regulate (Harris, Pomeranz, Lobstein & Brownell, 2009).

Re-localizing the Food System

A local food system is not inherently better than global food systems, but can be when it promotes ecological sustainability for farmers and consumers, social justice, better nutrition, food security, and freshness and quality (Born & Purcell, 2006; Hinrichs, 2003). Localizing food systems can represent discrete socio-economic, cultural and environmental shifts promoting social justice. Local food systems that are economically viable to local farmers and consumers and that are ecologically sound can promote social equity and democracy for all community members (Feenstra, 1997). However, these directions are amplified when the interests of the producer and consumer are further melded together (Hinrichs, 2003). Supporting local food systems promotes sustainability, food security, local economies, and the livelihood of farmers (Bowler, 2002; Martinez,
A local food system can promote diversity, can be culturally nourishing while being communicative and participatory (Kloppenburg, Lezberg, De Master, Stevenson & Hendrickson, 2007). A local food system can promote “...the environmental, social, spiritual, and economic well-being of the community,” (Feenstra, 1997). Macias (2008) found that local agricultural production that emphasized social inclusion had an effect on the equitable access to healthy food, with more knowledge gained about the natural world, concluding that local food systems that promote social inclusion could help reduce access disparities between classes.

In order to work toward a healthy, sustainable local food system, it must be defined first. The Healthy, Sustainable Food System Collaboration is comprised of a variety of organizations, such as Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, American Nurses Association, American Planning Association, and American Public Health Association. The collaborative defines a healthy, sustainable local food system as having the following principles: health promoting in that it supports the health of all farmers, workers, and eaters; sustainable in that it regenerates natural resources and does not compromise the ability to meet future food and nutrition needs; resilient in that thrives as it faces challenges; diverse in size and scale, culture, and choice; fair and just conditions for farmers, workers and eaters with equitable access to healthy foods; economically balanced from the local to the global scales for all stakeholders; is transparent in that knowledge about the food system is known and it empowers farmers, workers, and eaters to actively participate in decision making (W.K. Kellogg Foundation Healthy, Sustainable Food System Collaboration, 2010). Trusting relationships within the local food system are also important. These relationships take time to build and these
opportunities must occur within the contexts of daily lives, where people have time restrictions, since the current global food system is based upon speeding up time (Hendrickson & Heffernan, 2002).

“To succeed, these movements must organize where the dominant system is vulnerable – by making ecologically sound decisions, by relying on time and management rather than capital, and by building authentic trusting relationships that are embedded in community,” (Hendrickson & Heffernan, 2002).

Some communities are organizing and finding solutions to food system issues. One solution is creating a local community food system, with closer connections between producers, processors, and consumers. Consumers are educated about local food system issues such as seasonality, to make that connection between space and time that has been lost in the global food system and to encourage a safer, more culturally-appropriate, nutritionally-adequate, more sustainable, and just food system for all (Hamm & Bellows, 2003; Allen, 1999; Hendrickson & Heffernan, 2002). Another solution is to include food systems consideration in urban planning to ensure improved interconnectedness between food systems and land use, housing, transportation, environment, and the economy (Pothukuchi & Kaufman, 2000). Some communities are also adopting food sovereignty policies. This policy framework is guided by seven principles: food is a basic human right, genuine farming reform, protecting natural resources, reorganizing the food trade, social peace, ending globalized hunger, and democratic control (Pimbert, 2008). Other cities, such as San Francisco, are passing local ordinances regulating food marketing to children, such banning toys in Happy Meals (Martinez, 2010).
Strategies to Build Communities’ Capacity to Change the Food System

Several strategies to build communities’ capacity to change the food system were identified through an in-depth literature review. Strategies included: 1. using community engagement and capacity building, 2. applying framing theory, specifically collective action framing, to messaging during issue campaigns for change, 3. various strategic communications recommendations, and 4. incorporating values in messaging. These strategies were applied to practice.

Community engagement and capacity-building strategies may be a sustainable, long-term approach to food system changes as a childhood obesity prevention strategy (Jones, 2011). Three studies that used community engagement and capacity-building strategies reduced the prevalence of obesity in their communities (Jones, 2011; Economos et al., 2007; Sanigorski et al., 2008; Taylor et al., 2007). Currently, evidence of food systems strategies as a childhood obesity prevention strategy is limited. For more impactful results, childhood obesity researchers should adopt a practice-based evidence model with research taking place in community-based settings in the local context (McDonald & Viehbeck, 2007; Brownson, Chriqui, & Stamatakis, 2009; Jones, 2011; Swinburn, 2009; Marmot, 2004).

Applying framing theory to practice, specifically collective action framing, may be a way to create more impactful messages during issue campaigns to create change. Framing theory describes the process by which people develop conceptualization or re-orientation of an issue, with the premise that an issue can be viewed from a variety of perspectives (Chong & Druckman, 2007a). Framing can inform public health advocacy efforts and is
used in tobacco reform, as evidenced by campaigns promoting smoke-free environments (Schwartz & Brownell, 2007; Adler & Stewart, 2009; Flegal et al., 2012). Community-based groups must communicate what the problem is, why it matters, and build consensus about the solution in concrete terms that will create the change that is needed (Dorfman, 2003; Lakoff, 2008). Using collective action framing is a way to do this. Local community-based issue campaigns are recommended due to more manageable scope of activities; (Freudenberg et al., 2009) therefore, framing analyses that are local or regional may be more effective because they can reflect cultural or contextual particularities unique to a region.

Furthermore, other strategic communications recommendations from the literature includes framing the food system as an environmental agent that causes childhood obesity (Schwartz & Brownell, 2009; Alder & Stewart, 2009), educating people about the food system in concrete terms, not just an abstract system, in order to lead to campaigns for policy and program changes (Feenstra, 1997), and communicating values during issue campaigns (Lakoff, 2008). Using a two-sided approach for messaging by acknowledging individual responsibility while highlighting the physical and social factors that make eating healthy difficult, for example, in a food desert, may be an effective frame (Niederdeppe, Bu, Borah, Kindig & Robert, 2008). Also, highlighting local, grassroots food programs and empowering parents to advocate for environmental changes to protect children may also be effective strategies (Schwartz & Brownell, 2007). Community-based groups need to be able to communicate core values behind the physical and social environmental changes needed for a healthier food system (Lakoff, 2006; Lakoff, 2008; McDonald & Viehbeck, 2007; Young, 2001; Collins & Porras, 1998).
The purpose of this research was to apply these recommendations to practice by conducting a media content analysis about food systems, childhood obesity and the link between them; increasing community-based groups’ understanding of collective action framing and the social determinants of health through planning an advocacy campaign; and providing research, tools, facilitation, and technical assistance to community-based groups as they implement and evaluate advocacy plans (Marmot & Bell, 2010; Freudenberg et al., 2009; Dorfman, 2003; Kim & Willis, 2007; Schwartz & Brownell, 2007). This research sought to advance agriculturally- and nutritionally-based community-based groups’ advocacy skills. Using a multidisciplinary approach, this research developed citizen engagement that promoted the improvement of the local food system, community vitality, and public well-being. The link between social justice, social determinants of health, and public health advocacy was explored.

Public Health Advocacy and Linking Social Justice and Social Determinants of Health

Avoidable health inequalities exist because of the circumstances into which people are born, live, work, grow, and age. These circumstances are created by unjust systems shaped by political, social, and economic forces (Marmot et al., 2008). Social determinants of health are measured by social gradients in health within countries and health outcomes of the poor that are caused by an unequal distribution of power, income, goods, and services. This unequal distribution is visible and manifests through: access or lack thereof to quality, affordable health care; poor living conditions, such as unclean water; education inequalities; and neighborhood safety. “This unequal distribution of health-damaging experiences is not in any sense a ‘natural’ phenomenon, but is the result
of a toxic combination of poor social policies and programmers, unfair economic
arrangements, and bad politics,” (Marmot et al., 2008).

The W.H.O. makes recommendations to address the health equity gap. These are:
1. improve the quality and conditions of daily life, 2. tackle the unequal distribution of
power, money, and resources through political empowerment, 3 include the
disenfranchised in advocacy efforts, 4. measure the problems that produce the health
equity gap, then evaluate the effectiveness of the actions used to address problems, 5.
expand the knowledge base, and 6. develop a workforce trained in the social determinants
of health, while raising awareness of the social determinants of health (Marmot, 2008).
Through this research work, we aimed to improve people’s quality of life by: 1. building
the capacity of and empowering historically-disenfranchised people to advocate for food
systems change, 2. increase access to quality, affordable, local, environmentally-
sustainable agricultural systems that provides healthy food, 3. understand advocacy
efforts that demand the community-, organizational-, and policy-level changes to increase
food access.

In order for the public health field to advance to physical and social
environmental solutions, public health advocates must redefine issues in order to reveal
and challenge power structures through collective action (Beauchamp, 1976). Market
justice promotes the dominant paradigm of the powerful, including governmental
entities and corporation interests. The market is an institution of the dominant paradigm
of the powerful and reflects the interests of the powerful (Beauchamp, 1976). Its
precepts need to be challenged in order for power to be shifted so that the community-
level, organizational-level, and policy-level changes are made that impact the social determinants of health (Beauchamp, 1976).

“The central problems remain the injustice of a market ethic that unfairly protects majorities and powerful interests from their fair share of the burdens of prevention, and of convincing the public that the task of protecting the public’s health lies categorically beyond the norms of market-justice. This means that the function of each different redefinition of a specific problem must be to raise the common and recurrent issue of justice by exposing the aggressive and powerful structures implicated in all instances of preventable death and disability, and further to point to the necessity for collective measures to confront and resist these structures,” (Beauchamp, 1976, p. 523).

Market justice and social justice shape public opinion and dialogue (Beauchamp, 1976). Market justice often promotes individual and personal responsibility and self-determination (Dorfman et al., 2005). Social justice is the core component in advocating for the community-, organizational-, and policy-level changes needed to impact the social determinants of health. Social justice values must be at the core of public opinion to garner the support needed to make policy-level changes by counteracting market justice influences (Dorfman et al., 2005). For example, the United Nations has declared that having a right to food is a human right.

“For the Special Rapporteur, the right to food is the right to have regular, permanent and unrestricted access, either directly or by means of financial purchases, to quantitatively and qualitatively adequate and sufficient food corresponding to the cultural traditions of the people to which the consumer belongs, and which ensure a physical and mental, individual and collective, fulfilling and dignified life free of fear,” (United Nations Human Rights, 2014).

Using framing strategies, public health advocacy groups can re-frame the debate around food system change so that it better resonates with their values, especially social
justice values. Communities advocating for food system change can alter the conversation from market justice to social justice. For example, the successful Kansas City Food Circle challenged the logic of industrialization, making it known that the current food system was unhealthy, unjust, unethical, and economically unviable for communities, and taking away their right to know where their food originated. Therefore, they challenged the market justice paradigm and turned the food system into a social justice issue (Hendrickson & Heffernan, 2002).

Framing

A frame organizes reality, provides meaning to events and political issues, and impacts opinion formation (Chong & Druckman, 2007a). Framing is often defined in relation to a specific issue or event and can provide insight into media biases and cultural shifts (Chong & Druckman, 2007a). Politicians use framing to emphasize certain aspects of a policy or issue while making a connection to certain values that will resonate with their constituents (Chong & Druckman, 2007a). Framing research studies how the communication of elites (e.g. politicians, media outlets, advocates) influences publics’ frames (Chong & Druckman, 2007a). For example, it was important to understand how politicians were framing the movement to implement more stringent seat belt laws in the 1980s, as this was communicated to the media, which influenced public opinion. If public health advocates wanted to move public opinion, they had to move the public opinion from the personal freedom frame to a safety issue to protect children, thus moving public opinion to support the laws (Schmid, Pratt & Howze, 1995).
Framing efforts work through meditational and moderational processes. Meditational processes work only when a frame is stored in memory and is available and retrievable. When a frame can be applied consciously or unconsciously, it increases the effect on opinion according to the strength and relevance of the memory (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). For example, if public health advocates could get the public to remember the protection of children frame, a value held widely by the public through raising awareness about how many children’s’ deaths by car accidents occurred the prior year, the protection of children frame could be stored in the memory and retrieved easily. A frame is considered effective when individuals are motivated to weigh the competing considerations (Druckman & Holmes, 2004) and consciously evaluate the opposing considerations (Stapel, Koomen & Zeelenberg 1998). Therefore, a frame can make new beliefs available on an issue, accessible, and strong in individuals’ evaluations (Chong & Druckman, 2007a).

Moderators such as values limit framing effects (Chong & Druckman, 2007a). Conflicting research about knowledge level and framing effects stem from a failure to control for prior attitudes, which result from knowledge. Strength of the frame, such as credible sources, frames that evoke culturally-accepted values and norms, are also moderating factors (Chong & Druckman, 2007a; Druckman, 2001). When a frame is new, opposing sides may try to evoke the core values of the target audience (Sniderman & Theriault, 2004) For example, the personal freedom value is historically strong in America, as this frame provided a counter-frame to implementing laws and policies in the seat belt, drunk driving, and tobacco social movements (Schmid et al., 1995). Raising awareness and knowledge level is important, but understanding the key values behind
resistance to social movements, such as the personal freedom value, and evoking other core values in counter-framing, such as protecting children, is a key element in influencing media coverage and politicians, as well as swaying public opinion (Lakoff, 2006; Lakoff, 2008; McDonald & Viehbeck, 2007; Young, 2001).

*What is Collective Action Framing?*

The social movement field is a multidisciplinary approach to understanding why and how collective action occurs in society. The social movement field has drawn from the framing literature and collective action framing organizes thinking about how social change happens (Benford, 2000). Collective action framing is an element studied in social movements and can be a catalyst for understanding different perspectives and arguments for and against the changes for which community-based groups advocate (Benford, 2000). Collective action framing is an integral component in understanding social movements. Collective action frames are action-oriented toward solutions and involve an interactive, iterative process (Snow & Benford, 1988; Gamson, 1992). Collective action frames can shape and change cultural definitions of beliefs to be more inclusive of minority beliefs, allowing for emerging frames to further advance a social movement.

Collective action frames lead to mobilization because they define an issue, build consensus around an issue, assign blame for the issue (e.g. diagnostic framing or causes), defines what actions need to take place ( e.g. prognostic framing or solutions) with a call to action (e.g. motivational framing) (Benford & Snow, 2000; Klandermans, 1984).
When diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational framing combine, successful social movements are more likely.

Diagnostic framing allows for assignment of blame and provides targets for change. Diagnostic framing includes the injustice frame as it defines the actions of authority as unjust (Fireman, Gamson, Rytina & Taylor 1977). In Kim & Willis’ (2007) nationwide media content analysis of obesity, diagnostic framing or causes included individual-level and societal-level causes of obesity. At the individual level, these causes included lifestyle, behaviors, and genetic conditions, such as poor adult role models, and diet and sedentary behavior. Societal level causes or responsibility for obesity prevention included references to the food industry, social stratification (e.g. socioeconomic factors, racism), schools, and community organization or disorganization, such as an automobile-oriented society (e.g., drive-thru stores and restaurants, big-box stores), unsafe communities (crime, traffic, accident), and limited opportunities for outdoor activities.

Prognostic framing involves communicating strategies or plans to resolve the issue, building consensus and mobilizing action (Benford & Snow, 2000). The prognostic frame is heavily reliant on the diagnostic frame and can be a source of contention within a social movement (Benford & Snow, 2000). Differences in opinions on solutions among movement stakeholders can lead to the communication of different solutions (Benford & Snow, 2000). Solutions to these individual-level and societal-level causes of obesity were coded as well during the media content analysis (Kim & Willis, 2007).
Lastly, motivational framing engages collective action and an agreed upon vocabulary of severity and urgency emerges from the social movement (Benford, 1993). Motivational framing is conceptually aligned with providing the audience with mobilizing information so that they can get involved with the social movement. Mobilizing information, “…presents the audience with a means to act on existing ideas and motivations, (McKeever, 2013). In a news story, motivational information might include names, phone numbers, websites, times and dates of meetings, titles of documents, and more, websites, times and date (McKeever, 2013). Mobilizing information is a key component in empowering the audience and encouraging engagement (McKeever, 2013; Lemert, 1984).

Specifically related to childhood obesity and food systems change, motivational framing can lead to talking about the consequences of childhood obesity, such as a higher morbidity and mortality rate and rising economic and health costs to provide a sense of urgency. However, consequences of programs and policies, such as giving up personal freedom when policies such as soda serving size campaigns emerge as well and provide possible counter-frames those community-based groups may encounter.

Understanding strong frames and how collective action framing can combat entrenched, dominant, oppositional frames is vital to a successful social movement. Collective action frames are often in competition with counter-frames produced or maintained by movement opposition, with most of these frames being strong and entrenched in the dominant ideology. Since strong frames are entrenched with dominant ideology, they are able to align with the public’s view of the world and use the public’s fears and prejudices (Chong & Druckman, 2007b). Strong frames are not necessarily,
“...intellectually or morally superior arguments. They can be built around exaggerations...Strong frames often rest on symbols...links to partisanship and ideology, and may be effective in shaping opinions through heuristics rather than direct information about...policy” (Chong & Druckman, 2007b). Collective action frames may introduce cognitive dissonance into people’s understanding of the world to combat these dominant, entrenched frames.

The credibility of the frame is a factor in how much it resonates, impacting community-based advocacy groups’ ability to message effectively. Frame consistency, empirical creditability, or the fit between events in society and the frame, and the creditability of the activists communicating the social movement frames, all factor into the credibility of the frame. Salience is a factor in mobilization (Benford & Snow, 2000). A frame will be salient to an audience if the values and beliefs in the frame line up with the values and beliefs of the audience. If the frames are consistent with the everyday life experiences of the audience, it will have experiential commensurability (Benford & Snow, 2000). Also, the stories highlighted by the frames that are culturally resonating or have a high narrative fidelity will have a higher salience with target audiences (Snow & Benford, 1988).

Collective action frames have processes and strategies that can be used to make a frame more resonant with the audience. Collective action frames are generated through articulation and amplification. Reality and events need to be highlighted or amplified and then unified and articulated by social movement activists (Benford & Snow, 2000). Amplification is particularly useful when the target audience is exceedingly different from social movement beneficiaries and for stigmatized movements that
contradict the dominant paradigm values (Benford & Snow, 2000). Then, collective action frames can be aligned with other frames through the frame alignment process. Frame bridging, frame amplification, frame extension, and frame transformation are four frame alignment processes (Benford & Snow, 2000). Frame extension involves extending the benefits of the movement beyond the primary interests and targets of the movement to involve other beneficiaries in society. The concepts presented in the table below (Table 2.1) guided the training and message planning tool designed for the community-based groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2.1 Framing Process and Strategies</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Meditational processes</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Moderating processes</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Diagnostic framing or Causes</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Prognostic framing or Solutions</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Motivational Framing</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Frame Resonance</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Frame salience</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Frame articulation and amplification</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Frame alignment</strong></td>
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How Can We Frame Childhood Obesity and the Food System to Create Change?

Public health advocates and community-based groups need to be able to: 1. communicate the core values and beliefs behind the change they are asking for in order to be able to combat strong frames embedded in the dominant paradigm, 2. develop the framing skills needed to bring awareness to the problem and solution that resonate within their contexts, 3. use strategic communications recommendations to re-frame the argument, 4. make the story a landscape view that provides an in-depth understanding of the physical and social environmental links between food systems and obesity, 5. use community organizing and collective action framing to become a powerful, unified voice, and 6. become trusted sources of information in partnership with the media.

Values are a key component in effective advocacy work, but are often missing (Dorfman, 2003; Lakoff, 2008). Values must be discussed, agreed upon by the community-based groups and communicated through advocacy work. Community-based groups may be expressing minority values in their communities during issue campaigns. Community-based groups may need to use external framing of these values, meaning the public portrayal of the issue and values must resonate with external targets (Shiffman & Smith, 2007). Values of fairness, responsibility, equality, and equity should be communicated (R.W.J. Foundation, 2011). One recommendation is to re-frame according to one’s personal or social identity (Slater, 2006). Understanding the defining the values of the audience is also a key component to successfully re-framing an issue.

Next, developing the framing skills needed to bring awareness to the problem and solution that resonate within the community-based group contexts and anticipating oppositional frame, with the ability to re-frame this argument, is important. After values
are communicated, the problem should be clearly defined, along with explanation on why it matters (Dorfman, 2003; Lakoff, 2008). Next, details about policy and strategy for achieving change in concrete terms is communicated (Dorfman, 2003; Lakoff, 2008).

Framing the food system as an environmental agent that causes childhood obesity (Schwartz & Brownell, 2009; Alder & Stewart, 2009) and violates basic human rights may provide a powerful argument for food systems change. When the issue becomes that of risk (involuntary, universal and environmental and knowingly created risk), especially when created by the food industry, the more likely there will be public support physical and social environmental interventions (Lawrence, 2004). Educating people about the food system, then developing messaging blaming the food system in concrete terms, as an environmental causal agent to childhood obesity, could lead to campaigns for policy and program changes.

Another strategic communication recommendation is the “healthy environment by default” frame when advocating for food system change. This frame could also be an effective counter-frame to the personal freedom frame evoked when advocating for food system change. This frame communicates that individuals are responsible for engaging in health-promoting behavior, but should only be held accountable when they have the adequate resources to do so (Alder & Stewart, 2009). Using this two-sided approach for messaging by acknowledging individual responsibility while highlighting the physical and social factors that make eating healthy difficult, for example in a food desert, may be an effective strategy (Niederdeppe, Bu, Borah, Kindig & Robert, 2008). Other suggestions included highlighting local, grassroots food programs and empowering
parents to advocate for environmental changes to protect children (Schwartz & Brownell, 2007).

Community-based groups should try to make the story a landscape view that provides an in-depth understanding of the physical and social environmental links between food systems and obesity, not simply a portrait view that keeps the blame at the individual level (Dorfman, 2003). Episodic and thematic framing may be a way to conceptualize the landscape and portrait view. Episodic framing is event-oriented and can take the form of a case study. It can take on a more concrete form, sometimes through a narrative about a person or event (Iyengar, 1994) and could be conceptually aligned with the portrait view. Thematic framing is a more general and abstract frame of an issue focusing on outcomes or conditions and could be conceptually aligned with the landscape view. For example, political debates on legislation surrounding the Farm Bill would be thematic. Interviewing a farmer about how the changes in the Farm Bill will affect him is episodic.

Reframing messages in a more thematic way could help move the picture from the portrait to the landscape view. News coverage is rarely only episodic or thematic and has elements of both. However, television news, because of restraints such as segment time, television is more often episodic in nature (Iyengar, 1994). Viewers were more likely to attribute societal level responsibility to an issue when it is presented more as thematic, and more likely to attribute individual-level responsibility to an issue when episodic (Iyengar, 1994, Iyengar 2005). This is because the problems or issues presented in the episodic story are seen as personal problems and not correlated with social,
political, and economic issues (Kim & Willis, 2007). Therefore, it is important for advocates to message in the thematic frame.

Using community organizing techniques, along with collective action framing, may resolve some of this discrepancy in the theoretical underpinnings of media advocacy. One criticism of media advocacy is that it theoretically assumes that politicians will be engaged and interested in the needs of a marginalized, disenfranchised group. It also assumes that these groups are already organized and have a unified voice (Gibson, 2010). Organizing and creating a unified voice through community organizing could build the advocacy capacity of community groups.

As community-based groups become a unified voice and sources of information for the media, they will influence the frame by highlighting or withholding information about the issue and become sponsors of a certain frame (Zoch & Molleda, 2006). A community group must create a storyline around the issue (Zoch & Molleda, 2006) and can use elements of collective action in order to effectively communicate. Ways to become sources of information and to influence the media’s framing of an issue is to know about media routines, the media organization, and timing while building interpersonal relationships; understand message construction and news values; and providing good research while grasping the current state of the field by knowing stakeholders and publics (Zoch & Molleda, 2006).
CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

Preliminary Studies

Previous work and coursework completed in the student’s master’s program at the University of Georgia in the Grady School of Journalism and Mass Communications added to her experience for this dissertation. In working with the Institute on Human Development and Disability, the student applied her communication and advocacy skills. The Children’s Freedom Initiative partnered with the Georgia Department of Family and Children’s Services Region Five Adoptions Unit to increase adoptions of children with disabilities. Through a needs assessment, formative research, epidemiological data, and theoretical support, a three-pronged marketing plan was developed for the unit. The student also started developing a website for distant learning training activities for foster parents and social workers.

While earning her Ph.D. at the University of South Carolina (U.S.C.) the student took coursework that gave her the skills necessary to complete this dissertation. Currently, the student is a graduate assistant on the COPASCities project. This dissertation built upon work completed for this project. COPASCities is a 5-year U.S.D.A. project that seeks to: 1. build the capacity of community leaders to change the food system in S.C. and 2. better understand how leaders change food systems while developing a practice-based model for the U.S.D.A. This dissertation built upon work
completed for the COPASCities project, including a formative media coding analysis from January 2013-April 2014. The student has also modeled community organizing techniques to community partners through door knocking, implementing visioning training, and food summit organizing.

Additionally, the student convened a multidisciplinary committee with expertise in the social work, journalism and communications, and public health fields. Dr. Pippin Whitaker is an associate professor in the College of Social Work at U.S.C. specializing in empowering populations while bringing an equity and human rights perspective to her work. Dr. Brooke Weberling-McKeever is an associate professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication specializing in advocacy and health communications while mobilizing publics and increasing stakeholder input. Dr. Jim Thrasher is an associate professor in the Arnold School of Public Health. His work focuses on media and policy interventions in the areas of tobacco and obesity. Both Drs. Weberling-McKeever and Thrasher have experience in conducting framing analysis and applying them to practice.

Dr. Sonya Jones is an associate professor in the Arnold School of Public Health, director for the Center for Research on Nutrition and Health Disparities, and chair of the student’s dissertation committee. She specializes in community-engaged research with food insecure populations, nutrition policy analysis, and nutrition-related health disparities.
**Conceptual framework**

This research study used several theories and concepts. The socioecological perspective (McLeroy et al., Bibeau, Steckler & Glanz, 1988), social determinants of health (Marmot et al., 2008), and social stratification theory (Solar & Irwin, 2007) guided the conceptual framework. Pedagogy of the Oppressed and Participatory Action Research (P.A.R) methods, as well as community organizing techniques, informed tools, trainings, and facilitation to encourage social action and a challenge to power.

Socioecological perspective describes how multiple levels of society influence health behavior (McLeroy et al., 1988) and captures the structural factors influencing the policy and systems environment of global food systems. For example, the socioecological perspective can inform how fresh, local fruits and vegetable availability in an area, as well as community norms about preparing and cooking food, can impact eating patterns and behaviors (Winch, 2012).

The social determinants of health are the complex, overlapping social and economic structures, including physical and social environmental factors that are responsible for most health inequities (Marmot et al., 2008). Examples of physical environmental factors of the food system include the availability and accessibility of fresh, affordable, healthy food (e.g. food deserts) and the sustainability of a food system (Martinez, 2012). An example of a social environmental factor of the food system is cultural or community norms, such as shopping at direct-to-consumer retail locations of small, local farmers or joining a community supported agriculture organization (Martinez, 2012). The goal of changing the physical and social environments of food
systems leads to an overall more equitable food system, including increased availability, affordability, and accessibility, leading to better eating habits and reduced prevalence of childhood obesity.

Social stratification theory explains power differentials between groups (Solar & Irwin, 2007). Health disparities are a result of systematic power differentials among historically-disenfranchised groups (i.e. working poor, Blacks, poor single mothers) based upon the simultaneous intersection of gender, race, class, ability, and sexuality (Moss, 2002; Inhorn & Whittle, 2001; Weber, 2006). Health disparities are often thought of as social justice issues, as everyone does not have the same access to a policy and systems environment that is healthy (Solar & Irwin, 2007). Public health advocates interested in targeting health disparities should advocate for better policy and systems environments, which address issues of oppression resulting from social stratification by gender, race, class, ability and sexuality; not simply individual-level interventions (Becker, 1986; Nyswander, 1967).

The conceptual framework, adapted in part from the Commission of the Social Determinants of Health framework, contends that structural determinants of health disparities within the global food system are the result of the interplay between socioecological context and social stratification. These structural mechanisms are rooted in institutions and generate, reinforce, and define individual socioeconomic position within hierarchies of power and access to resources (Solar & Irwin, 2007). The social determinants of the local food systems are a part of the structural determinants of health of the global food system at the community level within the socioecological context. However, we are working with community-based groups to change their local food
system, therefore, the activities and tools developed as part of this research are geared toward changing the social determinants of health of the local food system.

The Pedagogy of the Oppressed states that human encounters reflect the domination of the oppressed through gender, race, class, religious beliefs, political affiliation, national origin, age, and size (Torres, 2007). Marginalized people are further oppressed through a culture of silence as a direct effect of domination, where they are submerged into their reality, without being able to achieve critical awareness or response (Freire, 2000).

The Pedagogy of the Oppressed asks people to expand their perception of the world and illuminate the causes and consequences of human suffering. Transformative social justice takes place when people examine the systems- and organizational-level, rules, regulations, and their own traditions and customs that reflect human interest such as wealth, power, and prestige, in order to understand how inequality is systematically replicated (Torres, 2007). This requires the examination of both individual and social conscious and developing critical consciousness. Therefore, transformative social justice occurs when hierarchies and inequalities are explored through in-depth social analysis. This includes understanding the past to understand the current conditions and social behavior (Torres, 2007).

P.A.R. methods draw from the Pedagogy of the Oppressed in that it incorporates Freire’s praxis (Baum, MacDougall & Smith, 2006). This praxis combines reflection and action together and through this process, critical consciousness is realized. This process,
along with transformative power, is central to P.A.R. methods (Baum, MacDougall & Smith, 2006).

By using community organizing techniques to engage marginalized populations within the food system, we are ensuring that the local food system changes that occur are transparent and inclusive for all. This not only has implications on food access, but the fairness and justice of the local food system. The process of critical consciousness and breaking the culture of silence is a catalyst for transformative social justice of the food system. Developing critical consciousness may help the oppressed see other systems that are reproducing inequality and they may develop skills needed to target these systems. Transparency will further reveal the disconnect people have with their food and the consequences of their local food system.

By using message training, incorporating critical consciousness through P.A.R. methods and community organizing techniques, social justice values may emerge through advocacy efforts. Activities and trainings incorporate conscious raising techniques, such as photovoice (Carlson, Engebretson, & Chamberlain, 2006). Raising critical consciousness affects the way community members understand the interaction between socioecological systems and social stratification, creating their physical and social environments. This gives a better understanding of context and place and encourages community members to engage in transformative social change in food systems, as well as with other social issues.

This research used community organizing tools that incorporates tactics to raise critical consciousness as well as encourage social action, incorporating praxis. For
example, asking SHOWeD questions during a photovoice project encourages communities to create their own narrative about social issues and identify solutions for local food system change (Minkler, Wallerstein, & Wilson, 1997). SHOWeD stands for the following questions: 1. what do you see here?, 2. what is really happening here?, 3. how does this relate to our lives?, 4. why does this situation exist?, 5. what can we do about it? (Wang & Burris, 1997).

This research also used community organizing tools that incorporated tactics to challenge power. However, understanding how power is operating in their context, as well as the costs of challenging power, was explored in the ethnographic questions. There is a substantial power differential between community-based groups and Big Food corporations. However, the groups can navigate this power differential by believing in their own agency to make changes at the community level (Henrickson & Heffernan, 2012). For example, the Kansas City Food Circle believed that by making the food system more just and democratic at a local level and understanding the weaknesses of the current food system, they had opportunities to change and challenge the current food system at a local level (Henrickson & Heffernan, 2012).

Changing the environment on the policy and systems environment level revealed and challenged power inequalities (Beauchamp, 1976; Solar & Irwin, 2007) and required using the collective action framework to re-define issues, as well as mobilizing communities (Marmot & Bell, 2010; Freudenberg et al., 2009; Dorfman, 2003). Altering relations to power includes building strong organizations, changing laws and regulations, and electing people who support the cause (Bobo, Kendall & Max, 2001). The community gained a sense of ownership over the issues by identifying the community
needs (Minkler, 1997). Nyswander (1956) called this starting where the people are at. Through this process, communities determine what change is needed in the community through goals and find their power to act. However, barriers to challenging power may be political, pragmatic (time, logistics), it may feel mandated (i.e. perceived expectations to appease funders), or there may be a lack of continuity between issues (Ozer; Newlan, Douglas & Hubbard, 2013). This was documented in the field notes.

Social action elements used are grassroots-based efforts, with a focus on direct action and organizing the disenfranchised, marginalized populations (Minkler, 1997). Reframing obesity prevention as a social issue with social solutions from a socially-responsible community is a key component of effective collective action. Raising the advocacy knowledge and skills as well as raising the motivation to advocate, raised the community-based groups’ advocacy capacity to challenge power and change physical and social environments.

Community-based groups are currently using community organizing tools, such as the strategy chart from the Midwest Academy, as part of the COPASCities project. These are tools that the community-based groups are familiar with using, but also include challenging power, an element missing from most communication planning tools available.

Population and Setting

Two community-based groups were selected and receive funding for a community organizer as part of the COPASCities project. The Organic Helpers (T.O.H.) of Chester, S.C. is a community-based group made of volunteers from the community.
that are interested in projects such as increasing lower-income participants' access to fresh produce. This group is mainly made up of African-Americans that have grown up in Chester that are economically disadvantaged. Chester is a small Southern, former textile town, 30 minutes from any major interstate, about 30 minutes from Charlotte, North Carolina in the northern part of the state.

The COPASCities research team, along with the part-time community organizer, used community organizing techniques such as door knocking, to bring interested people from the community together to engage them in food systems change. T.O.H. were formed shortly thereafter. The COPASCities research team in partnership with the group, piloted photovoice and other activities to raise critical consciousness about the local food system. The group participated in an issue campaign last year regarding a community kitchen at the Farmer’s Market, demanding accountability and inclusion from the Chester City Council, who now runs the project.

The next community-based group is a food policy council, Midlands Food Alliance (M.F.A.), emerging from the Midlands Food Collaborative in Columbia, S.C. COPASCities’ efforts have also been to engage farmers. The part-time community organizer conducted surveys with farmers during the Summer of 2014 to see what their issues are and how to engage them in the local food hub. M.F.A. members also emerged from these efforts. M.F.A. is a food policy council interested in creating and advocating for a local food hub, while educating the public about local food. The group is newly-formed and working on their first project, mapping the local food system, to understand strengths and challenges and to create a network of local food producers, processors, distributors, and retailers.
Raising community-based groups’ advocacy capacity to challenge power and change PSE

- Raising knowledge and skills in capacity advocacy
- Raising motivation to advocate
- Raising critical consciousness

Activities and Tools to advocate for the physical and social environmental changes

More equitable food system

Better Eating

Reduce childhood obesity

Social Determinants of Health of the Local Food System

Physical Environment
Availability and accessibility of fresh, affordable, healthy food

Social Environment
Changing cultural norms; demanding social justice values are reflected in local food system

Structural Determinants of Health Inequalities of the Food System

Socioecological Context
Global Current Food System and Big Food
Societal
Community
Organizational
Interpersonal
Individual

Figure 3.1 Conceptual Framework
*Project Sequencing, Methods, and Analysis*

Aim 1:

1. Evaluate the current S.C. media environment and public opinion about food systems and childhood obesity and provide framing reports to community-based groups

1.1 Complete a media coding analysis of newspapers, television outlets, and advocacy groups, including social media outlets, as well as a literature review about best practices and recommendations

1.2 Develop a collective action and social determinants of health framing report deliverable to community-based groups to guide the messaging in advocacy efforts.

A media coding analysis of newspapers, television outlets, governmental entities, and advocacy groups was conducted. The media coding analysis timeline was from February 2011-June 2014 using the search term “childhood obesity” in S.C. newspapers in Chester, Columbia, and Aiken using the search engine Newsbank. Duplicates and unrelated articles were discarded. National wire stories were coded for tracking purposes. Additionally, the local Columbia television affiliates including ABC, NBC, and CBS were added, and included the video stories and accompanying print stories from the websites when available, as transcripts of local newscasts were unavailable.
Other sources for the media coding analysis included the websites, press releases, and Facebook sites of the following to analyze advocacy group and governmental sources for their framing of childhood obesity: Eat Smart Move More South Carolina; S.C. Medical Association Childhood Obesity Task Force; S.C. Department of Health and Environment Control; Let’s Move. These groups were picked for their prominence and involvement with childhood obesity in S.C. and were considered a targeted list (Jeffrey, 2013). These sources were analyzed from February 2011-June 2014 and included the same code book for analysis mentioned in detail in the next paragraph. Comments left on the website (when available) and comments on Facebook will were analyzed using the same codebook (Jeffrey, 2013). Additionally, the number of “likes” and friends of the page were recorded (Jeffrey, 2013).

For Aim 1, the coding scheme was based on prior research about framing strategies for health and advocacy (R.W.J. Foundation, 2010; Kim & Willis, 2007; Lawrence, 2004) and was more quantitative in nature because these a priori codes were established and provided a picture of how the local media is framing obesity. Collective action framing recommends that advocates assign blame (diagnostic), provide concrete, well-defined solutions (prognostic), and mobilize action with specific instruction on how to act (motivational) (Snow & Benford, 2000; Snow & Benford, 1988; Gamson, 1992).

The hired coder and I coded for passages that reference an individual’s blame (or diagnostic) in causing obesity, including any reference to genetic conditions, lifestyles and behaviors, such as diets and physical activity. Parenting behavior and practices were also included in the coding of individually-focused frames. Likewise, we coded any recommendations for preventing or controlling childhood obesity using the same
individual solutions (or prognostic). For instance, an article might frame childhood obesity around the profile of an individual child that plays hours of video games and might interview an expert who recommends less than two-hours per day of screen time. We coded this article for both the individually-focused cause and individually-focused solution to childhood obesity.

We coded passages that articulated collective societal responsibility (or diagnostic) for causing obesity, including references to the food industry, socioeconomic factors, community organization and disorganization, such as automobile-oriented society (e.g., drive-thru stores and restaurants, big-box stores), unsafe communities (crime, traffic, accident), and limited opportunities for outdoor activity. Likewise coded for solutions identified at the societal level (or prognostic). These individual- and societal-level definitions were based upon Kim’s established definitions and methods (2007). Coders used a paper code sheet for each article, where the presence of individual level causes and solutions and societal level causes and solutions were coded as a “0” for not present and “1” for present. These were entered into an excel spreadsheet. Please see Appendix A for the code book. Percentages of how often a code appears were used to give an overview of collective action framing and level (individual vs. societal). Chi-square tests were run to better understand relationships between codes and levels.

A more qualitative analysis was used to analyze frames not previously captured in childhood obesity media coding analyses to give a more in-depth analysis of how the food system was being covered. Consensus coding between the two coders established a more concrete definition of the frames. Frames that were qualitatively coded were personal narratives about childhood obesity and the consequences of childhood obesity
(motivational), which included the rise in diseases such as Type II diabetes, early mortality, and economic consequences of obesity such as medical costs. The consequences frame also included a separate definition about the consequences of childhood obesity prevention policies and programs, such as the stigmatizing of obese children and portion sizes of drinks. Capturing this frame provided information about possible arguments against intervening at the policy and systems environment level (Lawrence, 2004).

We used qualitative methods to understand how to take a story from the individual level to the physical and social environmental level by understanding narratives and how the social determinants of health and consequences were being covered by the media. Narratives evoke emotion and are often more powerful than statistics and research to elicit public responses; and could assist in message recall and comprehension (Niederdeppe et al., 2008). Introducing social determinants of health in narratives in concrete terms could move the conversation to involuntary risk (Niederdeppe et al., 2008).

Based upon the previous formative media content analysis, it was difficult to find search terms that garnered results about the food system. However, after reviewing articles pulled from the formative media content analysis, and reviewing material about the consequences of the food system, as well as the different phases of the food system and the principles of a healthy food system, search terms were added. The following terms were added: Big Food; Monsanto; Farm Bill; power and agriculture; power and food; disconnect between food and people; childhood obesity and food system; labor and agriculture; monopoly and agriculture; Genetically Modified Organism (G.M.O.),
organic, local food, pesticides and agriculture; groundwater and agriculture; carbon footprint and agriculture; hunger and agriculture; privatizing safety standards and food; addictive foods; food marketing to children; lobbyists and agriculture; healthy food, fair food, green food, and affordable food; health promoting and agriculture; sustainable agriculture; resilient agriculture; diverse agriculture; just agriculture; fair agriculture; economically balanced agriculture; production of food; processing of food; consumption of food; distribution of food; retailing of food; and marketing of food.

Citizenship versus consumer responsibility frames were explored. The citizenship frame was a call to action change the food system or to help prevent childhood obesity at the societal level. It also was a deeper call for change for the good of the community, country, and future generations. Consumer responsibility was the act of shopping or choosing certain products that help prevent childhood obesity (i.e. parents shopping for healthier food for their children) or products that support a healthy food system (i.e. responsibility-sourced, organic, non-G.M.O., local, sustainable) For example, voting with your dollar by the products bought. Mobilizing information or the presence of information for the audience with a means to act on existing ideas and motivations were coded. Motivational information included names, phone numbers, websites, times and dates of meetings, titles of documents, and more. If the mobilizing information was present, we coded for its presence and how it encouraged people to get involved. Lastly, sources of information including people, research, or institutions were coded. That included different sources of information, as well as their role (i.e. Doctor, Parent, Researcher, Food Industry Lobbying Group Spokesperson), and the information they revealed in the story.
The quantitative code book served as an overview snapshot of childhood obesity and the food system, whereas the qualitative code book revealed deeper analysis of how food system is being covered by the media, if at all. The qualitative code book included the following: consequences of the food system, power in the food system, the different phases of the food system, principles of a healthy food system, as well as the inductive analysis of coverage of Big Food, Monsanto, G.M.O., and organic, as these have been considered hot topics in the media in the last year. Principles of a healthy food system were explored to see if and how these are being covered, if at all. The social causes coded in the quantitative codebook gave an overview of the main causes of childhood obesity cited by the media, whereas the social determinants of the food system provided a much-needed in-depth qualitative analysis of what was (and was not) being reflected in the media. Additionally, sources of information and their social position were coded.

I concentrated on articles related to the food system as my top priority for my qualitative analysis, as there is a knowledge gap in the literature currently on how the media was covering food systems and if the media was covering a link between food systems and childhood obesity. In order to ensure the quality of this qualitative analysis, it was necessary to concentrate on food system articles.

Two coders were trained using consensus coding to establish a mutual and shared meaning together for both the quantitative and qualitative coding. This was accomplished by setting aside a certain number of materials that were double coded and discussed between coders. Once consensus was established, materials were coded independently, with double coding of 15% of the materials to establish reliability. Quantitative data were
stored in excel and analyzed in SPSS. NVivo v. 10 was used to store and analyze qualitative data.

The objective was to answer the following research questions, which guided the framing report:

- Who or what is responsible for causing and solving the childhood obesity problem according to SC media? What consequences are being presented? Which social determinants of health are being mentioned?
- Is mobilizing information present? If so, how does it encourage to get people involved?
- Who and what are the sources of information being mentioned? What information are they revealing in the story?
- Is the call to action to the public as a citizen or a consumer?
- Are consequences of the current food system or principles of a healthy food system being reflected? Is there any linkage between childhood obesity and the food system? If so, how are they being linked?
- Does the channel source affect episodic vs. thematic framing?
- What personal narratives are present and do they reflect individual-level or societal-level actions?
- How should community-based organizations re-frame the mainstream public opinion to advance their issue campaigns to improve food systems?

Aim 2:
2. Catalyze and describe the process through which communities re-frame the debate from the individual level to the physical and social environmental changes needed to their local food system

2.1. Build capacity to advocate for food systems changes using the framing research report, tools, training, and facilitation throughout the advocacy campaign planning process

The first step in Aim 2 was to provide the framing research report and tools needed throughout the advocacy campaign planning process. Tools and resources to establish best practices came from organizations such as the R.W.J. Foundation and the Praxis Foundation (See Appendix B). First, each community-based group was participating in the Food Systems Certification training offered by the COPASCities project starting in May 2014. Community-based groups also participated in a values and visioning training, also offered by the COPASCities project, as part of the pre-dissertation phase work. Community-based groups used a strategy chart, power analysis, and critical path analysis part of the issue planning campaign and was guided by the COPASCities staff on how to use these tools. Some community-based groups utilized these tools in prior successful issues campaigns.

Next, community-based groups completed a training about messaging and framing, to give the groups an overview of the literature and best practices to help them understand why messaging is important and to raise knowledge and comprehension of framing. Additionally, the training was interactive, with discussion to analyze current messaging strategies and how to apply recommendations to future efforts. This training and the framing report was presented in a Prezi, an interactive power point that allows for
creativity. Best practices of translating research to practice for the framing report were included, ensuring the report fit local cultural beliefs and norms, and involved a reciprocal learning process and bi-directional translation, with continuous feedback loops (Wallerstein & Duran, 2010). Readability and accessibility of information in the framing report was piloted with the T.O.H. community organizer, who is a member of the local community where the community-based group is located.

Next, a planning session introducing a message planning tool based upon key recommendations from the literature and collective action framing was used to help community-based groups write their 1-pager, which they referred back to throughout the issue campaign. The framing report was referred back to during this planning session to help guide the writing of the 1-pager. For each tactic identified, an implementation tool helped guide activities and establish a timeline. Other tools, such as “How to write a press release” from the Praxis Institute was provided to groups.

Learning objectives of the training, framing report, and technical assistance follow best practices using Bloom’s taxonomy and include: 1. define collective action framing, 2. develop messaging based on key recommendations from the literature, 3. how to talk about and understand the abstract food system in concrete terms, 4. integrate collective action framing and key recommendations into issue campaign, and 5. evaluate own messaging efforts and incorporate feedback for future efforts (Writing Objectives Using Bloom's Taxonomy, 2014). Please see the Table 3.1 below for more information about learning outcomes, sources and activities, and evaluation questions. A checklist was used to measure implementation fidelity and can be found in the appendix for each
group. Lastly, an evaluation meeting was held with T.O.H. and the group was asked and the group was asked about the process and the tools’ usefulness and effectiveness.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Objectives</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Evaluation Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Define collective action framing</td>
<td>SHOWeD Message Planning</td>
<td>1. Define collective action framing 2. Differentiate between individual vs. societal framing 3. Apply to advocacy efforts</td>
<td>1. What is collective action framing and the differences between individual/societal framing? 2. What examples can you show individual and societal framing and collective action framing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop message based upon recommendations</td>
<td>SHOWeD Framing report Message Planning</td>
<td>1. List key recommendations 2. Analyze current advocacy efforts and recommendations 3. Implement new messaging into advocacy efforts</td>
<td>1. What key recommendations are you currently using in your advocacy efforts? 2. What do you still need to apply and how would you do this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrate recommendations</td>
<td>SHOWeD Strategy chart Power analysis Message Planning</td>
<td>1. Define steps to issues campaign 2. Discuss and examine the new tools 3. Implement into advocacy efforts</td>
<td>1. Can you recall the tools and steps to planning an issues campaign? 2. How are these tools related to what we learned about key recommendations and how are you using them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate own messaging efforts</td>
<td>Evaluation Meeting</td>
<td>1. Assess messages used throughout the campaign and 1-pager 2. Evaluate what worked and what did not work?</td>
<td>1. Do your messages align with your messages in the 1-pager? 2. What worked and didn’t work in your issues campaign? 4. What would you do differently?</td>
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</table>
The student provided technical assistance to community-based groups as they implemented their advocacy campaign plans. Due to the P.A.R. nature of this work, specific strategies emerged as part of the process as Aim 2 began. Re-framing was appropriate to all types of advocacy strategies, so we trained in re-framing and recorded how community-based groups used it as they implemented strategies appropriate to their issue campaigns. Strategies included: community organizing techniques, developing social marketing campaigns, and media advocacy campaigns. An example of a community organizing technique included a door knocking campaign to raise support for a local school food policy being voted on by the local school board. Social marketing can involve different levels of the socioecological perspective, such as mobilizing organizations and interpersonal networks (Glanz, Lewis & Rimer, 1990). Media advocacy strategies can increase community capacity to develop and allow communities to be heard and seen (Wallack, 1993).

Ethnography provided the detail and contextual background needed to understand how this process unfolds, (Maxwell, 2012) including identification of key players in policy and systems environment advocacy and of promising future directions for the community-based groups advocacy efforts. Delgado-Gaitan (1993) suggests that researchers should establish a relationship and to change or redirect role as the context changes. The relationship between the community and researcher must be based upon respect, reflection, caring, and collective participation. A bi-directional flow of communication and social interaction between the community and researcher is required, with the purpose of improving the communities’ quality of life (Delgado-Gaitan, 1993). The researcher affects the change the community’s experiences through the role of
participant-observer while the researcher is influenced by the community’s changes.

Learning occurs within sociocultural contexts and should bolster cultural values, with the hope of promoting social and cultural awareness. With this new awareness, communities should be able to garner new understandings about the oppression being experienced by the community (Delgado-Gaitan, 1993). Since critical consciousness was being raised, ethnographic questions documented this process.

Since ethnography is naturalistic and contextual, the student described aspects of this process not normally captured through other methods (Patton, 2005). Although ethnography does not allow for generalization of the results, ethnography contributed to the development of a theory of the process, and provided practical implications for other communities also interested in improving their food systems (Yin, 2009; Patton, 2005; Ragin, 1999). The data was current and provided clarity to specific issues the challenges and opportunities in food systems changes at the physical and social environmental level (Bernard, 2012; Patton, 2005).

The student used triangulation of her own field notes and used field notes from COPASCities staff and community organizers, to establish reliability, along with document analysis of advocacy materials and plans in order to establish validity (Maxwell, 2012; Bernard, 2012). Triangulation was used in this study to test for consistency within results, with the understanding that it does not always yield the same result. Using triangulation revealed differences between sources, as a result of different nuances playing out in context. This was an opportunity to explore the relationship between the inquiry and the phenomena that was being studied (Patton, 2002). Therefore,
when differences were found between investigators and data, I used this as an opportunity to dig deeper into the context behind the difference. This study’s purpose was to gain knowledge into the process of change in communities; therefore, revealing differences between sources revealed important contextual elements that needed to be considered and studied in future research.

The field notes included: the setting and activities observed activities that took place in the setting, people who took part in activities, meanings of what was observed from the perspectives of those observed. This was captured through describing the location, people, activities and interactions; observer’s feelings along with the nature and intensity of feelings experienced, direct quotes using the emic perspective; insights, interpretations, and documenting what happened as well as what did not happen (Blake, 2013; Patton, 2005). The observations were overt, as the community-based groups knew the nature of the project and came from participant perspective, as the student was a part of the process through her facilitator role (Blake, 2013; Patton, 2005). Additionally, the student asked follow-up questions about the observations in an unstructured format with the entire group, as well as individual members, to garner a deeper understanding what was being observed. Often, the student would reflect back insights perceived to the group members to gain a deeper understanding and to ensure the validity of the observation. Since the student was not member of the community, the field notes offered an informed outsider’s perspective. The organizers’ field notes provided an insider’s perspective, as that person is from the community.
The ethnography answered the following questions:

1. Describe the attendees of the meeting or event. Note representatives from *key institutions* in the community (schools, companies, libraries, hospitals, agencies, etc.) that are possible sources of support. Which stakeholders were present or had networks that could lead to access to desired stakeholders? Is there anyone that is not at the meeting that should be involved? Were there obstacles such as timing and location that may have prevented them from being there? Have they been invited to be involved? If not, why not?

2. Describe the meeting purpose, details of the location, and mood of the room. Note if there was a clear agenda that was followed and if this was or leading to a major event.

   **Remember to note your feelings.**

3. How did the group address the following? (If it was not discussed, indicate):
   - Collective action framing
   - Key recommendations
   - SC framing report
   - Frame variants and strategies

4. How did the group discuss their issues? Individual level or physical and social environmental level? Provide details on how they are re-framing the issues?

5. Did the group discuss challenging power? If so, how was this discussed? Did they use the collective action framework?
6. Were any issues related to critical consciousness about the food system discussed? Provide details on the discussion and context of the discussion. Were there any other social issues raised as related to the food system as just or unjust, or issues that need to be addressed in the community? If so, provide details about the discussion and context.

7. How people are engaging in community based efforts? What motivations do they state for engaging? Have there been any costs are to challenging power (i.e. loss of social capital or relationships within the community; time or money costs)?

8. How is group consensus around a decision or issue being met (i.e. through discussion, through voting, 1 or 2 dominant leaders or shared leadership within the group)? Are minority or dissenting opinions addressed or discussed? If so, why were these dissenting opinions not popular with the group? Are people encouraged to offer opinions, ideas or topics, and, if so, how are they encouraged to participate and act? Is there a particular way the meeting space is set up or the way the meeting is being conducted to exert power or disenfranchise certain people within the group?

9. Were there any barriers brought up to challenging power (i.e. political, pragmatic (time, logistics), mandated (i.e. perceived expectations to appease funders), lack of continuity between issues?

**Results Products/Deliverables and Dissemination**

For Aim 1, the results from the media content analysis were used to produce the collective action and social determinants of health framing report delivered to community-based groups. For Aim 2, tools and resources were used to plan future advocacy campaigns. Findings were presented to community-based groups. A final report
with advocacy recommendations for community-based groups, as well as the framing report will be distributed statewide to COPASCities partners and available on Center for Research on Nutrition and Health Disparities (Center) website. The student will submit abstracts to conferences such as the American Public Health Association and the Community Development Society. Two journal articles were also produced for this dissertation.

*Pitfalls and alternatives*

Possible pitfalls included community-based groups having limited time and resources. To avoid this pitfall, COPASCities community organizers dedicated time to the project as part of their ongoing COPASCities duties, and were trained along with community-based groups. COPASCities resources were used for this project.

Conducting research in community settings is difficult due to the political, social, and policy environment being out of the researcher’s control. Ethnography captured this context. Ethnography was limited as the student could only investigate a few communities at a time. However, this project provided data needed about the process, laying a foundation for future work. Ethnography depended heavily on the primary researcher as the primary instrument. All researchers have biases based on experiences, roles, and knowledge gained that shape their reality. To ensure the objectivity of the researcher, feelings about the work were overtly expressed in the field notes in a specific section, so that biases are acknowledged and owned.

*Extended Methodology*
For Aim 1, a framing report was developed for communities in the Fall 2014 and can be found in Appendix A. All articles mentioning our search terms from the primary newspapers in the Midlands area (n=351) were sampled through Newsbank, and all news segments with our search terms from the local television affiliates including ABC, NBC, and CBS between February 2011-June 2014 (n=35), yielding 386 newspaper articles and television segments. Search terms such as “childhood obesity,” “sustainable agriculture,” and “big food” were used. Primary newspapers included the Chester News and Reporter, The Charlotte Observer, The State, Columbia Star, Columbia Examiner, Aiken Standard, Augusta Chronicle, and The Herald. An established code book from a media coding analysis on nationwide media sources was used to give an overall picture of how S.C. media framed childhood obesity and our food system (Kim & Willis, 2007). We used 20 articles for training and took notes on how we built consensus around quantitative codes. Of the remaining articles, 15% were pulled for double coding with Krippendorf’s alpha range between 0.7369-0.9696.

Individual level blame for childhood obesity (59 of 386 articles, or 14.9%) slightly outnumbered societal level blame (54 of 386 articles, or 13.6%). However, societal level solutions to childhood obesity (181 of 386 articles, or 45.7%) outnumbered individual level solutions (80 of 386 articles, or 20.2%).

An unhealthy diet (38 of 386 articles, or 9.6%) and parents and adult role models (36 of 386 articles, or 9.1%) were mentioned most often for individual level responsibility for childhood obesity. The food industry (24 of 386 articles, or 6.1%) and schools, education, and the community (21 of 386 articles, or 6.1%) shared the most societal level responsibility. A sedentary lifestyle (31 of 386 articles, or 7.8%) and
genetic composition (10 of 386 articles, or 2.5%) were mentioned less often as individual level responsibility factors for childhood obesity, while socioeconomic factors (15 of 386 articles, or 3.8%) and other factors such as an automobile-oriented society and unsafe communities (13 of 386 articles, or 3.3%) were mentioned less often in societal level responsibility attribution.

Schools, education, and community-based programs (163 of 386 articles, or 41.2%), changes to the food system or regulation of the food system (42 of 386 articles, or 10.6%), and other health promoting environmental factors (41 of 386 articles, or 10.4%) such as a more walking oriented society were mentioned most often as societal level solutions to childhood obesity. Parents and adult role models (61 of 386 articles, or 15.4%), an unhealthy diet (13.9%), and physical activity (47 of 386 articles, or 11.9%) were mentioned most often as individual level solutions to childhood obesity. Medical treatments (3 of 386 articles, or 0.8%) were mentioned less often as individual level solutions, as well as socioeconomic changes (20 of 386 articles, or 5.1%) such as making healthy food more affordable.

Food system articles, or articles that mentioned the food system without any reference to childhood obesity accounted for 44.4% (176 of 386 articles) of the total articles included in this study.

Additionally, we tested the following hypotheses to answer RQ1: Who or what is responsible for causing and solving the childhood obesity problem according to SC media?
H1: Articles that mention individual level causes to childhood obesity are more likely to mention individual level solutions to childhood obesity than articles that do not mention individual level causes for childhood obesity.

A chi-square test was performed and a relationship was found between articles that mention individual level causes to childhood obesity and articles that mention individual level solutions, \( X^2 (1, N=386) = 63.15, p < 0.00 \). Therefore, articles that mention individual level causes of childhood obesity are more likely to mention individual level solutions to childhood obesity than articles that do not mention individual level causes for childhood obesity.

H2: Articles that mention societal level causes to childhood obesity are more likely to mention societal level solutions to childhood obesity than articles that do not mention societal level causes for childhood obesity.

A chi-square test was performed and a relationship was found between articles that mention societal level causes to childhood obesity and articles that mention societal level solutions, \( X^2 (1, N=386) = 27.02, p < 0.00 \). Therefore, articles that mention societal level causes to childhood obesity are more likely to mention societal level solutions to childhood obesity than articles that do not mention societal level causes for childhood obesity.

We also explored how the media was talking about the food system and the intersection between childhood obesity and the food system in-depth, since we know very little about these issues are being discussed in the media. We purposively selected 79 news articles to ensure that we were analyzing frames from across the spectrum of frames in our codebook. We used exploratory methods to analyze these articles in-depth, to see
how these issues were being talked about, if at all, by the media, as well as any relationships we saw between these issues. We coded 19 articles to build consensus around codes and took notes on how this was accomplished. Of the remaining articles, 15% were double coding to establish reliability. We asked: How should community-based organizations and advocacy groups re-frame their messaging to advance their issue campaigns to improve food systems and prevent childhood obesity? We came up with nine recommendations with some examples from the data for the framing report. The following recommendations were given to community groups in a packet during the messaging training exercise, along with the results from the quantitative piece of the media content analysis:

1. Use collective action framing to guide messaging.
2. Use diverse sources of information in messaging.
3. Talk about the issues with the food system in concrete terms and link them to group values and the principles of a healthy local food system.
4. Make narratives about local food and link it to childhood obesity rates. This will keep the picture at the landscape view (societal level), not the portrait view (individual level).
5. Assign blame for childhood obesity to the current food system, offer specific, concrete solutions, and ask people to become engaged citizens, not just educated consumers.
6. Look for opportunities to re-frame the debate from the individual level to the societal level through describing the consequences of childhood obesity and tying it to our values.
7. We need to tie local food to our values and ensure we are being inclusive in the local food movement, because eventually local food will be at odds with Big Food.

8. Capitalize on missed opportunities to challenge power in the current food system through assigning blame.

9. We need to keep the call to action as a citizen for the good of the community, country, and future generations.

For Aim 2, we helped the two community groups’ ability to re-frame the debate from the individual level to the physical and social environmental level by: 1. giving access to the Food System Certificate Training series, including the values and visioning training, 2. providing the training on Framing and Messaging, 3. giving access to the tools and resources (e.g. messaging planning tool, 1-pager or foundational message, implementation tool) noted in the appendices, including the framing report, and 4. providing technical assistance to develop 1-pager to serve as the foundational message for the issues campaign.

T.O.H. participated in the Food System Certificate Training, but the series was still in the pilot phase and under development by the COPASCities research staff while they were completing it; therefore, some of the trainings were updated and changed with participant feedback, including their own. This included the values training. Additionally, M.F.A. only completed the first training of the series, the values training, as it was determined by the community organizer and the COPASCities community organizer supervisor that this group had these capacities already and did not need these additional
Upon working with this group, I recommended that the group continue the training series, specifically the community organizing training, once they started planning their first issue campaign.

It should be noted that T.O.H. and M.F.A. were in two different phases of group development, both as a group and in the issue campaign planning process. T.O.H. was in year two of existence and had a planned and implemented a successful issue campaign. M.F.A. had just formed in August 2014 and started meeting regularly in October 2014. T.O.H. had identified a new issue campaign and was starting to work on it, including two public addresses to the school board, one to the city council, survey and information collection about the issue, and a walk to school to raise awareness of the issue in November 2014. M.F.A. did not choose an official issue campaign until November 2014 and were still in the planning phases when data collection officially ended for this dissertation in April 2015.

The Framing and Messaging Training was given to the two groups. T.O.H. received the training first in October 2014. Their feedback drastically changed the way the training set up because of time and resources that the groups had to dedicate to the trainings, but also for ease of use. For example, instead of having two separate trainings on framing and collective action framing and then the framing report, it was combined into one interactive training the encouraged critical thinking and discussion. This was achieved by presenting the information in a Prezi format, along with quotes from articles as examples of the difference between individual vs. physical and social environment messages and opportunities for group discussion. Additionally, I made the framing report
more user-friendly and readable for a wide variety of reading levels. Also, the frame variants appeared to be too detailed for the group and hard to understand, as well as not very relevant to initially raising their advocacy capacity; therefore, this information was taken out of the training.

The groups appeared to connect the concept of framing, specifically collective action framing, to messaging and how this could improve their issues campaigns. The groups also understood the importance of having consistent, clear messaging throughout their campaigns. Key recommendations from the training report that specifically related to their current issue campaign was presented to the groups. The framing report was discussed by both groups with interest and both seemed to understand how it could help them with their issue campaigns. When the training was presented to M.F.A. in December 2014, it seemed to flow much better than with T.O.H.

One interesting finding was that T.O.H. was also able to better connect the link between food systems and childhood obesity prevention advocacy work, as this link was presented during the training and seemed to align more with their mission statement. M.F.A. seemed a little confused about this link, as their main objective is to change the local food system, not to work on childhood obesity. This training was additionally requested by the community organizer for E.S.M.M.S.C. in February 2015 for the Spartanburg coalition, as they were planning an issue campaign that aimed to change the local school food environment. The group also seemed to make the link easier, as this was a childhood obesity prevention group trying to change the food environment in the school and had made that explicit link in their campaign. Linking childhood obesity and
the food system during issue campaigns was a result in the media content analysis. It was interesting to see how the different groups reacted to this link. I asked the M.F.A. group to consider working on making that link in their work.

Directly after the trainings, both groups were given access to the tools and resources (e.g. messaging planning tool, 1-pager, implementation tool, framing report). The message planning tool had elements from the strategy chart; therefore, these were filled out prior to the Framing and Messaging training to help with the time allotted to fill out these tools. Both groups seemed to like the way the tools flowed from one another. I facilitated group discussions about the remaining questions that could not be answered from the strategy chart. This process worked well; however, after the T.O.H. training, some questions were taken out of the message planning tool and/or changed in order to better streamline the process of converting the answers from the message planning tools to the 1-pager tool. The updated version can be found in the Appendix B. I also added a document to help with the conversion, a word document with the message planning tool questions in order, so that groups can simply copy, cut, and paste their answers into a word document to make the 1-pager.

Despite these changes, at the groups’ request, I was asked to be more involved in the conversion step than I originally planned. I attempted set up this training and these tools so that community groups could facilitate this process and create a foundational message independent of the COPASCities research group staff. I realized that the community groups were still learning the community organizing paperwork (i.e. strategy chart) and how to use it independently from us (i.e. the community organizer facilitated a
group planning session, filling out the chart for the group); therefore, this is something the COPASCities project staff members need to work on overall with our community groups.

Additionally, the Implementation Tool, which takes each specific tactic from the strategy chart and assigns responsibility and action for the group to complete the tactic, was not embraced at all by either group. Both groups are heavily reliant on the community organizer to facilitate the strategic chart process; therefore, the implementation tool was not pushed by the community organizer during the strategy chart planning sessions and not used by the group. Again, I designed these tools to be used independently of the COPASCities project staff and we have not built the community groups’ capacity to do so.

Thus far, M.F.A. has not produced any materials for their issues campaigns that could be analyzed beyond their Facebook page and planning materials. The Facebook page featured their mission statement and linked to articles about local food. Also, their Facebook page and the foundational message that was produced by the group re-framed local food issues at the physical and social environmental level. As a group, they embraced the idea of a consistent, foundational message guiding their issue campaign. T.O.H. produced materials for their issue campaign and appeared to be applying a consistent message that aligned with their foundational message for the campaign, keeping the debate at the physical and social environmental level.

Values were consistently clear during T.O.H.’s messaging and a newspaper article covering their second issue campaign followed the foundational messaging. However,
during school board meetings and city council meetings, the T.O.H. community organizer only had time to present the problem and the questions that are still unanswered by the school board because public comment time during local governmental meetings is often less than 5 minutes per speaker. Getting access to this information about the district bussing policy was a key part of this campaign; therefore, she strategically used this public comment period to officially get on the record that these questions remain unanswered and to bring awareness to the local media outlets, which are regularly in attendance for these meetings. It appeared most of the responsibility for messaging fell on the community organizer, as a key leader that previously acted as the groups’ spokesperson is inconsistently involved with the group. Both groups should be continued to be followed by the COPASCities project staff, to see if they are able to continue to apply these concepts to practice.
CHAPTER 4

MANUSCRIPTS

The Process of Change: Lessons Learned about Increasing the Advocacy Capacity of Food System Change Groups Through Utilizing Collective Action Framing and Media Content Analysis

I. Introduction

Public health researchers and practitioners are moving toward food system changes as a promising childhood obesity prevention strategy (Sobush, Keener, Goodman, Lowry, Kakietek & Zaro, 2009; Marmot & Bell, 2010). To create systems change, social movements generate collective action by re-framing issues as social rather than individual problems, with clear policy and environmental remedies, and provide motivation for affected populations to take action (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Advocates need to be able to assign responsibility for childhood obesity to a globalized food system that: 1. promotes high-energy, low-nutrient foods, 2. discourages regional and local distribution of low-energy, high-nutrient foods, and 3. assigns little corporate and community responsibility for food accessibility and affordability (Gollust, Lantz, & Ubel, 2009; Freudenberg, Bradley, & Serrano, 2009; Dorfman, Wallack & Woodruff, 2003; Kim & Willis, 2007).
Many food systems advocates promote local food economies as a healthy alternative to the globalized food system on the assumption that foods produced and sold locally are less energy-dense (e.g., fruits and vegetables directly marketed at farmers’ markets) (Martinez, 2010), provide economic opportunities for income-generating activities (Feenstra, 1997; Bowler, 2002; Martinez, 2010), and allow for more local control of food systems decisions (Hendrickson & Heffernan, 2002). A local food system is not necessarily better than the current globalized food system, but it can be when it promotes social justice, food security, and ecological sustainability for farmers and consumers, better nutrition, freshness and quality (Born & Purcell, 2006; Hinrichs, 2003). Localizing food systems can promote social justice through discrete socio-economic, cultural and environmental shifts (Feenstra, 1997).

Advocates also promote a consumer action approach to creating systems change, or “voting with your fork.” The individual consumer action frame reduces the food system to a relationship between consumers and producers and simplifies food system issues as mainly economic issues (Campbell, 2004; Sbicca, 2012; Guthman, 2008). Efforts to advance food system change must re-focus from the individual consumer frame to engaging citizens to advocate for restructuring how food is produced, processed, distributed, consumed, and disposed so that the system is fair, sustainable, inclusive, including those who lack access to enough food for a healthy and active life, or are food insecure (Guthman, 2008; Blue, 2009; Born & Purcell, 2006; Hinrichs, 2003). One way local food system advocacy groups can accomplish these goals is through framing messages effectively during issue campaigns (Ryan, Carragee & Meinhofer, 2001).
The Childhood Obesity Prevention in South Carolina Communities (COPASCities) project partners with community coalitions in SC to (1) build capacity for food systems change for childhood obesity prevention, and (2) catalyze and describe the process of creating food systems change. COPASCities gathered surveys, self-assessments, and participant observers’ field notes to identify areas for capacity building. Communications, media advocacy, and collective action framing were all identified as needs in community coalitions. Media content analysis of S.C. media was conducted to identify mainstream messages about childhood obesity prevention and food systems change. Based upon these findings, we created and piloted tools, trainings, and resources, while facilitating the issue campaign planning process with the Midlands Food Alliance (M.F.A.) in Columbia.

The purpose of this study was to describe the process of increasing advocacy capacity of community-based groups interested in childhood obesity prevention through food systems change, using the tenets of collective action framing theory: assigning blame to the food system for childhood obesity (Diagnostic), identifying local actions and solutions (Prognostic), and engaging citizens in those actions through more effective communications (Motivational) (Snow & Benford, 2000; Ryan, Carragee & Meinhofer, 2001; Dorfman, 2003). In this paper, we describe: 1. a media content analysis that revealed local mainstream frames for obesity prevention and food systems change; 2. communications trainings; and 3. how one community group grappled with re-framing food systems change issues.
I. Strategies

Study Setting

COPASCities is a participatory ethnographic study documenting the process of food system change, focused on health equity and social justice. Project activities include door knocking, hosting public forums on the food system, implementing issue campaigns, and disseminating trainings, research, and tools. The COPASCities project funds part-time community organizers in S.C. communities to catalyze changes to the local food system. Four communities were selected within the Midlands region of S.C. and two of the COPASCities communities, including M.F.A., received the additional Advocacy Capacity Building program. This study was approved by the University of South Carolina Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects.

M.F.A. Contextual Background

In the summer of 2012, the COPASCities project hosted a local food summit with the Midlands Local Food Collaborative (M.L.F.C) in Columbia, S.C. M.L.F.C. is made up of employees from governmental, academic and non-profit agencies such as the Richland County Soil and Water Conservation District, S.C. Department of Agriculture, Sustainable Midlands, and Clemson Extension. Sustainable Midlands members worked to recruit local farmers, distributors, and retailers to attend the event. After the summit, the COPASCities staff invited M.L.F.C. to submit an application to become one of the four organizations that COPASCities would work with and shortly thereafter, the partnership was formed.
M.L.F.C was formed with the goal was to promote a sustainable local food system in the Midlands region. Group activities include focusing on improved local food distribution and food system access, support for local farmers and sustainable agriculture practices, community engagement and education, organizing a local food hub, organizing low-income farmers to become producers for the S.C. Farm to School program, and to improve farm and food policies at the local, state, and national levels. However, most members of this group are not allowed to advocate about certain issues or specific legislation due to possible conflicts of interests while working for governmental agencies or academic institutions. Therefore, there was a need to engage community members interested in local food that were free to advocate for or against specific legislation, issues, and policies.

Erin, a 20-something white woman, appeared to be a perfect for the role of community organizer and was hired by the COPASCities project. Erin was from Aiken, attended the College of Charleston, and worked in Public Relations. She had worked for Sustainable Midlands as an intern and knew the M.L.F.C. members well. Sustainable Midlands’ mission is to advocate, educate, and celebrate solutions that balance the needs of the community, the environment, and the economy. Sustainable Midlands is funded through a variety of sources, such as the Conservation Voters of South Carolina. Other partners include the Congaree Land Trust, Keep the Midlands Beautiful, and Sustainable Carolina. Sustainable Midlands’ staff and M.L.F.C. members thought her job was more of a project coordinator. While the COPASCities staff wanted Erin to be using her time, for example, organizing low-income farmers to engage them in the S.C. Farm to School program, the M.L.F.C. members expected Erin to organize meetings and write grants.
Additionally, the M.L.F.C. was a newly-formed group and still figuring out what their purpose was as an organization. M.L.F.C was initially formed in order to apply for local food hub funding, which it did not receive. Erin’s position was the only funded position of the group and her initial role had been project coordinator as an intern.

In addition to these issues, there was a lot of personal tension between the M.L.F.C. members and Ryan, the executive director of Sustainable Midlands. Ryan had been a founder of Sustainable Midlands and was a very well-known advocate in the community. She was well-respected for her work with Sustainable Midlands and knew how to tap into networks of power to achieve campaign goals for Sustainable Midlands. However, she was known as someone that could be overly-assertive at times. Ryan was one of the M.L.F.C. members that pushed for Erin’s position to be more of coordination than community organizer. M.L.F.C. members expressed concern over any future local food policy councils or local food hub efforts being housed under Sustainable Midlands, as she would have more control and may not steer the project in the direction that the M.L.F.C. members wanted. The COPASCities community organizer supervisor said, “I think that the [M.L.F.C.] members really do genuinely want to work together, but I think they still see Ryan as somebody who doesn't play well in the sandbox kind of thing.”

Additionally, COPASCities’ efforts were focused upon actively engaging local farmers. One goal organizing farmers was to ensure that all farmers were surveyed, including black farmers, smaller farmers, low-income farmers, and farmers that also worked other jobs in order to support their families. Erin had trouble surveying black farmers in particular. Carrie, the community organizer supervisor, said:
“So…the challenge is figuring out who the gatekeepers are to even let us know who the African-American farmers are in this area….I think [Erin] has been doing the right things in terms of using her connections to try to contact other people…and so far, nothing So I feel like… that we're really not reaching and I think the main reason for that is because we don't have the resources…to even know who they are to be able to reach them.”

Eventually, Erin found out that cooperative extensions were great places to make connections to farmers, but these resources were divided by race. White farmers typically accessed resources through the Clemson University Cooperative Extension and black farmers access resources through South Carolina State University Cooperative Extension due to historical segregation of resources. Erin also found that black farmers were more adept at using co-op farming models historically, because they had fewer resources as a group than white farmers.

Another finding was that farmers do not typically work together, even when organizing seems to be in their best interest. For example, Erin was working on organizing farmers around the Food Safety Modernization act policies that would affect farmers; however, she was met with a considerable amount of trepidation organizing farmers to work together. Carrie said:

“And [Erin] had been figuring out… getting them to connect her with a few of their other farmers. And then when she would try to do that, they would be like, ‘that’s not really how we work. That's not who we consider to be our community, is other farmers,’ and there's a lot of competition.”

Erin, the community organizer, said:

“So that also is a challenge in getting farmers to collaborate because some farmers are very open to the idea of things like co-ops and shared expenses and things like that, and other farmers are just kind of like, ‘I'm doing my thing and I'm busy and I do not want to be a part of anything else.’ But I think, I mean, farming historically has been more like a not cooperative industry. “
Another interesting finding was the difference in farmer attitudes toward organizing between two counties, Richland County, which is where Columbia is located, and Lexington County, which neighbors Lexington County. She found Richland County farmers to be more willing to organize than Lexington County Farmers, as Richland County farmers were smaller in scale. She said, “But there are bigger farms in Lexington...like the Rawls and the Jackson Brothers...they really have their operations going and so they're not as interested in working to make small farming into the local food system.”

In addition to having trouble breaking into farmer networks in order to organize them, Erin also seemed resistant to using community organizing techniques, such as door knocking, to engage low-income farmers. It was not uncommon for community organizers to be hesitant to use door knocking initially, as cold calling on people can be an intimidating experience. Additionally, Erin was working on another project with a M.L.F.C. member, where farmers were hand-selected for a documentary film where their farms were highlighted. She was completing surveys with these hand-selected farmers, but not progressing with the farmers that needed the door knocking technique.

Eventually, Erin decided to leave the COPASCities community organizer position in January 2014. In the Spring of 2014, Ryan retired from Sustainable Midlands and moved to Vermont. Katie, a 20-something white woman from Columbia, was hired as the part time community organizer in March 2014. Katie studied Political Science at Clemson University and had recently returned from China, where she taught English. She finished conducting surveys with farmers during the Summer of 2014 to see what
their issues are and how to engage them in the local food hub efforts. She also organized a local food summit August 2014 and promoted through social marketing, phone banking, door knocking, and word of mouth advertising. More than 100 local processors, distributors, farmers, retailers, consumers, and restaurant owners attended the food summit. At the end of the summit, key issues surrounding the local food system were identified, such as lack of labor and access and continuity of resources for farmers.

Those who participated in the farmer survey, as well as the local food summit, were invited to become a part of a local group forming advocate for these issues. After a substantial amount of coordination, Katie organized the first meeting of the group in October 2014 in a local library meeting room. Roughly 30 people attended the meeting, including Ryan, who had moved back from Vermont, along with the newly-hired Sustainable Midlands Executive Director, Stephen. Ryan was still involved with the organization and was serving on the board of directors.

M.F.A. formed as a food policy council interested in creating and advocating for a local food hub, while educating the public about local food. The group is working on their first project, mapping the local food system, to understand strengths and challenges and to create a network of local food producers, processors, distributors, and retailers. A few months later, Sustainable Midlands agreed to provide an umbrella for the newly-formed local food advocacy group, providing meeting space, resources, and limited dedicated staff time, as well as 501(c) 3 status for the new group. The newly-formed group would be one of eight initiatives of Sustainable Midlands and would function as a sub-group under the Sustainable Midlands name.
Mainstream Media Frames for Childhood Obesity Prevention in S.C.

All articles mentioning our search terms from the primary newspapers in the Midlands area (n=351) were sampled through Newsbank, and all news segments with our search terms from the local television affiliates including ABC, NBC, and CBS between February 2011-June 2014 (n=35), yielding 396 newspaper articles and television segments. Search terms such as “childhood obesity,” “sustainable agriculture,” and “big food” were used. Primary newspapers included the Chester News and Reporter, The Charlotte Observer, The State, Columbia Star, Columbia Examiner, Aiken Standard, Augusta Chronicle, and The Herald.

We purposively selected 79 news articles to ensure that we were analyzing themes and frames from across the spectrum in our codebook. These included themes and frames such as: (1) Mobilizing Information or the presence of information for the audience with a means to act on existing ideas and motivations, (2) Power in the food system or monopolies, lobbyists for Big Food, industry influence over regulations and policy, capital in the food system, intellectual property rights, food marketing regulation, (3) Principles of a healthy food system, including, health promoting, sustainable, resilient, diverse, fair, economically balanced, transparent, and empowering (W.K. Kellogg Foundation Healthy, Sustainable Food System Collaboration, 2010), and (4) Narratives or stories from people such as a citizen, parent, child, or teacher who is struggling with obesity or has a loved one or narratives about food system.

The a priori codebook was based on previously published research and qualitatively analyzed using NVIVO v. 10 (NVIVO, 2012). Both a priori and emergent coding schemes were used throughout the analysis. Consensus coding established
concrete definitions of frames. Here, we present data from two frames, individual consumer responsibility and citizen engagement, present in mainstream media.

The mainstream food system change movement recommends both individual consumer-based actions and actions as a citizen to create food system change (Campbell, 2004; Sbicca, 2012; Guthman, 2008; Blue, 2009). The consumer responsibility frame was defined as the act of shopping or choosing certain products that help prevent childhood obesity (i.e. parents shopping for healthier food for their children) or products that support a healthy food system (i.e. responsibility-sourced, organic, non-GMO, local, sustainable). In our media content analysis, we defined the citizenship responsibility frame as a call to action to change the food system at the societal level through physical and social environmental changes. It was described as a deeper call for change for the good of the community, the country, and future generations and tied in closely with values around local food.

Terms and phrases that described consumer responsibility included: “to help families learn to shop and eat healthier on a budget,” “people voting with their dollars in terms of local food,” and “paying for higher quality and environmental benefits of eating local.” Examples of consumer responsibility in the Framing and Messaging training included “shop wiser” and “raise awareness of how to eat healthy.” In the Aiken Standard, consumer responsibility was described as, “Promoting this idea of local consumerism will improve the quality of life for residents across our state, and should ultimately be one of the main missions of South Carolina,” (Editorial Board, 2013). Another article from the Charlotte Observer stated,
“Jessica said she has become vegetarian since she started working with the organization. ‘I wanted to be conscious of the food I eat and where I shop,’ Jessica said. ‘Now my family is healthier as a whole,’” (Penland, 2012)

Terms which described citizenship responsibility included: “responsible to our children to be healthier;” “concern about people who don’t have access to fresh fruits and vegetables,” “using food to reach communities and hearts,” and “a responsibility to eat local food.” Local food was described in terms such as “healthy,” “fair,” “sustainable,” “greener future,” “deep connection with land,” “knowledge about food origin,” “responsibility to children to pass down this knowledge,” “respect the environment and cultural traditions,” and “caring about the local community.”

Examples of a citizenship responsibility frame found in the media content analysis were included in the Framing and Messaging training. This included the following quote from the newspaper article from *The Herald,*

“He is trying to nudge people to become ‘engaged citizens’ who fight for farmworker rights or lobby their representatives or set up buying clubs to support local farms. Only about 2 percent of the food bought in the United States comes from local and sustainable resources (MacVean, 2011).”

Other examples of the citizenship responsibility frame included in the Framing and Messaging training were to start a petition about asking grocery stores to source produce locally if not currently doing so and to write a letter to the newspaper editor supporting food programs that double the dollars of those who are food insecure at local farmer’s markets.
Building Communications Capacity

The Advocacy Capacity Building program included a Mission and Visioning Training, a Messaging and Framing training, the message planning, a 1-pager tool, which helped translate the answers from the message planning tool into a 1-page foundational message for the campaign, and implementation tools, the framing report, and facilitation through planning an issue campaign. Strategies that were used to develop these trainings, research, and tools addressed gaps found during a literature and resource review, findings from a community-based needs assessment and field observations, as well as key recommendations from the literature.

Ethnographic field notes, transcripts of interviews with community organizers, participants, and COPASCities staff members and team meetings, as well as documents produced by groups during the planning phases of issue campaigns were analyzed. The field notes included setting and activities observed, people who took part in activities, and meanings of what was observed from the perspectives of those observed. To establish reliability, field notes from COPASCities staff and community organizers were triangulated during analysis, along with document analysis of advocacy materials and plans in order to establish validity (Maxwell, 2012; Bernard, 2012). The COPASCities project data collection period started in July 2012, with data collection ending in July 2017. The data collection for results reported here was from August 2014 until March 2015, as M.F.A. formed as a group in August 2014. A total of 19 documents were analyzed. A case record was constructed to organize the data into a manageable file using NVivo v. 10. A final case study narrative was written. Content analysis was used to
identify core consistencies, themes, and meanings (Patton, 2005). A priori themes were identified, with allowance for emergent themes.

III. Lessons Learned

We developed these trainings, research, and tools to help local food system advocacy groups diagnose the problem or assign blame to the food system in their messaging and re-frame their messaging and action around citizen engagement. M.F.A. still took actions that were consumer-action focused while attempting to transform their messaging and action into citizen engagement. M.F.A.’s goals in their first issue campaign were to map the local food system in order to: (1) Build a base of engaged citizens that are concerned about the local food system, (2) Identify the most pressing challenges and gaps in the local food system, and (3) Distribute a food guide to build awareness of local food and to educate concerned consumers.

Applying Research to Practice

We translated research to practice by presenting the results of the S.C. media content analysis into an interactive training that encouraged critical thinking and discussion during the Messaging and Framing training. This was achieved by presenting the information in a Prezi format, along with quotes from articles as examples of the difference between individual versus physical and social environment messages and opportunities for group discussion. Presenting quotes and real examples from the media content analysis seemed to help make abstract concepts, such as collective action framing, concrete for the group. Additionally, the framing report that contained results
from the S.C. media content analysis with strategic communications recommendations was written for a wide variety of reading levels and given to M.F.A. as well.

M.F.A. appeared to connect the concept of framing, specifically collective action framing, to messaging and how this could improve the effectiveness of their issues campaigns. M.F.A. discussed as a group the importance of having clear, consistent messaging throughout campaigns. Key recommendations from the training report that specifically related to their current issue campaign was presented, such as local food values found in the media. Presenting findings specifically related to their current issue campaign helped further solidify the abstract concepts being presented in the training, as well as fostering a sense of buy-in of the importance of these concepts by the group.

One of the findings from the S.C. media content analysis that was highlighted during the messaging training was the importance of linking together childhood obesity and the food system during issue campaigns. M.F.A. members had trouble understanding the importance of linking food systems and childhood obesity prevention in messaging during issue campaigns and in forming coalitions with other groups. Group members expressed that M.F.A.’s mission is to change the local food system, not necessarily to work on childhood obesity. Group members stated that working on childhood obesity prevention was straying away from their original mission as a group. Making this link is an area that will need further capacity building.

At the time of data collection, the group was still in the beginning phases of their issue campaign. Even though they did not reach out to the media at the end of data collection, they were developing their social media presence and creating elevator
speeches for phone banking activities. The group used their foundational message created at the end of the Messaging and Training framing, as well as their mission and vision statements, in developing these messages.

**Diagnosing the problem**

Diagnosing the problem and targeting who is to blame is the first phase of collective action framing (Benford & Snow, 2000). The diagnostic frame was included in the Framing and Messaging training several times, with examples from the media framing report. The Message Planning tool included diagnostic questions, such as:

1. What is causing this problem? 2. Do you have all the information you need? If not, what questions do you need answered and by whom? 3. Who or what is to blame? 4. Who is affected by this problem? These questions were translated into the 1-pager tool, which was used to develop the foundational message for the issue campaign. During the Framing and Messaging training, M.F.A. members were uncomfortable with the questions “What is causing this problem?” and “Who or what is to blame?” The group discussed these questions and Ryan was very vocal during this conversation.

“Sometimes there are problems and we do not always have someone or something to blame,” Ryan said.

The group’s final answer to “What is causing this problem?” was: “We don’t have a concrete understanding of the local food system. There are gaps and challenges that are not currently defined. We don’t have a network of people that care about the local food system.” The group did not answer “Who is to blame?” on the Message Planning tool and this was not a part of the foundational message of the campaign.
In this instance, it may not be clear who is to blame, as the food system is abstract and hidden. A goal of the food mapping campaign was to illuminate the challenges and barriers to increasing the production, distribution, processing, and retailing of the local food system, which may have given the group more specific targets. However, the COPASCities staff reiterated several times during the training that assigning blame and defining the problem is a critical first step in using collective action framing and also in implementing effective issue campaigns (Benford & Snow, 2000). If the problem is unclear and no one is assigned blame, the prognostic frame (solution) becomes a source of contention, as it is heavily reliant on the diagnostic frame. This can lead to stakeholders communicating conflicting solutions, making it hard to mobilize a base for social change (Benford & Snow, 2000).

However, M.F.A. group members did assign blame to specific actors in the food system during planning meetings through personal stories. Adam shared a story with the group about barriers to applying for a required water permit and how he felt some of the big agriculture farms had an influence over local entities that control necessary processes. He shared what his experience has been as a small farmer working in the food system.

“When I first started out, the bigger farmers thought I was just some hippie boy. They didn’t pay any attention to me. But now, I’m bigger and making more sales. Now I’m getting their attention….I just tell them I’m not on their scale and I’m not in competition with them…that worked for a while, but now, I’m not so sure,” he said.

This conversation led to other members of the group sharing their thoughts and stories as well about their issues with the current food system. The group discussed water
conservation and the drought in California was brought up. The current food system depends on agricultural regions that some may argue, are over farmed, such as California. Now, the water sheds are at historic lows and food prices could go up because of the drought in California. The group seemed to agree that if we had more localized and regional food systems, a drought in one place may not be as devastating as it currently appears to be and could possibly be prevented because over-farming may not occur.

Another issue that was brought up was genetically-modified foods (GMOs). Ken, a local miller, said he felt like local food and the current agricultural corporations will eventually be at odds and it may be over GMOs. The results from the media content analysis revealed that there is tension around the topic of GMOs in the media currently and could be a topic where local food and the current food system clash. The argument by agricultural corporations supporting GMOs is that we are going to need to have enough food to feed the rising population or we will have a food crisis. The argument is local food and organic farming practices do not yield enough food in order to supply the growing demand, according to the analysis. GMOs were supposedly the answer to feed everyone and stop the impending food crisis, according to current agriculture industry leaders. This finding was shared with the group. This seemed to spark an interesting conversation around how local food advocacy groups can anticipate these clashes and be prepared for them.

The group discussed the importance of tying advocacy work to values in order to gear up for these clashes with the current food system. Ensuring the local food movement can clearly communicate these values will provide stronger arguments that resonate with more people. The group seemed really engaged during this conversation. It will be
interesting to see if the group is able to assign blame during their issue campaigns, especially after they complete the food mapping campaign, where local barriers and targets will become clearer and anticipate clashes with the current food system.

**Prognostic Framing: Citizen Engagement**

Building consensus around a solution (Prognostic) is the second phase of collective action framing. The prognostic frame is heavily reliant on the diagnostic frame and can be a source of contention within a social movement (Benford & Snow, 2000). Differences in opinions on solutions among movement stakeholders can lead to the communication of different solutions (Benford & Snow, 2000) and could be an issue when trying to mobilize a base for social change. The question the group posed was whether or not to engage people who were consumers, not currently involved in agriculture or the food system in other ways, as part of the solution.

In their first face-to-face meeting on October 1st, 2014, M.F.A. members said consumers were generally “misled” about food, especially about local food. Other phrases that were used to describe the consumer’s relationship with food: “People are disconnected,” “lack of transparency and knowledge of the food system,” “lack of control over the current system,” and “lack of respect for how hard it is to produce food.” The group described different ways to engage and mobilize during the Values and Visioning training held in the October 1st, 2014 meeting. “When you’re connected to where your stuff comes from, many forms of injustice are brought to light and can be more easily prevented,” was a quote that reflected the citizen engagement approach. “As a sincere
consumer and producer, I have seen the gaps in our food system and education of seasonal, regional foods,” was a quote that reflected the concerned consumer approach.

In a planning meeting in late October 2014, the group talked about why different demographics care about local food as a way to further discuss how they would engage consumers or citizens. The group stated: older people are “more price conscious,” and “the younger generation [people in their 20s] care where their food comes from, but are priced out of the market.” Adam, the small cattle farmer said, “…stay-at-home moms in their 30s seem to be the biggest customers,” because they are concerned about feeding their children nutritious food. The group felt, “…younger children are not being taught anything about farming or local food.” The group was not entirely convinced that people would become involved beyond going to the farmer’s market, but acknowledged there were other factors influencing where people bought their food.

“People are not connecting to their food…it’s not their fault, it’s the way the system is set up,” Ken, M.F.A. member and a local miller, said.

Factors such as being overwhelmed by the complexity of the food system, convenience, seasonality of certain foods, and price, were all cited as contributing to consumer choices. The group came to a consensus that the best campaign they could do was a food map that could be easily distributed, so people could learn more about local food and where the gaps are. This map would be used to reconnect people to food. The food guide would connect consumers to where they could buy local food, but also, bring awareness and education about the local food system itself.
“This guide could have information about the local food system...like how much food is grown and consumed in the Midlands...and how much food is produced to just feed the livestock,” said David Harper, M.F.A. member and executive director of the Pee Dee Land Trust, which works to protect farmland.

In the November 18th, 2014 planning meeting, discussions around the food mapping process initially concentrated on the details creating, producing, and marketing the food guide for consumers. Ryan, the former executive director of Sustainable Midlands, gave the group an update at the beginning of the meeting. She stated Sustainable Midlands would meet with the *Free Times*, a free, local alternative weekly newspaper, to discuss the possibility of them helping with creating, printing, and marketing of the food guide. She said she felt it was “premature” to meet with the *Free Times*, but it was important for the group to “…maintain the control of the content [of the food guide] and who they are selling ads to,” even though she stated she was not sure if they would be a viable partner. The group discussed other possible contacts that would give the group reduced rates on layout and design. Ryan also mentioned during this discussion that the food guide would raise awareness and should raise the level of responsibility of the consumer. ”The food guide should include information about processors, distributors, etc. because the consumers should shop responsibility,” she said.

After about 30 minutes of the conversation about how to actually produce and distribute the food guide to consumers for ease of use, someone spoke up to change the conversation from just creating a food guide for consumers to the food mapping process as a way to illuminate issues and barriers with the local food system.
“I feel like this group is turning into more of a marketing group,” Weatherly said, a M.F.A. member, local farmer, and former S.C. Department of Agriculture employee.

This comment helped to shift the conversation from balancing how the group described the food guide as a tool for consumers to how to use the food guide to engage citizens that are interested in creating impactful changes to the food system. Gary Prince from Senn Brothers, a large, local food distributor, mentioned several issues with the food system could be highlighted by the food mapping process. He said he did not think there were enough local farmers and not enough diversity of crops, nor did farmers know how to extend seasons in order to be competitive. He stated there are also regulations that a lot of people are not aware of that will hurt local farmers. He attributed his opinion to the new governmental audit questions he will be answering soon for his distribution business about Good Agricultural Practices (G.A.P.) and traceability.

“Everything I sell doesn’t have to be G.A.P. certified right now, but I believe that where it’s going because of all these new audit questions. This will be bad for small farmers,” he said.

The discussion turned away from the food guide to the food mapping process. Competing conversations about the food mapping as a process to illuminate the food system and to build a network versus the food mapping process to create a food guide for consumers continued to be an issue during planning meetings. These competing conversations were really about how this group could balance being an advocacy group that engaged citizens in their efforts and a group that produced the annual food guide for thoughtful consumers.
M.F.A. struggled to define what “local” and “sustainable” meant because this would determine which farmers and producers should be included in their efforts. Underlying this conversation was the question of power in the food system. Would M.F.A. consider engaging powerful actors in the local food system or would they position themselves to develop collective power of smaller actors? The group was encouraged to define “local” and “sustainable,” to further delineate who would be included in the membership, to help clarify group values, and finally, to assist in clear and effective messaging. Defining what “local” and “sustainable” means was a recommendation from the media framing report, and was a part of the Messaging and Framing training, as well as the Mission and Visioning training (Table 1.) In a November planning meeting, the group debated about the meanings of “local” and “sustainable” and how to include these definitions in the food guide.

“To me, local means sustainable,” Weatherly said.

“Does that mean the big chicken processors that are local would be considered sustainable then?” one farmer asked.

“Well, no, I guess not,” Weatherly said.

“We should go back to our values and our vision and define it from that,” interjected Tom, a local high school agriculture teacher.

As the group debated what “local” and “sustainable” meant, a values conversation emerged. Questions such as ‘How are we defining sustainable?’ and ‘What values are we attaching to local?’ were discussed by the group. The group settled on the idea that the local food guide would have ratings. For example, a star for S.C. Grown, another star for
Midlands Regional Grown, and another star for Sustainably Grown. The concrete
definitions of these labels was tabled for another meeting.

This conversation about local and sustainable continued into the January 2015
planning meeting. One particular farmer, W.P. Rawl, a large, family-owned farm in the
Midlands region, was mentioned during a planning meeting and brought up several
issues. Adam, the small cattle farmer, stated that he did not want the “big boys” such as
W.P. Rawl, to be included in their efforts because these big farmers had a systematic
advantage over farmers like himself.

Ryan quickly spoke up, “What is the problem with Rawl? They have sustainable
farming practices and they are family-owned and local.”

“Well, I wouldn’t want W.P. to be an enemy, that’s for sure. They have a lot of
power and clout…I want farmers to make money,” Gary, a large, local food distributor,
said.

Questions such as ‘How are we defining sustainable?,” “Does local mean little?”
and “What values are we attaching to local?” came up again, as in the November
planning meeting.

“I would like to see this group support the little guys like me. Rawls doesn’t need
help,” Adam said.

“Healthy competition is good for everyone,” Gary retorted.

The conversation seemed to center around using collective action and cooperation
to help build the local food system, while balancing business interests and profitability of
farms. Results from the S.C. farmer survey conducted by COPASCities in the Midlands
area, as well as interviews with Katie and Erin, indicated that most white farmers were
not accustomed to working collectively and did not embrace the value of cooperation. However, most black farmers and smaller farmers seemed to embrace the co-op idea and may be more open to these ideas of collective action. Currently, the farmers in M.F.A. are smaller scale farmers, like Adam. There are no black farmers currently represented. Adam appeared to be the only farmer to debate this topic openly with the group.

Several members spoke up during this debate and stated the group may represent different “mindsets,” meaning people that have different interests in the food system and that they might always agree. This sentiment seemed to quieten the debate and the group moved onto other issues in the meeting. Adam did not attend the next couple of M.F.A. meetings, but did return in April 2015.

Motivational Framing: How Can We Get People Involved?

Motivational framing, the last phase of collective action, provides the audience with mobilizing information, so that they can get involved with the social movement with specific instruction on how to act (Snow & Benford, 2000). M.F.A. struggled with this last phase of collective action framing through discussions around how to engage people in their efforts. During a planning meeting in January 2015, the group was assigned their first task of the campaign, phone banking and reaching out to local farmers, distributors, processors, retailers, consumers, and legislators interested in being a part of the food mapping process. The group was hesitant about the phone banking activity.

“What’s the ask?...I can’t just contact these state legislators and Farm Bureau without a hard ask…They’re going to tell me they don’t have time to talk. It’s pointless,” Gary said.
“Okay, we can take the politicians off the list until we have a clear issue campaign,” Katie said. Katie was the COPASCities community organizer.

“Well, I don’t see getting people committed without a hard ask. I mean, what are we wanting them to do, exactly?” Adam said.

“Here’s an idea. We could tell them our mission statement and talk about why we care about local food, then ask them if they want to be on the food map or be a group member,” Ryan said.

“That’s like a salesman calling without a product. It’s hard to do cold calling…Why don’t we start putting a food map together and say we’re updating information and ask them if they want to be a part of it?,” Gary asked.

“Let’s try to remember that this is about community building…One of our goals is to use the phone banking as a way to build personal relationships and a base that is interested in local food issues and to see if these people know other people that want to be involved,” Katie interjected.

Another M.F.A. member, Ariel, also mentioned how she started her own farm and got business by being on different email lists. She started pushing for an e-mail list instead of making phone calls through the phone bank. She stated they needed to generate buzz and consolidate resources for local farmers, as this process is very disjointed. Weatherly pushed back, stating there are already agencies that should be doing this.

“We need to do something different. I’m struggling. I have the acreage…but can’t expand because I can’t find labor to work my farm. We need to solve these problems for
local food, not just market it….I thought that’s what this group was formed to do,” she said.

Ariel stated she felt like emailing and social media was just a more efficient way to reach people in general.

“Look, we have the chance to do something radical in the Midlands,” Weatherly stated. She explained that the Midlands region was historically overlooked by the State Department of Agriculture, with the Low Country and Greenville areas getting the money and attention for local food.

“We have the chance to really switch it up,” Weatherly said.

“Well, since no one is looking, we could do something really different without constraints,” Ken said.

The group continued to discuss phone banking and appeared to have a couple good reasons for being hesitant with the phone banking, such as not having a clear, hard ask. M.F.A. members threw out several ideas, such as hosting an annual meeting, hosting ‘Meet the Farmer’ events or having a booth at the farmer’s market. Ultimately, the group decided that because Whole Foods pulled funding for the annual local farm tour in the Midlands, they would host their own in September. There would be a hard ask for the phone banking activity, and would be building a relationship, database, and a food map at the same time. They could use events, such as the Slow Food event, to highlight the map. These educational events; however, did not ask people to become engaged citizens or to be involved in actually advocating for local food system change.
In February 2015, M.F.A. was split into different subgroups, including Advocacy, Outreach and Marketing, the Farm Tour Planning group, and the Food Guide Planning group. The Advocacy group was tasked with identifying issues and policies which the group can advocate for or against. This group may be tasked with further answering the questions of when, where, and how citizen engagement will occur. The group tabled the idea of phone banking, but picked up the idea again in a March 2015 planning meeting.

Figure 4.1 Timeline of M.F.A. Events
IV. Limitations

Conducting research in community settings is difficult due to the political, social, and policy environment being out of the researcher’s control. Ethnography was used to capture the context. Ethnographic methods are usually limited to one or two communities at a time. However, this project provided in-depth data needed about a process, laying a foundation for future work. Ethnography also depends heavily on the primary researcher as the instrument. All researchers have biases based on experiences, roles, and knowledge gained that shape their reality. To ensure the objectivity of the researcher, feelings about the work were overtly expressed in the field notes in a specific section, so that biases are acknowledged, as well using multiple sources of data to triangulate the results.

V. Future Directions

Examining how the media is covering food system change is the first step in understanding where and how groups such as M.F.A. can re-frame the debate around food systems change (Snow & Benford, 2000; Ryan, Carragee & Meinhofer, 2001; Dorfman, 2003). As groups such as M.F.A. become more adept at re-framing food systems change as a citizenship rather than as consumer issues, local mainstream conversations in media may change, as well (Guthman, 2008; Blue, 2009). Additionally, more knowledge is needed about the effectiveness of advocacy capacity building efforts to engage citizens, as well as how to effectively use collective action framing during issue campaigns, to bring about the impactful food system changes that are needed (Snow & Benford, 2000; Ryan, Carragee & Meinhofer, 2001; Dorfman, 2003).
I. Introduction

Public health researchers recommend policy, systems and environmental (P.S.E.) changes as the most promising public health approach to childhood obesity prevention (Brennan, Castro, Brownson, Claus & Orleans, 2011; Koplan, Liverman & Kraak, 2005; Marmot, Friel, Bell, Houweling & Taylor, 2008; Swinburn, 2009). P.S.E. strategies could focus on changing the food system (Sobush, Keener, Goodman, Lowry, Kakietek & Zaro, 2009; Marmot & Bell, 2010). To create food system change, advocacy efforts will likely need to assign responsibility for obesity on: a food system that promotes consumption of high-energy foods; lack of corporate responsibility for food accessibility and affordability; and social policies that discourage the production of low-energy dense foods (Gollust, Lantz, & Ubel, 2009; Freudenberg, Bradley, & Serrano, 2009; Dorfman, Wallack & Woodruff, 2003; Kim & Willis, 2007). Building stronger local food systems that promote ecological sustainability for farmers and consumers, social justice, better nutrition, food security, freshness and quality may represent an important P.S.E. change when compared to the current food system (Born & Purcell, 2006; Hinrichs, 2003).

Raising critical consciousness about the food system is a key component in advancing advocacy work to promote social justice in the food system (Feenstra, 1997; Allen, 1999); however little is known about this process. Linking together food system advocacy work and social justice issues, may not only help community groups clarify the values that provide the foundation for their advocacy work, but also raise critical consciousness about the food system to encourage collection action (Allen, 1999; Galt 2013). Raising critical consciousness about the food system includes changing attitudes
and beliefs toward food and talking about food as situated in political, economic, and social contexts, instead of merely treating food as a commodity (Allen, 1999). Revealing the lack of connection to the food system (i.e. lack of knowledge of food origin and ingredients) and the revealing the consequences of the current food system (i.e. the impact of unsustainable farming practices or the use of slave labor in farming) are ways to raise critical consciousness.

Galt et. al (2013) described three types of consciousness during their analysis of students’ writings and reflections in a food system change college-level course. The process included a reflection of values in their own personal and social context; a review of information, evidence, and field experience through service learning-type activities; with lectures, readings, and reflections. Types of consciousness achieved included: 1. Personal or neoliberal consciousness that led to reflections about changing their own consumption behavior; 2. Community well-being or a liberal consciousness that led to reflections about bringing good food to others; and 3. Radical consciousness, related to critical consciousness in that it led to reflections about calling for and organizing around social justice and social change (Allen, 1999; Freire, 2000). These definitions were used to analyze the different types of consciousness that were achieved in this study.

Raising radical consciousness about the food system is a critical first step towards utilizing collective action framing to advance the food system change work because defines problems beyond individual personal choice or individual service to enhance community well-being. Collective action framing is a multidisciplinary approach to understanding why and how collective action occurs in society. Collective action framing organizes thinking about how social change happens (Benford & Snow, 2000).
Successful advocacy efforts generally use three types of collective action frames: 1. Diagnostic (problem definition, assign blame, and why it matters), 2. Prognostic (define solutions in concrete terms that will create the change that is needed), and 3. Motivational (mobilize action) (Dorfman, 2003; Lakoff, 2008; Benford & Snow, 2000). Food system change groups could use collective action framing in order to further advance advocacy work.

Values are a key component in effective advocacy work, but are often not identified or communicated (Dorfman, 2003; Lakoff, 2008). Food justice advocacy groups may be more successful if they communicate core values behind the changes needed for a healthier, fairer, and more socially-just food system (Lakoff, 2008; McDonald & Viehbeck, 2007), thereby challenging power and building a common base (Sbicca, 2012; Allen, 1999) to further advance their work. Food justice initiatives that incorporate social justice issues and values such as economic inequality, food security, labor, and sustainability, may provide an effective focus for changing the oppressive structures of the current food system (Sbicca, 2012). Having a common ideological base and tactics and a link to anti-oppression frames could connect segments that may be localized or regionalized food justice movements under a unifying message, while also broadening their base of support to include other groups that are built on similar values and opportunities for coalition building, advancing these movements further (Sbicca, 2012; Allen, 1999).

The purpose of this study was to: 1. Raise the consciousness of a food system advocacy group in South Carolina (S.C.); 2. Facilitate the definition of group values; 3. Strengthen the linkage between their values, social justice ideals, and their advocacy
work; and 4. Provide an in-depth description of this process. We wanted to know more about strategies to raise consciousness about the food system, different types of critical consciousness that emerged, the role of values, and how this would translate to practice in the groups’ advocacy work.

Childhood Obesity Prevention in South Carolina Communities (COPASCities) is a 5-year United States Department of Agriculture (U.S.D.A.) research project through the Center for Research for Nutrition and Health Disparities at the University of South Carolina. COPASCities seeks to: 1. Build the capacity of community leaders to change the food system in S.C., and 2. Better understand how leaders change food systems while developing a practice-based model for the U.S.D.A. COPASCities aims to increase the capacity of community-based groups to change local food systems through using community organizing techniques, with a Participatory Action Research (P.A.R.) model guiding the conceptual framework of the project and activities. The Organic Helpers (T.O.H.) were selected for this study and agreed to pilot the Advocacy Capacity Building program. T.O.H. was formed through community organizing efforts by COPASCities staff in partnership with Eat Smart Move More South Carolina (E.S.M.M.S.C.)

II. Methods

Design

COPASCities is a community-based participatory ethnographic study documenting the process of change that focuses on health equity and social justice. In short, COPASCities works to bring people who lack access to nutritious food, or are food insecure, to the decision-making table in communities, and to document how their
advocacy creates food system changes. Ethnography is a way to provide the detail and contextual background needed to understand how this kind of process unfolds (Maxwell, 2012), including identification of key players and of promising future directions for the community-based groups’ advocacy efforts. The relationship between the community and researcher was based upon respect, reflection, and collective participation.

**Study Location**

The COPASCities project is a statewide effort for obesity prevention and food systems change in S.C. Four communities were selected in Year 1 of the project within the Midlands region of S.C. Two of the COPASCities communities received the additional Advocacy Capacity Building program, one of which was T.O.H.

**Intervention**

Overall, the COPASCities project used community organizing techniques and tools, such as door knocking and strategy charts, to engage communities and assist them in planning issue campaigns. The tradition of community organizing is innovative to these groups, as historically, the S.C. culture has not been conducive to community organizing in the past (Bobo, Kendall & Max, 2001). For example, ethnographic field notes gathered from coalitions revealed a resistance to using the term “community organizing” as the perception is that using the term may be polarizing because of the association with certain political parties or campaigns, such as President Obama’s election campaigns. The perception also was that using community organizing techniques would challenge power openly and require targets for change. These same targets wielded a lot of power and challenging them could hurt needed relationships, possibly
harming the image and work that groups have accomplished in S.C. Part of the planning process was dedicated to openly discussing concerns with community organizing tactics with community-based groups, anticipating oppositional frames and how to react to these.

The COPASCities project staff also developed a series of capacity-building training sessions and activities to help communities create changes to their local food systems. The capacity-building intervention included a Food Systems Change Certificate Program, a hired part-time community organizer from the community, as well as an Advocacy Capacity Building program, which included a Message and Framing training, messaging tools (i.e. message planning and 1-pager tools, S.C. framing report), and facilitation through planning an issue campaign. The COPASCities project staff developed a Food Systems Change Certificate Program with the goals of building capacity of community groups to learn how to develop connections, strengthen resources, and create change in their communities and local food systems. The training was designed to bring diverse groups of people together to identify challenges and opportunities within the local food system and to collectively develop strategies through community organizing and advocacy. Training sessions included presentations of material that encouraged critical thinking, group dialogue and reflection (Table 1). T.O.H. served as a pilot community for the certificate program development.

T.O.H. participated in an Advocacy Capacity Building program that included a Message and Framing training and a framing report providing recommendations for messaging during issue campaigns based upon a S.C. media content analysis of food systems and childhood obesity coverage. Message planning and 1-pager tools and
facilitation to develop advocacy capacity during an issue campaign was provided, to understand how to communicate more effectively during issue campaigns. These tools, reports, and the training were based upon key recommendations from the literature.

Data Collection

Ethnographic field notes, transcripts of interviews with community organizers, participants, and COPASCities staff members and team meetings, and documents produced by community groups in planning issue campaigns were analyzed. The field notes included the setting and activities observed, people who took part in activities, and meanings of what was observed from the perspectives of those observed. This was captured through describing the location, people, activities and interactions; observer’s feelings along with the nature and intensity of feelings experienced, direct quotes using the emic perspective; insights, interpretations, and documenting what happened as well as what did not happen (Patton, 2005).

The observations were overt, as T.O.H. members knew the nature of the research project, and were made from participant perspective, as the researchers were a part of the process through their facilitator roles (Patton, 2005). However, since the researchers are not members of the community, the perspective offered an informed outsider’s perspective. To garner insider’s perspectives, transcripts of T.O.H. member interviews and community organizer interviews were also analyzed. IRB guidelines were followed to ensure confidentiality and informed consent.
Data Analysis

The case study approach is a specific way to collect, organize, and analyze in-depth, comprehensive data (Patton, 2005). To establish reliability, field notes from COPASCities staff and community organizers were triangulated during analysis, along with document analysis of advocacy materials and plans in order to establish validity (Maxwell, 2012; Bernard, 2012). Multiple sources of data providing different perspectives produced a triangulation of sources. Preliminary findings were shared with the COPASCities research group and discussed, providing analyst triangulation through sharing multiple ways to interpret the data, as well as illuminating any blind spots in the analysis (Patton, 1999). The raw case data was assembled into a comprehensive package, then a case record was constructed to organize the data into a manageable file using NVivo v. 10. A final case study narrative was written, with feedback from COPASCities staff members, during this step. Content analysis was used to identify core consistencies, themes, and meanings, as this type of analysis is often used in case studies (Patton, 2005). A priori themes were identified, including the different levels of consciousness about the food system, values expressed by T.O.H., and the different phases of collective action framing, with allowance for emergent themes.

III. Case Study: Chester, S.C.

Contextual Background

Chester is a small Southern town, 30 minutes from any major interstate and about 30 minutes from Charlotte, North Carolina in the northern part of the state. Ghosts of past prosperous times can be seen while riding down Main Street and around the downtown
area known as “The Hill.” Empty brick buildings that once housed clothing stores and family-owned restaurants open for textile workers’ 30-minute lunch breaks are mixed in with newer shops, with restored wooden floors and tile ceilings, selling antiques and flowers, as part of the downtown revitalization project. There is also an emergency food pantry that often has too many people lined up on certain days outside on the sidewalk and too few boxes of food available. There are restaurants where you can sit at the counter and order pulled pork barbecue sandwiches or plates of what is just known simply as “barbecue” with dill pickles. Mixed into the original downtown fixture of buildings are a Fred’s Discount Store, churches of several dominations, local barber shops, car repair shops, and gas stations. Part of the downtown revitalization project is restoring a park on “The Hill,” featuring a Confederate War Memorial (Downtown, 2015). There is also an area outside downtown for shopping, where there is a Walmart, chain grocery stores, and fast food restaurants. Outside of these two areas, the rest of the county is rural.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the population for Chester County was 32,578 in 2013, with a 1.7% population loss recorded between 2010 and 2013. The racial breakdown for the county is mainly white (60%) and black (37%), with 78% of the population having a high school degree, and only 12% having a bachelor’s degree or higher. The median income was $33,103 between 2009 and 2013, with roughly 25% of Chester County living in poverty in 2013 (Chester County, South Carolina, 2015). From the late 1800s until the 2000s, Chester County’s industries were mainly farming and textiles. Springs Industries, one of the world’s largest textile companies, was the largest employer in Chester County in 1988 (Chester County History, 2015). In the 2000s,
Springs Industries began laying off workers in Chester and around South Carolina, finally moving all manufacturing operations to South America in 2007, after roughly 120 years of operation in South Carolina (Hopkins, 2007).

The February 2015 unemployment rate in Chester is 9.7%, which was a decline from the 20.9% annual unemployment rate in 2009 (February 2015; Annual 2015). In June 2014, an international tire company announced plans to move their North American headquarters to Chester County, making an investment of $560 million and bringing in 1,700 new jobs over the next decade (Giti, 2014). Training for these new jobs is slated to start in mid-2015 (About, 2015).

The Formation of T.O.H.

COPASCity partnered with E.S.M.M.S.C. In S.C., a central E.S.M.M. office oversees local E.S.M.M. coalitions across the state, giving them resources and providing facilitation for efforts in their local communities to implement childhood obesity prevention programs. E.S.M.M.S.C. coalitions were working to create P.S.E. changes in S.C. communities, including food systems changes since the Fall of 2007. COPASCity partnered with local coalitions interested in using community organizing as a strategy to create P.S.E. change to improve food systems for obesity prevention. E.S.M.M. Chester was interested in using community organizing strategies to bring more Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (S.N.A.P.) recipients to their newly developing farmers’ market and community kitchen. E.S.M.M. Chester was formed in January 2012 and is made up of mainly white and middle- to upper-class people living outside of Chester that
serve on the committee as part of their full-time employment, usually with a governmental or non-profit entity.

The COPASCities research team, along with Tammy, the part-time community organizer, used community organizing techniques such as door knocking, to bring interested people from the community together to engage them in food system change in the Summer of 2013. In addition to door knocking, Tammy met with organizations, businesses, agencies, people from the local Department of Social Services, and other key stakeholders in the community that may be interested in food system change work. She also attended a city council meeting, where she presented information about COPASCities and attended community events, such as the farmer’s market. Tammy organized the first meeting in August 2013 and T.O.H. was formed shortly thereafter. T.O.H. of Chester, S.C. is a community-based group with a hired part-time community organizer and volunteers who are interested in food system change projects such as increasing low-income participants’ access to local, fresh produce. T.O.H. is mainly made up of black members who have grown up in Chester, are economically disadvantaged, and who live in different neighborhoods in Chester. As T.O.H. members, they are responsible for reaching out to their neighbors to build relationships, membership, and to garner support during issue campaigns.

Mistrust of Political Power

Chester is a divided community, especially around politics; however, Chester residents expressed a sense of responsibility to take care of one another. The political and community divide was discussed during a photovoice session in July 2013 organized by
COPASCities. During the photovoice activity, it was clear that a number of participants had lived outside of Chester, had been successful, and returned to live in Chester. Despite their mistrust of politicians and a sense of hopelessness about the economic situation, people returned to Chester because they wanted to make it better and wanted to build a sense of community. One photovoice participant said, “We have people to take care of.” The group also talked about community well-being in terms of advocating for a food system that is nourishing and healing for the community, but also as a responsibility to take care of the elderly and children and those who cannot take care of themselves.

T.O.H. members also expressed a level of divide and mistrust with political leaders in their community, which was typified by a run for political office by Tammy, T.O.H.’s community organizer. Chester City Councilmember Odell Williams allegedly threatened the Chester City Police Chief at a City Council meeting in March 2014 (Leland & McFadden, 2014). Williams was allegedly shot by gang members near his home in December 2014. In 2010, Chester County had the 9th highest violent crime rate in S.C. (Crime, 2010). Shortly after Williams’ death, Chester County Sheriff Alex Underwood addressed Chester County Council members, asking for action to solve the gang problem. Sheriff Underwood’s address turned into a shouting match with the council member officials, covered by the local news media (Leland & McFadden, 2014). Williams’ murder left a seat vacant on the Chester City Council and a special election was held.

During an issue campaign planning meeting on January 6, 2015, Tammy announced that she was running for the vacated city council seat. T.O.H. members talked about their mistrust of their currently-elected political leaders during the meeting.
“It’s supposed to be for the people, by the people, but they don’t give a ____ about the people…It’s been creeping out here and there. They pass what they want, when they want,” Robert said, a black man in his 50s, who has lived in Chester all his life.

“One group’s just taking power from another and we’re sick of it,” Jackie said, another black T.O.H. member, who also has lived in Chester all her life. She turned to Tammy and said, “You get in there and get something done.” The group joked that once Tammy got in, she would turn into “one of them.”

The divide in Chester does not simply stop at race. The Chester mayor at the time of this conversation was a black woman. There was also a number of other city and county administrative staff and board members that were black as well. The divide also appears to be a class issue. T.O.H. members often felt that the black elected officials did not represent their concerns and they were often left behind by these officials once elected. This is illustrated by the pressure that Tammy felt to drop out of the race.

Tammy pulled out of the race a couple weeks later for both personal reasons and amidst pressure from both the white and black communities, to allow for the other two candidates to run. Before a planning meeting on January 20, 2015, Tammy described the factors that went into her decision to drop out of the race. She worked part-time for the COPASCities project, was the executive director of Battered But Not Broken, a nonprofit organization in Chester that she founded, ran her own part-time cleaning business, and attended college part-time in order to finish her bachelor’s degree. Other factors also influenced her.
One of the candidates, who was black, was from a well-known, upper class family in Chester and was rumored to have a drug problem. It appeared that some people from the black community wanted her to stay in the race, but others wanted to her drop out, as she would split the black vote. People from the white community asked her to withdraw because the other candidate, who was white, was “a really good man,” according to Tammy. She dropped out, citing she felt God was telling her it was not the right path for her right now, but stated she planned on running for office again in the future.

Racial and Class Segregation

Tammy expressed that Chester is racially segregated and she feels split between the black and white communities. When Tammy was released from prison several years ago, she saw a newspaper advertisement for a leadership class in Chester and signed up for it. The class cost $175 and this was money she did not have. She called the contact number any way, told her story about her prison time, how she found God and faith, and was trying to start a nonprofit in order to help ex-offenders like herself get their lives back in order. She explained she was, “stepping out on faith” by telling the gentleman her story. Her fee was waived, and, during the class, she made many important social connections, including with affluent black and white residents of Chester. She also started running a part-time cleaning business and her social connections turned into business customers and members of her non-profit board of directors. She employs ex-offenders in her business and often served as a bridge between social classes in Chester. As she built trust in the community, cleaning clients gave her keys to their homes.
Tammy is known in Chester for stopping on the street, even in the worst neighborhoods, if she sees someone in need. For example, if she sees someone walking down the street who appears to be on drugs, she has been known to stop her car, no matter where she’s going, and counsel them. Tammy said the people who serve on her non-profit board have told her, “they’ll serve this way [on the board], because they won’t do the type of work that I do. They’ve told me they won’t go into the neighborhoods that I do to reach these people.”

As passionate as Tammy feels about her nonprofit work with ex-offenders and as grateful as she is that community members accepted her and her story, she said she gets tired of being known as the “battered but not broken person.” Often she is in situations or meetings where she is asked to share her story, even though it has nothing to do with the agenda. Even though her story is met with admiration by her audience, she gets tired of being known as “that” person and would sometimes just like to be known for other roles in the community.

She feels her role as a community organizer has further complicated her position, as it is her job to empower the disenfranchised, mainly black, and lower-income members of Chester to challenge power in Chester. This power could be held or reinforced by the very same people that serve on her board, are her cleaning clients, and friends in the community. She said she is perceived by the white community as a bridge between the two races and often feels torn between the black and white community. This bridging issue has been an ongoing internal struggle that Tammy has dealt with as she has evolved into an experienced community organizer who is illuminating hidden power structures through the process of organizing. The COPASCities activities and trainings specifically
for community organizers are designed to build Tammy’s capacity to challenge oppressive power structures in Chester, and through this process, critical consciousness is raised. As Tammy becomes more seasoned as a community organizer, her raised critical consciousness has made her more aware of the racial and class divides in Chester, seemingly making her bridge between the two races stretch further and further.

**COPASCities Activities and Trainings**

Raising the *radical* consciousness of the food system a learning objective through the Food System Change Certificate program. This program, piloted with T.O.H., revealed the consequences of the current food system such as lack of transparency (i.e. lack of knowledge of food origin and ingredients, lack of knowledge of how food is produced, distributed, sold, and consumed) and connection to our food, unequal access to healthy food, unfair labor practices, inhumane treatment of animals, and unsustainable practices of the current agriculture system. During these trainings, these issues with the food system were linked to social justice issues. The four sessions described in Table 4.4, were designed to elicit group discussion, so that the group could actively reflect on the information given. Attendance ranged from 5-10 people per session.

The photovoice activity, held in July 2013, was the first step in getting to know the community and their priorities for food system change, and the first session in the Food System Change Certificate program. Mainly low-income and black residents were recruited for the photovoice session, as the E.S.M.M.S.C. Chester coalition asked COPASCities to help them identify the barriers to participating in the farmer’s market. Community members brought in pictures of their food system and discussed what issues
were most pressing to start working on as a group. The Chester community members answered SHOWeD questions: 1. What do you see here?, 2. What is really happening here?, 3. How does this relate to our lives?, 4. Why does this situation exist?, and 5. What can we do about it? (Wang & Burris, 1997). This contextualized what was going on in the food system and unearthed the inequalities at a local level (Allen, 1999). One photovoice participant said, “We are so divided…We do not work well together with all the big ‘I’s.’” Food was also seen as a lost connection. One participant in the photovoice project stated, “We have lost our connection with our food and as a community. I am not connecting with my peers.”

One of the sessions, “Uncovering our Values and the Food System: Introduction,” was given in October 2013. During the photovoice session, people were asked to visualize and connect issues of the food system. During this training, members were asked to explore values and create mission and vision statements. T.O.H. members were encouraged to connect personal experiences (i.e. gardening with grandparents, traditions such as canning, and traditional foods shared with family or at important events) to food and explore how to take action to change the food system. T.O.H. members discussed a list of common values in social justice work (Lakoff, 2008). T.O.H. voted to include the following values: fulfillment, community building, open communication, fairness, responsibility, competence, opportunity, cooperation, trust, and honesty. The group also added their own values during the conversation: encouragement, motivation, and love.

“We have to be the ones to go out there [to create change] and we are trusting one another…We have to reach our community,” Robert said, during the exercise.
T.O.H. members were given resources on how to write mission and vision statements, which were written with facilitation from the community organizer and community organizer supervisor within a month of the training. The mission statement is: “The Organic Helpers are committed to creating a fair, just, and transparent local food system that is easily accessible and affordable for all community members; to promoting spiritual community building; and to organizing the community around our fundamental commitment to create positive and lasting change in our local food system.” The group’s vision statement is: “To create a food system where all future generations experience and value fresh, local, organic fruits, vegetables, and meats.”

The Uncovering our Values training included viewing the Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech. The speech is included for this training because Martin Luther King Jr. was able to clearly articulate the values of the Civil Rights Movement in this speech, as these values resonated with many different types of people. The speech provided a great example of how clearly communicating values can be a powerful tool in garnering support for a social movement. Showing the speech elicited group discussion about why the members participated in community organizing efforts to change the food system.

“I want a better world for my children…He [Martin Luther King, Jr.] gave his life for the Civil Rights Movement, and he has died, and he is bringing us together still,” Robert said. Tammy said she looked to the Bible for guidance on community organizing and bringing people together to create change.

“John wrote in Revelations...about all the people coming together. My dream is that everyone can eat healthy and it takes more than one person,” she said.
T.O.H. members described their food connection as a spiritual connection and the spiritual connection was a value in their mission statement. They felt food was nourishment for the soul and talked often about their faith, and the connection to the earth and food during the values training. T.O.H. cited the lack of connection to food because of convenience and cost, lack of knowledge about cooking and nutrition, and the sheer complexity of the food system. *Raised radical* consciousness of the food system emerged as the lack of transparency and disconnection in the food system was being exposed.

*Community well-being* consciousness appeared to be a key reason why members participated in food systems change work. T.O.H. members valued taking care of their community, building relationships, and strengthening their communities. T.O.H. members also connected local food to the local economy, to the past and traditions, to the community, and to health and well-being. T.O.H. members further reflected *community well-being* consciousness when asked the question from the values training: “What do you want your children’s and grandchildren’s food system to look like?”

“I would like my grandchildren to know that…you can pick a spot to grow your own homegrown fruits and vegetables…without pesticides and God knows what…we are T.O.H., we need to teach them. If we don’t teach them, they won’t know,” Robert said.

Also for this question, T.O.H. members expressed the need for agricultural education for children, discussed the traditions and culture around farming, and being connected to the land as a way to strengthen connections within the community. T.O.H. continued to host community events, cooking classes, and gardening as a way for the community to connect back to food, further reflecting *community well-being*. 
Personal consciousness about the food system was also found in their group values, conversations about personal health, food origin, and the local food system. Group values related to personal consciousness included: “To know where the food comes from,” and “I want to grow it myself.” T.O.H. members stated they wanted healthy, naturally-grown food. They wanted to know their food’s origin, with farmers selling directly to them, and how to grow their own food, giving them a personal connection with food. T.O.H. members mentioned food origin as being aware of the ingredients in food and where it came from, learning about seasonality and different types of vegetables, cooking, and health (i.e. better nutrition through fresher, local food and portion sizes).

Role of Values, Mission and Vision

As a group, a shared sense of values, mission, and vision solidified the group’s identity and helped sustain the group. In one planning meeting, T.O.H. acknowledged that their membership ebbs and flows, but having a strong sense of shared values motivated people to stay involved. T.O.H. has experienced its own set of personal challenges, with some group members moving out of town for a job, being only able to secure seasonal work, and issues such as incarceration and major surgery. T.O.H. members described themselves as a family. For example, one T.O.H. member thanked the community organizer during a planning meeting for checking in with him during a time of bad health.

T.O.H.’s mission and vision statements were featured as the first line in a local newspaper article featuring their Community Kitchen issue campaign. Their mission and vision statements appeared on informational cards handed out during door knocking.
activities and were discussed during issue campaign planning meetings and in issue campaign messaging. T.O.H. continued to use their values, mission, vision statements in their latest issue campaign, the Safe Routes to School campaign, communicating values such as “equal” and “fairness” in their messaging.

The Community Kitchen Campaign

T.O.H. members participated in their first issue campaign starting in January 2014 about a community kitchen that was being built at the local farmer’s market, demanding accountability and inclusion from the Chester City Council. T.O.H. members were interested in the community kitchen issue because it would provide them and the community an economic opportunity to sell their own products, such as jams and canned vegetables made from locally-produced products, which could boost consumption and economic viability of local food. The kitchen could also serve as a place to hold cooking classes, church groups could use it to make large quantities of food for fundraisers or to feed the hungry, and it could promote the farmer’s market itself. The community kitchen project had received federal funding, but the bidding process for the construction work had stopped without any explanation in August 2013. T.O.H. asked the Chester mayor and city administrator for answers, but were getting nowhere.

Mary, the COPASCities community organizer supervisor, urged the group during a planning meeting in January 2014 to take turns calling the city administrator, asking for answers, while asking friends and family to do the same. Mary also made an emotional appeal to the group to attend the Chester City Council meeting the following week and to consider being put on the public comment list to address the council during the meeting.
Chester community members and T.O.H. members were commenting about how upset they were that they were not getting answers, but fell quiet when Mary asked for action.

Since this was the first issue campaign for many of T.O.H. members, the COPASCities staff modeled community organizing techniques, such as developing asks (i.e. such as asking people to attend city council meetings, write editorials to the newspaper, or sign petitions) modeling door knocking activities in neighborhoods, and preparing Tammy, who had volunteered to address city council. COPASCities staff members also prepared T.O.H. members for speaking to the press. “Let’s grow Chester together,” was the slogan selected by T.O.H. for the Community Kitchen campaign and it embodies community well-being. The slogan appeared in newspaper articles written during this campaign. Also, their mission was repeated several times during the Community Kitchen campaign in newspaper articles and during activities such as door knocking, as a group advocating for “a fair, just, transparent local food system,” reflecting radical consciousness.

A march on City Hall was planned in April 2014 after the city mayor and administrator cancelled an informational meeting with T.O.H. at the last minute. The march on City Hall was met with a considerable amount of trepidation from T.O.H. members, as it was the first time they had ever participated in a march. While preparing for the march and making signs, Tammy talked to the group about the reasons to participate in T.O.H. Members expressed they wanted to make things better for their children or future generations and often mentioned a connection with their spirituality and faith, speaking of the Civil Rights Movement and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s work. These are the same themes that T.O.H. members mentioned during the “Uncovering our
Values and Food System: Introduction” training. This seemed to help center the members and give them courage. T.O.H. members listened to a gospel song called “Change is Coming” as they prepared, as the group members shared a connection to their faith. Mary described the scene in an interview afterwards:

“And so it was a very powerful experience with being around the tables making picket signs with [T.O.H.]. We asked people ‘what do you want your sign to say?’, and we helped them make signs with their messages. We had "We're No April Fools," "We Want to Meet this Month," "Change Today"....And then we all marched behind them with our signs. The Chester News and Reporter editor, Travis, came and he took pictures. They were featured on the front page that weekend...It was a very powerful moment...everyone was just so excited and felt like they were actually taking some action, like doing something about their frustrations, which is one of the things that Tammy always brings up. They say, 'you know, this is how it's always been and this is how it's going to be'.... So for them to take a step and say, ‘you know, not only am I out there talking to my neighbors, but I'm also doing something...I'm taking a stand and I'm letting my voice be heard’...so we marched down the street and we chanted.”

T.O.H. called the media to let them know about the march, which was a story featured on the front page of the local newspaper. During this first issue campaign, T.O.H. also wrote press releases, informed the local media when they were going to address local city council during the public comment period at monthly meetings, and invited the media to T.O.H. community meetings. COPASCities staff suggested during the facilitation process to develop a relationship with the local media. T.O.H. members expressed nervousness about engaging the media, as no one in the group had experience with this. The COPASCities staff offered tips for best practices, such as being available within 24 hours of contact for any follow-up questions from journalists, as they are often working on a deadline and guidance on how to write and distribute press releases to the local media. T.O.H. designated a group spokesperson, who was also the main contact for the local media. The group was often available for comment and follow-up questions for the journalist covering the community kitchen.
Eventually, T.O.H. members were given the information about why kitchen construction had been delayed. Kitchen construction started again and is scheduled to open in the Summer of 2015. However, T.O.H. members are still working on the campaign as of April 2015, as they have not completely gained inclusion in the process of decision making around the kitchen. They still seek answers about how they could be included on a governing board in charge of the kitchen about how the kitchen will be used. In a community meeting in March 2015, the group asked the farmer’s market manager, who is temporarily overseeing the progress of the kitchen, to give them an update. The group pushed him for answers about when exactly the community kitchen is opening and about the board selection process without any encouragement from the COPASCities staff to do so. Highlighting lack of access to information, resources, and decision-makers seemed to be a way to illuminate the power structures within the food system, making the very abstract concept of power in the food system a concrete, localized target for community groups. This may be a way to help raise radical consciousness.

The Safe Routes to Schools Campaign

Tammy asked the group to present issues and vote on their next issue campaign topic during a planning meeting during the Summer of 2014. Jackie stood up to speak in front of the group at this meeting. She had stapled papers in hand, at first speaking with a slightly trembling voice, looking at the back corner of the room as she spoke. She described the health disparities between blacks and whites in S.C. She presented research that linked education level and economic opportunities to health outcomes. Jackie was able to connect several systems of oppression in her speech, including unequal access to
education, health disparities for marginalized groups, and lack of access to a healthy school breakfast, which is linked to positive educational outcomes and health, reflecting a raised radical consciousness.

She often pointed to the papers as she spoke, but never read from them. Then, she started sharing with the group that her daughter had to walk to the high school because the school district did not provide bussing for her neighborhood. Her daughter was having trouble completing school. She had several tardies and absences and she worried about her safety, as Chester has a gang problem. Her voice gained passion and she was adamant when she talked about her daughter. She looked at the group as she spoke about her daughter. The local school district policy allegedly states that children who live within a mile and a half of the high school must walk and some of these routes are dangerous. Children are also not making it to school on time to receive access to the school breakfast, which affects their educational and health outcomes, and ties in with T.O.H.’s mission.

“This bus issue was the same 30 years ago when I was in school. I’m sick of things always being the same here. It’s time for change…I want better for my children,” she said.

T.O.H. voted that day to take on the Safe Routes to School campaign. Their short-term goals are to ensure children have a safe physical and social environment to walk in, free of stray packs of dogs, adults preying on children, safe cross walks, and sidewalks. The long-term goal is to ensure every child has access to the bus. T.O.H. is taking on this
issue campaign with several community partners and stakeholders including, E.S.M.M.
Chester and the local YMCA branch.

The main issue throughout the campaign is lack of information about the local school bussing policy, the number of children that have been impacted, and how this policy has affected drop-out rates. T.O.H. had questions such as: 1. Was the mile and a half radius determined by walking distance or a true parameter?, 2. What neighborhoods were affected?, and 3. What was the local school district definition of excessive weather, a clause in the state policy, where local districts are required to provide transportation during excessive weather events. The group has called the local school district several times, speaking with everyone from the public relations manager, all the way up to the superintendent of schools.

In a January 2015 planning meeting with T.O.H., Tammy asked me to make a phone call to the school board, to see if I could get information about the policy that they had asked for and not received.

“I want you to try, just to see if they give the information to a white person,” she said.

I had been working with T.O.H. for a couple years and had built trust with the group. We were able to discuss race and class issues very honestly, but this was the first time that I was asked to do something because of my race.

She handed me the phone. I was a little taken aback and for a split second wondered if I was stepping over my bounds as a researcher, even as a participating observer. I felt like I needed to make this call because I believe access to knowledge is a form of power and a crucial part of issue campaigns. I called Janette Skinner, a contact in
the Transportation Department that Tammy had previously tried to get information about the bussing policy. Her secretary directed me to her line, and someone picked up the phone. The voice stated she was not there, but stated to call a gentleman that is over the bus policy. She gave me his name and number. Before I made the next phone call, I shared with the T.O.H. members that I went through this every day as a former journalist. I shared that I felt access to knowledge is power and I believe this is one way that people hide power. I asked T.O.H. members to think back about how the community kitchen was handled and how they had to fight for access to knowledge. I told them this is how it is probably going to be with each campaign.

Tammy took the phone and made three subsequent phone calls. She seemed a little nervous at first, but by the third phone call, she was gaining confidence. In the last phone call, she spoke with the public information officer for the local school district.

“We’ve been getting the run around…now maybe I had time for this last week, but not today. I don’t have time for this today,” she told the public information officer.

She was respectful but firm. The public information officer stated she would put in a Freedom of Information Act request for the policy. She did not even know if they had a district-level bussing policy, but she would work on getting T.O.H. access to it if they did, she stated. Tammy got her name and number and the lady took her email address and name so she could get the information to her. It was an empowering moment, seeing Tammy articulate and demand information. The group talked about how things are done in Chester after the phone call.
Robert, a long-time TOH member, stated, “The people in power in Chester do whatever they want…it’s time to say, ‘What the hell?’”

Robert described the process he saw unfold on the phone with the school district as a basketball game. The “players” passing the ball to each other, protecting information. This was another event to highlight how power is hidden in local systems, further raising radical consciousness.

Tammy received a phone call from the Chester County school superintendent a couple days later. She seemed to be upset with Tammy for submitting a Freedom of Information Act Request. It appeared that the local school district may not have an official written policy for the local level and is simply interpreting the state policy, which did not address all information that T.O.H. members needed for this campaign. One explanation as to why the state bussing policy is vague may be to give freedom for local school districts to interpret and enact policies that best fit their districts. Whatever the reason may be, the Chester school board gave T.O.H. some of the information requested, but referred them to an assistant superintendent and the state policy for further questions.

T.O.H. has sponsored a community event where participants walked to school and documented the dangers they encountered and also have addressed the Chester County School Board and the Chester City Council, where pictures of routes, as well as results from a survey conducted with children walking to school, were presented. T.O.H. invited local newspaper journalists to community meetings, informed them when they were speaking at governmental meetings, and invited them to the community events, such as the walk to school. The local media covered the campaign several times and even
attended a community meeting about the Safe Routes to School campaign in March 2015. The journalist that attended this meeting was a different journalist from the Community Kitchen campaign. The group casually talked with him before the meeting, making small talk and shared food with him that the group had prepared for the meeting. The journalist asked T.O.H. members for an update on what information they had not received, as he was interested in asking officials the same questions on the record. He recorded the meeting and asked follow-up questions during the meeting. T.O.H. members appeared to not only be comfortable with his presence at the meeting, but even welcoming. This was a bit different from their first issue campaign, where they seemed intimidated about reaching out to the local media.

A newspaper article in the *Chester News and Reporter* came out a couple days after the community meeting (Garner, 2015). The article clearly articulated the dangers that children face as they walk to school, the struggles that parents have if they are working multiple jobs and cannot give their children a ride to school, how walking to school affects children’s educational opportunities, access to the school breakfast, and T.O.H.’s problems in getting information about whether the city or county has control over the sidewalks of certain routes areas. The article clearly communicated the problem definition, reflecting the first stage of collective action framing, diagnostic framing, and why people should care about the problem. The article also clearly articulated the solutions the group is proposing, such as better sidewalks and crossing guards at major intersections, reflecting the second stage of collective action framing, the prognostic stage.
The article also covered the update of the community kitchen, which was also a part of this community meeting. A sense of community well-being was communicated, with quotes such as, “…they’ll be able to come in and use the kitchen, because it’s a community project,” and “…everyone has something to share with the community that will make it grow.” The article also reflected radical consciousness.

For example, the farmer’s market manager said, “For those people like…T.O.H. that are out there trying to do tasks, you have to realize you have to build a community first….In order to have a strong city, you’re going to have to make sure your community is healthy. If getting sidewalks will help make the community healthy, we should look at how we can get sidewalks…The more people are educated about different situations in the community, the more enlightened we become, and the more we can try to help out those situations.”

Lastly, the article connected the two campaigns, with very different purposes, back to the mission of T.O.H., described as “a grassroots organization committed to creating a positive and lasting change in South Carolina’s food system.”

T.O.H. members stated food system change was not only about food, but fighting oppression to make their community better and teaching the next generation how to advocate against oppression, further reflecting radical consciousness. During a planning meeting for the Safe Routes to School campaign, the group talked about the food system as “a rock that we’re chipping away at. It will take years and years, but it’s worth it.” Bridgett, another T.O.H. member who is a white female in her 30s, commented on the oppression she sees in Chester.
“I have never seen people so oppressed in my life [as in Chester],” she said, while participating in the route walking event to raise awareness of the dangerous routes children walk to school. Bridgett is from Asheville, a small city in North Carolina known for its progressiveness. She said T.O.H. gives her an outlet to fight the oppression she sees.

T.O.H. members connected their food system advocacy work to other activities in their lives and started making connections to other systems of oppression, such as the education system. Another example of connecting advocacy work with multiple systems is one T.O.H. member linking her food system advocacy work with her domestic violence outreach work, where she used a door knocking activity in her community to promote both. These connections were also made during the Safe Routes to School campaign and demonstrated their sense of raised radical consciousness.

IV. Discussion

To advance food system advocacy work for food justice, people will need to be moved toward community well-being and radical consciousness of the food system (reference). Food system change initiatives need to be focused on ways to restructure how food is produced, distributed, consumed, and disposed of; not simply focused on individual consumer action (Guthman, 2008; Blue, 2009). Raising radical consciousness was the critical step in engaging T.O.H. members to restructure the food system. Elements of community well-being consciousness fostered a sense of social justice and inclusiveness of the local food system, of the responsibility to take care of vulnerable community members, and of local food as a means to connect with each other, traditions,
and the land. Personal consciousness of the food system may not necessarily be a hindrance to food system change, but it keeps action at the individual level by encouraging people to think like concerned consumers, rather than engaged citizens. T.O.H. members talked about personal consciousness, but it appeared to be combined with the other types of consciousness to promote change.

Radical consciousness was the most difficult type of consciousness to achieve. Raising radical consciousness forced T.O.H. members to reveal hidden power structures of the food system in their local community. The COPASCities staff urged T.O.H. not only to reveal these structures, but to challenge them during local issue campaigns and make them primary targets, using social justice values to guide their work. Sbicca (2012) stated having a clear link between food advocacy work and social justice could advance the food justice movement. T.O.H.’s values, mission, vision, advocacy issues, campaign planning, tactics, and messaging were linked to social justice. Incorporating activities that link the food system to social justice while defining group values early on in the group formation process appeared to center T.O.H.’s advocacy work on social justice values and made it easier to communicate these values during issue campaigns. Food justice movements that incorporate social justice elements and connect concerns about racial and economic inequality with anti-hunger, food security, and sustainability of the food system, have the potential to transform the local food system (Sbicca, 2012).

All social movements, including the movement for a healthy food system, face the primary challenge of engaging a base of citizens and building consensus around the values of the movement. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation recommends public health advocates avoid words such as “justice” and “equality” in their messaging and opt for
more neutral words that will resonate across political spectrums, such as “fair” and “adequate,” (Robert Wood Johnson, 2010). However, the principles of a healthy food system, which seems to stand as a clear definition of what the food justice movement is striving for, has the principle of “equitable access.” (W.K. Kellogg Healthy, Sustainable Food System Collaboration, 2010). Food justice movement literature explicitly asks for the food system to be tied directly to social justice overtly, but it is unclear if this means using the very words of “justice” and “equality” that Robert Wood Johnson Foundation suggests should be avoided (Feenstra, 1997; Sbicca, 2012; Allen, 1999; Galt, 2013).

Additionally, T.O.H. wrote their mission statement based upon their group values, including “just.” Based upon literature recommendations, the COPASCities staff asked T.O.H. to connect their mission and messaging during issues campaigns (Dorfman 2003; Lakoff, 2008; McDonald & Viehbeck, 2007). Even though they were given materials about words to avoid by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the COPASCities staff also encouraged them to connect their messaging back to their mission. The COPASCities project also clearly connected social justice and the food system in trainings and activities. Even though social justice values can be communicated without using these avoidable words, it is unclear how this affected T.O.H.’s campaigns or how it will affect the food justice movement in general.

Food justice movements should also challenge oppressive structures of the global food system and community groups should reveal their own local solutions to food system issues (Sbicca, 2012). Since the current global food system is based upon speeding up time and convenience, building trusting relationships within the local food system is important. Hendrickson & Heffernan (2002) stated that food justice movements
will succeed when they organize where the current food system is vulnerable. This includes relying on time and management rather than capital, building trusting relationships that are embedded in the community, and by making ecologically-sound decisions. These relationships take time to build and these opportunities must occur within the contexts of daily lives (Hendrickson & Heffernan, 2002). The COPASCities project theoretical framework is based upon P.A.R. and T.O.H. members were encouraged to define and determine the local food system issues that they wanted to confront during issue campaigns. The photovoice activity gave T.O.H. a list of the most pressing issues of their local food system and possible local targets of power, as well as local solutions. Additionally, by revealing the consequences of the current food system and then asking community groups to participate in a photovoice activity documenting their own experiences with their food system, we were able to further raise their radical consciousness and encourage local self-determination.

Photovoice is a foundational method by which critical consciousness is raised (Wang & Burris, 1999; Carlson, Engebretson & Chamberlain, 2006) and provides a way to community members to reflect on the social and political forces and power structures that influence their lives (Molloy, 2007), and promotes dialogue about these forces (Wang & Redwood-Jones, 2001) Photovoice can validate participant experiences, can build group trust, and encourage collective action (Molloy, 2007; Minkler, Wallterstein & Wilson, 1997).

Finally, raising the radical consciousness of the food system had the potential to advance food system advocacy work because the problems and solutions T.O.H. advocated for were clearly defined during issue campaigns, building to the first stage of
collective action framing. Using collective action framing where the problem is clearly defined and who is to blame (Diagnostic), and building consensus around a solution (Prognostic), have been integral steps in past social movements (Benford & Snow, 2000). Diagnostic framing allowed for assignment of blame and provided targets for change. Having activities, such as photovoice, where consensus on the cause of the issue can be provisionally reached as a group, could help lay the foundation for starting the diagnostic phase and be a key process of successful food system advocacy work, where power is hidden and abstract in the food system.

Figure 4.2 Timeline of T.O.H.
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<th>Types of Consciousness</th>
<th>Values/Relation to Consciousness</th>
<th>Type of Action</th>
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| Radical                | Connection to Earth and food as spiritual connection  
                              Transparency in food system  
                              Fair food system  
                              Socially-just food system | **Community Kitchen Campaign (Citizenship)**  
                              March on City Hall  
                              Demanded information and access to leaders  
                              Revealed hidden power structures/messaged to press  
                              Demanded inclusiveness on Governing Board | **Safe Routes to School Campaign (Citizenship)**  
                              Connected systems of oppression/related to mission  
                              Demanded information and access to leaders  
                              Revealed hidden power structures/messaged to press  
                              Raised awareness through events |
| Community Well-being   | Responsibility to take care of each other, most vulnerable  
                              Community building  
                              Accessible and affordable | Hosted community events, cooking classes, community garden, advocated for community kitchen project (Citizenship) |
| Personal               | Personal health  
                              Personal connection with food and knowing food origins | Growing own fruits and vegetables, buying from farmers and farmer’s market, learning about seasonality, food origin (Consumer) |
V. Conclusions/Implications

Building both the *community well-being* and *radical* types of consciousness of the food system, linked to social injustice and the groups’ values, was a critical first step in raising the advocacy capacity of T.O.H. Linking values to work is a way to keep groups engaged when challenged, but also promotes sustainability of group as people are more invested. Future research directions could include how the media is covering the social justice issues of the food system and how using the avoidable terms of “equality” and “justice” in messaging is affecting the food justice movement momentum.

Using community organizing techniques in issues campaigns illuminates hidden power structures in the food system, further building radical levels of critical consciousness. COPASCities is in year three of the five year research project, and it has taken time to build trust and capacity within these communities, especially when encouraging community organizing techniques.

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<th>Table 4.2 Capacity Building Program</th>
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<td><strong>Food Systems Change Certificate Program</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Part-time Community Organizer</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Advocacy Capacity Building</strong></td>
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CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The intended impact of this dissertation was to build the capacity of two community-based groups to advocate, through social action, for healthier and more sustainable food system that would be more accessible and affordable, leading to healthier communities. The dissertation’s central hypothesis was that if the advocacy capacity of community-based groups was built, community groups would be able to re-frame the debates surrounding childhood obesity as physical and social environmental issues, not individual lifestyle issues; and become better advocates for the changes needed to their local food system. We took key recommendations from the literature and developed trainings and tools to be piloted in two food system advocacy community groups. This dissertation work tracked the exploratory process using ethnographic methods.

There is much to be learned about raising the advocacy capacity of groups working toward a more just, accessible, sustainable, and healthy local food system. The two papers produced from this dissertation will hopefully promote the first steps of building advocacy capacity in community groups interested in food system change. By capturing the process through detailed ethnography, we are providing an exploratory, in-depth look at the process that will hopefully provide future research directions for this area.
The first paper topic was chosen to describe the process of increasing advocacy capacity of community-based groups using the tenets of collective action framing theory, to describe a media content analysis that revealed local mainstream frames and how we applied to practice through communications trainings, and to describe how one community group grappled with re-framing food systems change issues, especially how to engage citizens in their advocacy efforts. M.F.A. was planning their first issue campaign, mapping the food system, with three goals: build a base of engaged citizens that are concerned about the local food system, identify the most pressing challenges and gaps in the local food system, and distribute a food guide to build awareness of local food and to educate concerned consumers. Throughout this campaign planning process, we examined how the group discussed the three phases of collective action framing. This included how they defined the problem, if they offered concrete solutions, and how they motivated people to act. The group also defined whether they were engaging concerned citizens that wanted to change the food system or if they simply wanted to educate the public on how to be better consumers in the food system.

In the diagnostic phase, M.F.A. was hesitant to assign blame to the food system, although this started occurring through personal stories told during planning meetings. After mapping the local food system, the group may have clearer targets and a concrete understanding of the problem, which may lead to more willingness to assign blame. The next phase, prognostic, or offering clear solutions, was seen in the question the group posed about whether or not to engage people who were consumers as part of the solution. This was reflected in competing conversations about how this group could balance being an advocacy group that engaged citizens as part of the solution in their efforts and a
group that produced the annual food guide for thoughtful consumers. They also struggled to define what “local” and “sustainable” meant. This definition would determine which farmers and producers should be included in their efforts as part of the solution. The main question was would M.F.A. consider engaging powerful actors in the local food system or would they position themselves to develop collective power of smaller actors? The group was encouraged to define “local” and “sustainable,” to help clarify group values and to assist in clear and effective messaging. During the last phase, the motivational phase, M.F.A. discussed how to get people involved. M.F.A. was hesitant to reach out to potential members through phone banking without a hard ask or specific events that they could promote, not just simply asking people to be involved with the group. Furthermore, the group pushed for electronic means of communication, not face to face interactions that would build relationships. The conversation was about how to efficiently engage consumers interested in buying local food versus involving citizens interested in changing the food system.

The second paper topic was chosen because raising the community well-being and radical critical consciousness level of food system advocacy community groups is a key first step in building overall advocacy capacity. The purposes of the paper about T.O.H. was to understand the facilitation of defining group values, to help T.O.H. tie their values to social justice and the advocacy work, and to describe the process in-depth, while understanding how the different types of consciousness of the food system was reflected during the process. The different types of consciousness discussed included personal, or linking food system change to personal consumption habits; community well-being or
bringing good food to the community; and radical or organizing around social justice and social change in the food system.

The photovoice activity was the first step in getting to know the Chester community and their priorities for food system change. Also, the first session of Food System Change Certificate program revealed the consequences of the current food system. During these processes and trainings, these issues with the food system were linked to social justice issues. For T.O.H. members, the food connection was a spiritual connection linked to the earth. The lack of connection to food occurred because of convenience and cost, lack of knowledge about cooking and nutrition, and the sheer complexity of the food system. This reflected radical consciousness of the food system, as the lack of transparency and disconnection in the food system were being exposed. The lack of access to knowledge and decision makers during T.O.H.’s issue campaigns also raised radical consciousness, as hidden systems and oppressive power structures were being revealed.

During T.O.H.’s second issue campaign, Safe Routes to School, members connected several systems of oppression, including unequal access to education, health disparities for marginalized groups, and lack of access to a healthy school breakfast, which is linked to positive educational outcomes and health, reflecting a raised radical consciousness. For T.O.H. members, their work was not only about food, but fighting oppression in their community to make their community better and teaching the next generation how to advocate against oppression, further reflecting radical consciousness. T.O.H. members also built a relationship with the local media and learned how to use clear messaging to promote their issue campaigns. In one local newspaper article, the diagnostic and prognostic stages of the Safe Routes to School campaign were clearly communicated at
the physical and social environmental level. T.O.H. values were reflected in the newspaper article, as well as their mission statement.

Some common themes emerged across both groups. Defining group values appeared to be important to both groups. M.F.A. is still in the process of defining group values, as they have not decided what “local” and “sustainable” quite means yet. This will answer the question who to engage in their efforts. T.O.H. often linked their advocacy work and messaging to their values. This helped to keep T.O.H. members engaged when challenged and promoted sustainability of the group as people are more invested.

Additionally, it was a challenge to get both groups to use community organizing techniques for the first time. For M.F.A., the challenge was getting participation in the phone banking activity. For T.O.H., the challenge was getting them to participate in the City Hall march. Community organizing and challenging power is an intimidating process, as people may be challenging oppressive power structures for the first time in their lives. Relationships and resources could be lost during this process. However, illuminating hidden power structures in the food system seemed to lead to higher levels of radical consciousness. For T.O.H. and M.F.A., they both started revealing these hidden power structures through requesting information and access to decision makers. T.O.H. did this with their City Hall March in the Community Kitchen campaign and requesting bussing policy information in the Safe Routes to Schools campaign. M.F.A.’s first campaign is to map the local food system, therefore, revealing information about the system that is currently hidden. Requesting access to information and policy makers may be a strategy in easing food advocacy groups into using community organizing techniques in general and raising radical consciousness of the food system.
Using media framing and community organizing as strategies to build advocacy capacity of food system advocacy groups presented a couple of gaps. For example, using community organizing techniques to demand access to knowledge and decision makers was an effective way to raising radical consciousness about the hidden external power structures of the food system. However, using media framing and community organizing techniques also revealed internal power conflicts, especially in M.F.A. For example, one of the findings that was highlighted during the messaging training and one of the key recommendations from the framing analysis was for groups to define what “local” and “sustainable” meant. Also, using community organizing techniques challenged M.F.A. to engage citizens in efforts, not just as concerned consumers. Resolving both of these issues will reveal what type of advocacy work that M.F.A. is going to engage in and also with whom they will engage.

Another gap in using framing theory is the lack of information about how media is covering food system change, as well as public opinion about food system change. These entities make up two of the three points of the media framing triangle. As far as public opinion research, we really only know about emerging consumer trends. We have limited public opinion polls on food system change that are dated 10 years or older. Public opinion and consumerism does seem to have the power to change Big Food policies and practices (i.e. Chipotle has stopped using GMOs and Walmart now carries more organic produce). However, it is not clear how these industry changes translate into the systematic changes needed that embodies and promotes the principles of a healthy food system.
Additionally, emerging social movements often struggle to define itself. Through using community organizing techniques and in this project, we are targeting local communities in food system change at the local level. At this stage, we don’t know how these efforts are going to translate into systematic change. It is also hard to know anything about effectiveness of advocacy capacity building, to see if it is actually translating into real local change, and how these local changes translates into systematic changes.

Future directions for this work include conducting more media content analyses and public opinion polls, to further develop an understanding of how the media is covering food systems and the public opinion of food system change. This will create an understanding of how food advocacy groups can re-frame the debate from the individual level to the physical and social environmental level in the media and how this is resonating with the public. Furthermore, as food advocacy groups start re-framing food systems change as a citizenship issue, it will be interesting to examine if the local mainstream conversations in media change as well. Also, more knowledge is needed about the effectiveness of advocacy capacity building efforts to engage citizens and how to effectively use collective action framing. Understanding the different levels of critical consciousness and moving from the personal critical consciousness to the community well-being and radical critical consciousness may be a first step in moving people from concerned consumers to engaged citizens that participate in advocacy efforts. This would be an interesting area to be explored for future research projects. Raising the radical consciousness of the food system had the potential to advance food system advocacy work because the problems and solutions T.O.H. advocated for were clearly defined.
during issue campaigns, building to the first stage of collective action framing, diagnostic. The role of values and critical consciousness would be interesting to continue to track as groups’ community organizing capacity is built as well, to see if these concepts are further related in building advocacy capacity. Because very little is known about how the food system is being talked about in the media, the qualitative results of the media content analysis will be an ancillary publication after the dissertation work is completed. The framing report will be made available through the Center for Research in Nutrition and Health Disparities website for community groups, as well as the tools developed for community groups. As stated in the Extended Methodology section, community groups are still working on their issues campaigns and their advocacy capacity and messaging capacity will continue to be tracked for further evaluation and future publications by COPASCities staff.
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APPENDIX A – S.C. MEDIA CODING ANALYSIS OF CHILDHOOD OBESITY

I. Quantitative Analysis

a. Proposal Quantitative Codebook

Date (Year): Source:

National story from wire? Y or N Title:

Individual Responsibility (Diagnostic or Causes)

- ( ) Unhealthy Diet (IR1)
  Consuming too much food, consuming too much unhealthy food, addictive or emotional eating, cooking, growing, producing own food, how consumers buy food

- ( ) Sedentary Lifestyle (IR2)
  Lack of exercise, physical activity

- ( ) Genetic composition (IR3)
  Genetic or biological factors that may produce obesity (i.e. hormonal imbalance)

- ( ) Other IR (IR4)
  Poor adult role models
Societal Responsibility (Diagnostic or Causes)

- ( ) The Food Industry (SR1)
  Obesity-promoting foods (fast/junk food), portion sizes, increase in fast/junk food restaurants, food marketing; Consequences of the food system; The different phases of the food system; Principles of a healthy food system; Big Food; Monsanto; GMO; Organic; Local

- ( ) Schools and Education (SR2)
  Unhealthy foods in schools cafeteria, lack of physical activity programs at schools, lack of public education about healthy eating and lifestyle

- ( ) Socioeconomic Factors (SR3)
  Low-income families may not be able for afford healthy foods, exercise equipment, or a gym membership. They may be too busy to prepare their own food.

- ( ) Other SR (SR4)
  Automobile-oriented society (drive-thrus and big box stores), unsafe community (crime, traffic, accident), and limited opportunities for outdoor activities. Federal, state, local policies (not including Farm Bill and Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act)

Individual Solutions (Prognostic or Solutions)

- ( ) Healthy Diet (IS1)
  Consuming less food, consuming healthy food, cooking, growing, producing own food, how consumers buy food

- ( ) Physical Activities (IS2)
More exercise and physical activities

- ( ) Medical treatments (IS3)
  Medications such as diet pills/surgery

- ( ) Others (IS4)
  Working with a support group, talking to counselor, parents are role models

Societal Solutions (Prognostic or Solutions)

- ( ) Changes to the Food System or Regulations of Food Industry (SS1)
  Regulating obesity-promoting food, portion size, vending machines, taxes on unhealthy food, regulating agriculture/food industry; restricting marketing; sustainable, resilient, diverse, health promoting food; local food; organic food; non-GMO food; just, economically balanced food; food not based on exploitation of workers; connection between people and food

- ( ) Changes in Schools and Education (SS2)
  Healthier food in school cafeteria, more physical activities at schools, more public education about food and exercise through campaigns

- ( ) Socioeconomic Changes (SS3)
  Narrowing the income gap, healthy foods and exercise more affordable and available

- ( ) Other Health Promoting Social Environment (SS4)
  Less auto-oriented and more walking oriented (less drive thrus, big box stores), safer community and more opportunities to get physical activity. Federal, state, local policies (not including Farm Bill and Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act)

b. Final Quantitative Codebook
Individual Responsibility (Diagnostic or Causes)

- ( ) Unhealthy Diet (IR1)
  Consuming too much food, consuming too much unhealthy food, addictive or emotional eating, cooking, growing, producing own food, how consumers buy food

- ( ) Sedentary Lifestyle (IR2)
  Lack of exercise, physical activity

- ( ) Genetic composition (IR3)
  Genetic or biological factors that may produce obesity (i.e. hormonal imbalance)

- ( ) Other IR (IR4)
  Poor adult role models

Societal Responsibility (Diagnostic or Causes)

- ( ) The Food Industry (SR1)
  Obesity-promoting foods (fast/junk food), portion sizes, increase in fast/junk food restaurants, food marketing; Consequences of the food system; The different phases of the food system; Principles of a healthy food system; Big Food; Monsanto; GMO; Organic; Local

- ( ) Schools, Education, and Community (SR2)
Unhealthy foods in schools cafeteria, lack of physical activity programs at schools, lack of public education or awareness about healthy eating and lifestyle, not enough community-based programs promoting changes that are needed

- **( ) Socioeconomic Factors (SR3)**
  
  Low-income families may not be able for afford healthy foods, exercise equipment, or a gym membership. They may be too busy to prepare their own food.

- **( ) Other SR (SR4)**
  
  Automobile-oriented society (drive-thrus and big box stores), unsafe community (crime, traffic, accident), and limited opportunities for outdoor activities not linked to specific programs or campaigns

**Individual Solutions (Prognostic or Solutions)**

- **( ) Healthy Diet (IS1)**
  
  Consuming less food, consuming healthy food, cooking, growing, producing own food, how consumers buy food

- **( ) Physical Activities (IS2)**
  
  More exercise and physical activities

- **( ) Medical treatments (IS3)**
  
  Medications such as diet pills/surgery

- **( ) Others (IS4)**
  
  Working with a support group, talking to counselor, parents are role models
Societal Solutions (Prognostic or Solutions)

- ( ) Changes to the Food System or Regulations of Food Industry (SS1)
  Regulating obesity-promoting food, portion size, vending machines, taxes on unhealthy food, regulating agriculture/food industry; restricting marketing; sustainable, resilient, diverse, health promoting food; local food; organic food; non-GMO food; just, economically balanced food; food not based on exploitation of workers; connection between people and food; Farm Bill

- ( ) Schools, Education, Community-based programs (SS2)
  Healthier food in school cafeteria, more physical activities at schools, Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act, more public education and awareness about food and exercise through campaigns, campaigns/programs promoting other societal level changes outside schools and raising awareness.

- ( ) Socioeconomic Changes (SS3)
  Narrowing the income gap, healthy foods and exercise more affordable and available

- ( ) Other Health Promoting Social Environment (SS4)
  Less auto-oriented and more walking oriented (less drive thurs, big box stores), safer community and more opportunities to get physical activity, federal, state, or local policy (excluding Farm Bill and Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act). These changes are not linked to a specific campaign or program.

Food System

- ( ) The food system is discussed without any mention specifically to childhood obesity
c. Quantitative Media Coding Protocol

1. Articles will be randomly assigned. Once list is received, each article should be accompanied by its own coded sheet that is printed. Enter pertinent information for each article on sheet. Code no more than 10 articles at a time.

2. Once articles are coded, enter data into spreadsheet. Use “0” to indicate not present and “1” for present.

3. Enter the year of article publication

4. Enter Y for a wire story, N for a local story

5. Enter newspaper source

6. After these are entered, do a quick review to ensure checks have been entered as “1”

7. Do no more than 10 at a time.

8. Code only for overt responsibility, especially when mentioning a campaign because it is always implied. Policies are inherently changing the environment to change individual level behavior, so individual level responsibility should be overt. Changes to SNAP policy in SC will more than likely assign blame at the individual level.

9. Review articles for the day. Put any titles of articles that would fit into the qual. category into “Qual Articles.” Any articles that feature community-based programs promoting societal level changes outside of schools and raising awareness need to fit into qualitative category. Also, review qualitative code book for other articles that will need to fit into this category.

10. Any articles that are questionable to put back for review together.
II. Qualitative Analysis
   a. Proposal Qualitative Codebook

Mobilizing Information

Code for the presence of information for the audience with a means to act on existing ideas and motivations. Motivational information might include names, phone numbers, websites, times and dates of meetings, titles of documents, and more. If the mobilizing information is present, code for its prescience and how it encourages people to get involved.

Sources

Code for people, research, or institutions that are included as sources of information. Code for role (i.e. Doctor, Parent, Researcher, Food Industry Lobbying Group Spokesperson). Code for the information they are revealing in the story.

Citizenship vs. Consumer Responsibility

Citizenship is a call to action change the food system or help prevent childhood obesity at the societal level. It can be a deeper call for change for the good of the community, country, and future generations. Consumer Responsibility is the act of shopping or choosing certain products that help prevent childhood obesity (i.e. parents shopping for healthier food for their children) or products that support a healthy food system (i.e. responsibility-sourced, organic, non-GMO, local, sustainable) For example, voting with your dollar by the products you buy.
Social Determinants of the Food System

Consequences of the food system - health disparities related to obesity and diabetes; economic inequalities; ecological catastrophe; and alienation and disconnection between people and their land and food.

Food systems/agriculture and childhood obesity - Any instance were food systems/agriculture and childhood obesity are linked in any way.

Power in the food system - Monopolies, lobbyists for Big Food, Industry influence over regulations and policy, capital in the food system, intellectual property rights, food marketing regulation

The different phases of the food system - Production of food; processing of food; consumption of food; distribution of food; retailing of food; and marketing of food

Principles of a healthy food system - Health promoting in that it supports the health of all farmers, workers, and eaters; sustainable regenerates natural resources and does not compromise the ability to meet future food and nutrition needs; resilient in that thrives as it faces challenges; diverse in size and scale, culture and choice; fair and just conditions for farmers, workers and eaters with equitable access to healthy foods; economically balanced from the local to the global scales for all stakeholders; is transparent in that knowledge about the food system is known and it empowers farmers, workers, and eaters to actively participate in decision making (American Planning Association, 2013).

Big Food - The major food and beverage companies that control the global food markets
Monsanto-The multinational conglomerate that controls a vast amount of the world’s seed market.

GMO-Genetically modified food

Organic-Organically grown and processed food

Local-Locally grown and processed food

Episodic vs. thematic framing

Episodic framing is event-oriented and can take the form of a case study and takes on a more concrete form, sometimes through a narrative about a person or event (Iyengar, 1994). Thematic framing is a more general and abstract frame of an issue focusing on outcomes or conditions. For example, political debates on legislation surrounding the Farm Bill would be thematic. Interviewing a farmer about how the changes in the Farm Bill will affect him is episodic.

Consequences of childhood obesity (Motivational)

- Of Childhood Obesity- These can include rise in diseases such as Type II diabetes, early mortality, economic consequences of obesity such as lost production in the workforce, medical costs, and soldiers are less healthy/national security risk.

- Of Childhood Obesity Programs and Policies-These can be the stigmatizing of obese children, restrictions on what SNAP participants can buy, portion sizes of drinks
Narratives

Stories from people such as a citizen, parent, child, or teacher who is struggling with obesity or has a loved one or significant other struggling with obesity.

b. Final Qualitative Codebook

Mobilizing Information

Code for the presence of information for the audience with a means to act on existing ideas and motivations. Motivational information might include names, phone numbers, websites, times and dates of meetings, titles of documents, and more. If the mobilizing information is present, code for its prescience and how it encourages people to get involved.

Sources

Code for people, research, or institutions that are included as sources of information. Code for role (i.e. Doctor, Parent, Researcher, Food Industry Lobbying Group Spokesperson). Code for the information they are revealing in the story.

Citizenship vs. Consumer Responsibility

Citizenship is a call to action change the food system or help prevent childhood obesity at the societal level. It can be a deeper call for change for the good of the community, country, and future generations. Consumer Responsibility is the act of shopping or choosing certain products that help prevent childhood obesity (i.e. parents shopping for healthier food for their children) or products that support a healthy food system (i.e.
responsibility-sourced, organic, non-GMO, local, sustainable) For example, voting with your dollar by the products you buy.

Social Determinants of the the Food System

Consequences of the food system - health disparities related to obesity and diabetes; economic inequalities; ecological catastrophe; and alienation and disconnection between the between people and their land and food, food safety, traceability, food addiction, food access issues.

Food systems/agriculture and childhood obesity - Any instance were food systems/agriculture and childhood obesity are linked in any way.

Power in the food system - Monopolies, lobbyists for Big Food, Industry influence over regulations and policy, capital in the food system, intellectual property rights, food marketing regulation

The different phases of the food system - Production of food; processing of food; consumption of food; distribution of food; retailing of food; and marketing of food

Principles of a healthy food system - Health promoting in that it supports the health of all farmers, workers, and eaters; sustainable regenerates natural resources and does not compromise the ability to meet future food and nutrition needs; resilient in that thrives as it faces challenges; diverse in size and scale, culture and choice; fair and just conditions for farmers, workers and eaters with equitable access to healthy foods; economically balanced from the local to the global scales for all stakeholders; is transparent in that
knowledge about the food system is known and it empowers farmers, workers, and eaters to actively participate in decision making (American Planning Association, 2013).

**Big Food** - The major food and beverage companies that control the global food markets

**Monsanto** - The multinational conglomerate that controls a vast amount of the world’s seed market.

**GM** - Genetically modified food

**Organic** - Organically grown and processed food

**Local** - Locally grown and processed food

**Episodic vs. thematic framing**

Episodic framing is event-oriented and can take the form of a case study and takes on a more concrete form, sometimes through a narrative about a person or event (Iyengar, 1994). Thematic framing is a more general and abstract frame of an issue focusing on outcomes or conditions. For example, political debates on legislation surrounding the Farm Bill would be thematic. Interviewing a farmer about how the changes in the Farm Bill will affect him is episodic. It can be both, but we need to code for at least one.

**Consequences of childhood obesity (Motivational)**

- Of Childhood Obesity - These can include rise in diseases such as Type II diabetes, early mortality, economic consequences of obesity such as lost production in the workforce, medical costs, and soldiers are less healthy/national security risk.
• Of Childhood Obesity Programs and Policies - These can be the stigmatizing of obese children, restrictions on what SNAP participants can buy, portion sizes of drinks

Narratives

Stories from people such as a citizen, parent, child, or teacher who is struggling with obesity or has a loved one or significant other struggling with obesity. This can also be narratives about food system.

Personal Freedom

Any mention of personal freedom and childhood obesity/food systems. This is not individual responsibility.

III. S.C. Media Framing Report Teaching Guide

_S.C. Media Framing Report on Childhood Obesity and the Food System Teaching Guide_

_By: Casey Childers and Jasmine Gant_

_in Partnership with the COPASCities project through the Center for Research on Nutrition and Health Disparities_

INTRODUCTION

When trying to create change, it is important to know how the media is talking about a current issue because the media often influences public opinion and policy and vice versa. This creates a triangle of influence or a picture frame around an issue, affecting how we think about an issue. A way to understand how issues are being portrayed in the media is through a media content analysis, where media sources (e.g.,
newspaper articles and television broadcasts) are coded and analyzed to see what is being communicated to the public.

The purpose of this framing report is to provide community-based organizations interested in doing advocacy work around childhood obesity and food systems change a snapshot of how the SC media is talking about these issues. We created this report so that local SC community-based groups can create more impactful messages in their local issues campaigns. Messaging planning tools have also been developed and are available to help community groups better advocate for the changes to their local food system.

Issues can be discussed two ways: at the individual level or at the societal level. When we talk about an issue from an individual level, all the solutions and efforts are to change an individual’s behavior. **People will be well-educated about the healthy choices they need to make, but will not live in an environment that supports those healthy choices.** However, when we talk about an issue from a societal level, all the solutions and efforts focuses on the broad changes that creates an environment where healthy choices are the easy choices. Collective action framing can be a way for advocates to create change through messaging during campaigns. Messages that use collective action framing assigns blame for an issue, presents concrete solutions to an issue, and communicates specific calls to action to the audience. Using the collective action framework, this study examined SC media sources to determine who was being assigned blame for the childhood obesity epidemic, what suggested solutions to childhood obesity were, and what call to action, if any, being presented to the public to promote change.
COPASCities is a United States Department of Agriculture-funded research project through the University of South Carolina’s (USC) Center for Research in Nutrition and Health Disparities. The goal of the COPASCities project is to build the capacity of communities, through the use of community organizing methods, to create community-driven changes to their food system as a childhood obesity prevention strategy.

METHODS

The research team analyzed 396 newspapers articles and television segments between February 2011 to June 2014 using the search term “childhood obesity” and terms related to the food system such as “local,” “organic,” and “Big Food.” Sources included SC newspapers in Chester, Columbia, and Aiken and the local Columbia television affiliates including ABC, NBC, and CBS... We used an established code book from a media coding analysis conducted on nationwide media sources to give us an overall picture of how S.C. media framed childhood obesity and our food system (Q1).

We thought it was important to explore how the media was talking about the food system and the intersection between childhood obesity and the food system in-depth, since we know very little about these issues are being discussed in the media. We used exploratory methods to analyze 79 articles in-depth, to see how these issues were being talked about, if at all, by the media, as well as any relationships we saw between these issues (Q2).
RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Q1: Who or what is responsible for causing and solving the childhood obesity problem, according to the S.C. media?

Currently in our S.C. media, individual level blame for childhood obesity slightly outnumbered societal level blame. However, societal level solutions to childhood obesity outnumbered individual level solutions.

Articles that mention individual level causes to childhood obesity are more likely to mention individual level solutions to childhood obesity than articles that do not mention individual level causes for childhood obesity. Articles that mention societal level causes to childhood obesity are more likely to mention societal level solutions to childhood obesity than articles that do not mention societal level causes for childhood obesity. Therefore, using the collective action framework of assigning blame, providing solutions, and sounding a call to action; we can keep the discussion at the societal level if we start off with assigning blame at the societal level.

An unhealthy diet and parents were mentioned most often as the cause of childhood obesity, at an individual level. The food industry and schools, education, and the community were equally mentioned as societal level causes for childhood obesity.

Schools, education, and community-based programs, changes to the food system or regulation of the food system, and other health promoting environmental factors (e.g., more walking-oriented society) were mentioned most often as societal level solutions to childhood obesity. Parents and adult role models, an unhealthy diet, and physical activity were mentioned most often as individual level solutions to childhood obesity.
Food system articles or articles that mentioned the food system without any reference to childhood obesity accounted for 44.4% of the total articles included in this study.

*Q2: How should community-based organizations and advocacy groups re-frame their messaging to advance their issue campaigns to improve food systems and prevent childhood obesity?*

2. **Use collective action framing to guide messaging.**
   - Use collective action framing in messaging. When assigning blame for childhood obesity, offer societal level solutions, and recommend concrete ways that motivate community members to get involved.

   - The link between the food system and childhood obesity in the media is often not clear. Make this link clear, especially when assigning blame for childhood obesity.

**Example**

- A local food system advocacy group wants a city to overturn an ordinance banning backyard chicken coups. It is up for a vote next week and there are two councilmembers that have undecided votes on the matter. The group starts a petition in the councilmembers’ districts through a door knocking campaign. The message is: Councilman Smith has an important vote coming up that would allow you to have chicken coups in your backyard if you choose to do so. Currently, the Town of Smith has few
options for fresh local eggs and chickens, which is limiting your access to local food. Access to local food is good for the environment, supports local farmers, improves the health of the community, and can reduce childhood obesity rates. By overturning this ban, you will have the right to have chicken coups in your own backyard and access to your own fresh eggs. Councilman Smith needs to vote the will of the people. By signing this petition, your voice will be heard.

3. **Use diverse sources of information in messaging.**

- Take opportunities to discuss research around societal level causes to childhood obesity, especially related to the food system, from credible sources. Professors and governmental entities are the best source of information on current research. Advocacy groups should seek to establish relationships with these individuals and groups. In SC, the COPASCities research team can provide recommended websites and statistics that will help support your message.

- More childhood obesity prevention and local food groups need to partner on developing and implementing local food advocacy campaigns and messaging. The intersection of these two groups provides an opportunity to talk about the link between access to local healthy food and obesity.

**Example:**

- A community-based program partners with local farmers and backyard gardeners to deliver local produce to those who are living in a food desert. The article highlighting this program interviews a local farmer
who talks about the importance of knowing where your food comes from and the executive director of the program, who talks about food deserts and childhood obesity rates in these places, citing research findings.

4. **Talk about the issues with the food system in concrete terms and link them to group values and the principles of a healthy local food system.**

   - Consensus around the values of the community-based group needs to be built and these values clearly reflected in the mission, vision, and strategic plan of the group. This will help in clearly communicating these values during issues campaigns. COPASCities has a training to assist with this process.

   - Food deserts provide an opportunity to visually show some major weaknesses with the current food system. This can then be used to link the lack of fresh food availability to childhood obesity. The results of the media analysis indicates that the media fails to assign blame for the existence of food deserts to the current food system, rather, it’s communicated that food deserts simply exist. Food deserts can be an opportunity for food system change advocates to point out obesity rates higher in these areas and it is harder for these people to access healthy food, as a consequence of the current food system. This strategy assigns blame to the system and then highlights equal access to a healthy food system as a value.
• Talk about food access issues and ensure all children have access to a healthy school lunch may be ways to bring the values of equal access, fairness, and justice into the conversation.

• Become familiar with and describe all phases of the food system and the current issues within each phase, not just focusing on the production and distribution of food. Other phases that need to be highlighted are the processing of food; consumption of food; retailing of food; and marketing of food. Local definition and issues within these phases can be brought about through holding local food summits and photovoice projects with the community and partnering with other community-based groups or experts that specialize in food system issues.

• Access is not the only problem with the food system. It is important to describe other issues with the current food system in concrete terms, such as comparing confined animal feeding operations across the country and local, humanely-raised meat.

• Highlighting research that links environmental factors to childhood obesity may be a good way to assign blame, especially to the food industry.

• Making the healthy choice the easy choice can be a good way to bring the values of fairness and equity of the local food system into the conversation.
Talking about local food, linking it to health, economy, and tastes, is an easily accessible way to describe values. We need to concretely describe the issues with the current food system and tie our values/principles of a healthy food system to local food and childhood obesity. We can be more specific about health and local food by describing how this affects childhood obesity.

**Examples:**

- **Food Day** ([http://www.foodday.org/](http://www.foodday.org/)) is an opportunity to describe the issues of the current food system, including the principles of a healthy and local food system, while raising awareness for local food. Since this is an event, journalists will be more apt to give more coverage of these issues. Make sure to provide concrete examples when describing issues in the food system. For example, ask the journalist what they had for breakfast that day. Then, ask them if they know where it came from, who touched it, how it was grown, etc.

- If your group’s mission and vision statement reflects the group’s values and principles of a healthy food system, make sure to use this as the basis of your messaging. You can use words such as “sustainable,” “economically sound,” “environmentally safe,” “socially responsible,” “benefit our collective lives,” “community health,” to describe efforts for local food.
• If your group doesn’t know the economic benefits of local foods or does not have a partner or does know, make sure to partner with groups that can talk about these benefits if it applies to your campaign.

5. Make narratives about local food and link it to childhood obesity rates. This will keep the picture at the landscape view (societal level), not the portrait view (individual level).

• It appears that when stories feature parents/children, the cause/solution is at an individual level. However, when we incorporate stories about the food system and local farming, things such as raising children’s knowledge of food origin and farming and sharing local produce with those in need seem to be effective frames for messaging. Discussing access to healthy local food and health, specifically childhood obesity in articles, there is an opportunity to take the narrative from individual level to societal level.

• Melding narratives about local food and childhood obesity may be a way to keep the conversation at the societal level. Describing the food system through narratives about the food we eat and food origin may be a way to keep the conversation about the food system at a landscape view while giving concrete examples.

Example:

• A story about a local farm-to-school program highlights a class visiting a farm to learn about where their lunch is grown and to meet the farmer. The article tells about the farm-to-school program, and how it is
supporting local farmers and encouraging children to eat healthy at school, especially since childhood obesity rates have risen in recent years. The farmer is featured, talking about the importance of knowing where your food comes from. An advocate from a community-based program talks about how raising children’s knowledge of farming and food origin could affect the way they eat, affecting their health, which might reduce the school’s rates of childhood obesity.

- The local newspaper is doing a story for Food Day. Ask the reporter to trace the origin of their last meal. Use the reaction of the reporter to make a point about the disconnect we have with the origin of our food.

6. **Assign blame for childhood obesity to the current food system, offer specific, concrete solutions, and ask people to become engaged citizens, not just educated consumers.**

Mobilizing information is information to help people become involved and may include names, phone numbers, websites, times, and dates of meetings, titles of documents, and more. Most mobilizing information in the media content analysis was about community-based program events that raised awareness about childhood obesity. Move beyond raising awareness about childhood obesity, especially if we are interested in specifically changing the food system as a childhood obesity prevention strategy. Ask people to mobilize as engaged citizens who care about their local community, while raising awareness about access issues around healthy and local food. Make sure your campaigns are encouraging people
to be involved in making changes in their community, not just increasing awareness.

Example:

- Ask people to start, sign, and pass around a petition for more local produce in convenience stores through door knocking in their neighborhood or assisting in setting up buying clubs for local produce in their community.

7. Look for opportunity to re-frame the debate from the individual level to the societal level through describing the consequences of childhood obesity and tying it to our values.

- The freedom to make choices and decisions about food as an individual and parent is a strong argument against passing health-related policies and changing the food system. For example, the personal freedom of children and parents to choose was an argument used against passing the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act, which made children’s school lunches healthier. The argument against the federal regulation was that it took away choice. In order to combat this argument, talk about the decline of children’s physical and mental health, well-being, quality of life, and disproportionate rates of childhood obesity on blacks and the poor. Tie messages to the values of equality and decreased levels of opportunity that are unfair burdens on innocent children to the reasoning behind societal level action, especially when it comes to changing the current food system. Local food also elicits a value of responsibility to the next
generation to provide knowledge about farming, sustainability, and protecting the environment. Use these values, linking a responsibility to our children, as a way to garner support to change and regulate the food system.

- The economic costs of medical treatment of childhood obesity and the impact on national security can also be discussed as consequences of childhood obesity and can further the argument for changes and regulation of the food system. Obese children are at a high risk of becoming obese adults, making it difficult to become eligible for military service.

- Parents are often blamed for their child’s obesity. A powerful way to counter arguments is using a two-sided approach, or acknowledging the other side’s argument while using your own argument. For example: Acknowledging individual responsibility of parents, while highlighting factors in the environment that drive people towards unhealthy choices is an effective way to re-frame the debate.

**Examples:**

- It is predicted that this generation of children will live shorter lifespans than their parents due to chronic illnesses linked to obesity. They will have higher rates of diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and cancer. Some of these diseases will start during childhood. Our food system is to blame. It is making us sick and is based on quick, cheap options that are unhealthy, while ensuring food industry profits. Childhood obesity gives our children the undue burden of sickness early in life and diminishes their
opportunities in life and quality of life. We need to nourish our children and we can start by changing the food system in our community.

- We have lost an entire generation of children’s knowledge about farming. Children don’t know what it’s like to get their hands dirty. They don’t know the joy of picking the first tomato of the season or eating blackberries right off the vine. We have traded in local farmers and local food for the corporate food industry that gives us options that are quick, cheap, and that are making us sick. We need to get back to local food, raised by the farmer down the road that is a part of our community. Local food boosts the local economy, decreases the carbon footprint of food, is better for the environment, and connects us back to the land, where we belong. Isn’t that what our children deserve?

- While parents are responsible for encouraging healthy eating habits, the healthy choice should be the easy choice. Some parents live in food deserts, where healthy, affordable food is hard to find. Some parents have to ride two public buses an hour away just to shop at a grocery store that offers affordable produce. That’s not making the healthy choice an easy choice for parents.

8. We need to tie local food to our values and ensure we are being inclusive in the local food movement, because eventually local food will be at odds with big food.

- Currently, local food and big food happily co-exist without much conflict in the media. However, as the market and demand for local food grows, it
will be challenged soon by big food. We already see that emerging from debates around GMO versus organic and conventional methods of farming. Large food producers are using equal access to food as a value for using GMOs, stating this is the only way to yield enough food for a growing population, especially helping those living in poverty. The current food system excludes people from access to healthy foods. Being inclusive and ensuring our efforts are representing all principles of a healthy local food system is vital to the success of the local food movement and provides a powerful frame.

- Local food was often described as “healthy,” “delicious,” “nutritious,” “greener future,” “quality local food,” “deep connection with land,” “respect for traditional culture,” “fair,” and “creating connections.” This could create a very powerful frame if local food is tied to values that resonate with a lot of different people. Ideals such as “sustainability,” “knowledge about farming and food origin,” “responsibility to children to pass down this knowledge,” “respect the environment and cultural traditions,” and “caring about the local community” were communicated around local food.

9. **Capitalize on missed opportunities to challenge power in the current food system through assigning blame.**

- Food access issues were highlighted often through coverage of food deserts. However, blame or responsibility was not necessarily assigned
to the food industry for these food deserts; therefore, power dynamics in the food system creating these issues was not addressed. For example, the lack of buying power by communities in food deserts or the power of supermarkets “redlining” communities in food deserts because of their lack of buying power was not mentioned, but could be a way to talk about power in the food system, since food deserts and food access issues appeared to be an accessible frame.

- Support for policies and regulations of big food that protect children elicited a supportive tone in the media, while polices and regulation of big food not tied to protecting children often elicited a counter-frame supporting personal responsibility and freedom.

- Coverage of community-based childhood obesity prevention programs, such as Let’s Move and ESMM were significant, as societal level solutions outnumbered individual level solutions largely because of coverage of these programs. However, often these programs highlighted solutions and did not assign blame; therefore, missing an opportunity to challenge power in the food system. For example, there were a couple instances where the Let’s Move campaign highlighted self-regulation of industry, such as the Darden restaurant chain rolling out healthier menus and Walmart agreeing to stock more fruits and vegetables. Often, blame was not assigned to these companies for creating these issues, but rather, they were praised for self-regulation.
• Other ways to challenge the power of the current food system is to talk about: the marketing of foods high in sugar, salt, and fat to children and food addiction; fast food restaurants choosing to build in certain areas because of higher consumption of a population pressed for time and money; and comparing big food and big tobacco.

10. **We need to keep the call to action as a citizen for the good of the community, country, and future generations.**

• Citizenship is a call to action to change the food system or help prevent childhood obesity at the societal level. It can be a deeper call for change for the good of the community, country, and future generations.

• Citizenship was described as a sense of duty or responsibility to children and each other in the community to be healthier for a better future, as well as eating locally. Terms described in the theme of citizenship:

  “Community-based,” “state and federal policies and programs,” “a responsibility to our children to be healthier,” “a responsibility to ensure equal access to healthy foods for all, especially children,” “churches were responsible to their members to address health,” “a threat to national security,” “a responsibility to be an engaged citizen,” and “a responsibility to eat local food.”

• This theme ties closely in with our values, especially around local food.
APPENDIX B – TOOLS AND RESOURCES

A toolkit will be developed as part of Aim 2 activities to be used in the planning, implementation, and evaluation phases of an advocacy campaign and messaging. However, these tools are subject to change according to the community’s needs. Other tools may be added as part of the process. These changes will occur only with the dissertation committee’s approval.

I. Power Analysis

Develop a profile of the Target/Decision-maker by answering the following:

1. What power does the decision-maker have to meet your goal/demands? By what authority?

2. What is the decision-maker’s background and history?

3. What is the decision-maker’s position on your issue/goal? Why?

4. What is the decision-maker’s self-interest?

5. What is the decision-maker’s history on the issue?

6. Who is the decision-maker’s boss?

7. What/Who is the decision-maker’s base and support?

8. Who are the decision-maker’s allies?

9. Who are the decision-maker’s opponents/enemies?

10. What other social forces influences the decision-maker?

http://toolkit.healthjustice.us/power_analysis
II. Midwest Academy Strategy Chart

### Midwest Academy Strategy Chart

After choosing your issue, fill in this chart as a guide to developing strategy. Be specific. List all the possibilities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Organizational Considerations</th>
<th>Constituents, Allies, and Opponents</th>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>Tactics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. List the long-term objectives of your campaign.</td>
<td>1. List the resources that your organization brings to the campaign. Include money, number of staff, facilities, reputation, constituents, etc.</td>
<td>1. Who cares about this issue enough to join in or help the organization?</td>
<td>1. Primary Targets</td>
<td>For each target, list the tactics that each constituency group can best use to make its power felt. Tactics must be:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. State the intermediate goals for the issue campaign. What constitutes victory?</td>
<td>What is the budget, including in-kind contributions, for this campaign?</td>
<td>Whose problem is it?</td>
<td>In context, flexible and creative, directed at a specific target, make some in the membership, be backed up by a specific form of power. Tactics include:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alter the campaign.</td>
<td>2. List the specific ways in which you want your organization to be strengthened by this campaign, fill in numbers for each:</td>
<td>What do they gain if they win?</td>
<td>Media events, Action for information and demands, public hearings, strikes, voter registration and voter education, lawsuits, accountability sessions, elections, negotiations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Win concrete improvement in people’s lives.</td>
<td>Expand membership base.</td>
<td>What risks are they taking?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give people a sense of their own power.</td>
<td>Expand into new constituencies.</td>
<td>What power do they have over the target?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alter the relations of power.</td>
<td>Raise more money.</td>
<td>Into what groups are they organized?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What short-term or partial victories can you win as steps toward your long-term goal?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Who are your opponents?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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III. Tools from Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, *A New Way to Talk about the Social Determinants of Health*

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### SIX WAYS TO TALK ABOUT SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Health starts—long before illness—in our homes, schools and jobs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>All Americans should have the opportunity to make the choices that allow them to live a long, healthy life, regardless of their income, education or ethnic background.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Your neighborhood or job shouldn’t be hazardous to your health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Your opportunity for health starts long before you need medical care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Health begins where we live, learn, work and play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The opportunity for health begins in our families, neighborhoods, schools and jobs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### WHY THESE WORK:

- The proxy statements use colloquial, values-driven language and relatable lifestyle references that engage audiences.
- These statements all focus on the solution versus the problem.
- Some of the statements implicitly acknowledge the notion of personal responsibility.

### A GLOSSARY OF “OTHER TERMS”

| People with a more liberal perspective on this issue often describe health disparities as an injustice, whereas more conservative people never use this phrase. Though it was never commented on directly in the GZA health disparities research, we suspect that the idea of health differences being unjust would not resonate with conservative audiences because it may activate the same response as inequality. This would include the following type of language, which you should also avoid: |
|---|---|
| Unjust/Injustice | Immoral |
| Outrage | Unconscionable |
| Any variation of equal, equality or equalizing | Leveling the playing field |
| Creating balance | |

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Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
A GLOSSARY OF “OTHER TERMS” (continued)

Below is an evolving list of terms that describe the groups most profoundly affected by this issue. These descriptions are not only technically accurate but more representative of how we relate to each other as human beings and fellow Americans. These phrases have not been tested, but are reflective of the insights we gained from the research.

Vulnerable Populations
- Too many Americans don’t have the same opportunities to be as healthy as others
- Americans who face significant barriers to better health
- People whose circumstances have made them vulnerable to poor health
- All Americans should have the opportunity to make the choices that allow them to live a long, healthy life, regardless of their income, education, or ethnic background
- Our opportunities to better health begin where we live, learn, work and play
- People’s health is significantly affected by their homes, jobs and schools

Health Disparities
- Raising the bar for everyone
- Setting a fair and adequate baseline of care for all
- Lifting everyone up
- Giving everyone a chance to live a healthy life
- Unfair
- Not right

Disappointing (as in Americans should be able to do better, not let people fall through the cracks)
- It’s time we made it possible for all Americans to afford to see a doctor, but it’s also time we made it less likely that they need to

Poverty
- Families who can’t afford the basics in life
- Americans who struggle financially
- Americans struggling to get by

Low-income workers and families
- People who work for a living and still can’t pay their rent
- Hard-working Americans who have gotten squeezed out of the middle class in tough times
- Families whose dreams are being foreclosed

Violence in general, as well as gangs and intimate partner violence
- Unsafe streets
- The epidemic of violence
- Street violence
- Intergenerational cycle of violence and abuse
- Teen dating violence and abuse

The elderly population and their families, nursing homes and elder care
- Our aging parents and grandparents
- Our elders
- Elderly
- Caring for people as they age

Refugees and immigrants including children
- People seeking a new home in America
- Children caught between two worlds
- From undocumented immigrants to productive, tax-paying American citizens

Youth and teens
- The years of opportunity and danger
- Teenagers: They aren’t just young adults

Mental health or illness, including young people
- It’s just as dangerous and debilitating as any other chronic disease
NINE FACTS ABOUT FACTS

1. Less Is Always More
Regardless of how good or reliable the data is, this research showed us that less is more. If you can use two facts instead of three, use two. Or better yet, use just one great fact. When introducing information to people who may be skeptical about social determinants, we found that more facts made people feel like they were being sold or spun.

2. Use Complementary—Not Competing—Data
If you are using multiple pieces of information, they should be used to advance—not repeat—your narrative. If you are using multiple facts, they should be complementary in advancing your message. For example, use one that undermines the problem and another that highlights the promise of an approach.

“In a Little Rock, Ark., middle school last month, over 108 suspensions resulted from fights during recess—a time when kids should be playing, recharging their batteries and return to class ready to learn. After a new program called Playworks was introduced into the school, suspensions dropped to zero. The program allows kids to spend more time playing instead of fighting, and teachers to spend more time teaching instead of dealing with conflicts that carry over to the classroom. In fact, the program has been shown to restore a whole week’s worth of class time that would have previously been spent dealing with fights.”

3. Context Is King
“Just the facts, ma’am” may help advance police work on Danger but it doesn’t help advance our messaging. How and where a fact is presented in your message is critical, especially when that fact may challenge an existing belief. For example, if your fact could be perceived as a criticism, whether to a person’s race, country or cause, then he/she will most likely reject your fact at face value unless it is put in a more acceptable context. We shared an effective example of providing such context in the long-form message example used earlier.

America leads the world in medical research and medical care, and for all we spend on health care, we should be the healthiest people on Earth. Yet one of the most important indicators, like how long we live, we’re not even in the top 25, behind countries like Bosnia and Jordan.

4. Specific Examples Matter
In the previous example, POS tested several versions where the only thing that changed was which countries we used to illustrate the point. We had 25 different countries to choose from. In earlier drafts, we used France, Spain or Turkey as examples. The respondents rejected them outright and refused to believe them. One said, “Why are you picking on Spain? Others said these countries were too “socialist” or “backward” to have better health than the U.S. does. However, when we switched the countries to Bosnia and Jordan, the respondents were more open to the information.

5. Don’t Let Numbers Be Forgettable
Specificity matters when it comes to examples, but not so much when dealing with the actual number. Our level of precision doesn’t need to approach the level of pi to prove that the research is valid. Why say 23.6 percent of those in poverty didn’t graduate high school when you can say almost 25 percent? Complicated numbers are difficult to remember. Just think of the way you remember or forget phone numbers. The larger the number the more important it is to round it into something memorable. We don’t suggest using this approach in a scientific journal.
6. Break Down Big Numbers

Speaking of big numbers, unless they are put into some kind of context, they can lose their meaning and intended impact. Recently, the founder of TED, Richard Saul Wurman, illustrated this point when trying to put ‘a trillion’ into perspective.

‘Imagine a very wealthy couple who had a lot of cash in reserve. I mean a lot. Well, one day 30 years ago, they decided to start a small business. And it was an awful business plan. So every day, for the last 30 years, their business lost a million dollars every single day. To show you how much a trillion dollars is, they would have to lose a million dollars a day for another 2,700 years to lose a trillion dollars.’

The numbers we work with can be both mind-boggling and mind-numbing. It is our job to break them down in a way that is both comprehensible and meaningful. Reporting that health insurance legislation costs a trillion dollars (over 10 years) is an accurate estimate but creates a completely different meaning than telling someone that the cost of reform breaks down to $3 a day for every American.

7. The Value in a Number Is in Its Vokana

Numbers can represent both a value and our values. You can say that half of all parents in poor neighborhoods don’t feel safe letting their children play on the streets. Or you can try and create a picture of what it must be like to feel trapped in your own home, unable to move because of your job or income, not able to give your kids the most basic opportunities to play outside or run free, but instead fear that they could get caught up with the wrong crowd or stuck down by a nasty bully, like the neighbor’s kid next door.

8. Imagine Why Someone Might Cry Foul?

Some of the most important lessons from the research involved life expectancy data. For example, when we stated that there was up to a 25-year difference in life expectancy between a person who lives in a certain zip code in Connecticut and someone who lives in North Dakota, respondents cried foul, thinking we cherry-picked the data and that this was an extreme example. On the other hand, when we told people that there was a life expectancy difference of seven years between someone who graduated from college versus those who didn’t graduate high school, people responded differently and those differences were often associated with very different life circumstances.

So for those participants who had graduated college and were more conservative, they actually believed the data but amusingly didn’t think that seven years of life was that much of a difference.

Conversely, those who were not college graduates rejected the idea that education played any role in how long someone might live.

9. Overall Messaging Rules Still Apply

Finally, we need to realize that facts aren’t a separate part of our message but an essential ingredient to telling our story. They benefit from the same lessons we’ve shared earlier in this report.

There is no shortage of good data that support the idea that our health costs are long before illness—in our homes, schools and jobs. But there is still a long way to go to make sure that we are using it to maximum effect. To this end, we have begun to aggregate these sources and refine these messages online at http://sites.google.com/factsabouttobacco.

We invite you to visit this site, add your own compelling data and comment on how you’ve been able to successfully use great information to make good things happen.
IV. Message Planning, Implementation, and 1-pager Tools and Fidelity Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Updated-Message Planning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target (Target, Strategy chart):</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tactics (Tactics, Strategy chart):</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Problem definition—What is causing this problem? Remember to think at the physical and social environmental level, not the individual level. Do you have all the information you need? If not, what questions do you need answered and by whom?

2. Can this cause be directly linked to the food system? If so, draw it out simply. The food system is often hidden. It is important that we can communicate this link in concrete terms people can understand.

3. Who is to blame? Remember to think at the physical and social environmental level, not the individual level.

4. Why should people care about this problem?

5. What is the concrete solution to this problem that the group agrees upon? (Intermediate and long term goals in strategy chart)

6. Why should people take action right now?

7. What core member values does this problem and solution reflect?

8. Who is affected by this problem? (Constituents, #1 on strategy chart, but this may not cover everyone)

9. Is there a personal story we can tell? Are they our stakeholders or allies? If not, how can we engage them? (Constituents, #1 on strategy chart)

10. Who are your opponents? What will their arguments be against change? Can you flip their arguments?

11. How are people going to get involved?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Previous Message Planning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tactics:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Please have photovoice pictures, power analysis, and critical path analysis, along with the tool book available.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is causing this problem? **Remember to think at the physical and social environmental level, not the individual level.**

Can this cause be directly linked to the food system? If so, draw it out simply. The food system is often hidden. It is important that we can communicate this link in concrete terms people can understand.

Who is to blame? **Remember to think at the physical and social environmental level, not the individual level.**

Why should people care about this problem?

What is the concrete solution to this problem that the group agrees upon?

Why should people take action right **now**?

How are people going to get involved?

What core member values does this problem and solution reflect?

Are these common community values that will make people and stakeholders care about your message? If not, what values can we talk about to make them reflect community values?

Who is affected by this problem? Make sure to refer to power analysis that has been completed.

Are they stakeholders or allies? Is there a personal story we can tell? If not, what do we need to do to make them stakeholders or allies?

If there is a personal story to tell, is it someone that people from the community will relate to? Review the notes from the photovoice project and discussion of the challenges and barriers of the local food system. How does the story reflect the common community experience?
**IMPLEMENTATION TOOL**

**Target:** The Town Council  
**Tactics:** Editorial Writing Campaign

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>What will be done?</strong></th>
<th>10 letters based on messaging plan will be written to the Robbins Times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>By Whom?</strong></td>
<td>8 members of the Robbins Food For All Advocacy Committee; Mike Burns, pastor of First Baptist Church; Gary Sands (local farmer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>By When?</strong></td>
<td>We will write the letters between March and April 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Using What Resources?**  
(People and tools) | Our connections with the local editor of the Robbins Times and the Health Justice guide on writing a letter to the editor in tool book |
<p>| <strong>How will this be accomplished?</strong> | The Advocacy Committee will offer the 1-pager as a guide and will be available to guide the two stakeholders in their letter writing. |
| <strong>How will we know we were successful?</strong> | 1. If the letters were written and sent to the newspaper during the time period 2. How many letters were printed in the newspaper during the time period. |
| <strong>When will the feedback section be completed?</strong> | The Advocacy Committee will review this section at the end of March. Lilly is in charge of putting this on the agenda during that meeting. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Completion Date</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **Food Systems Certification Training**                        | 1. Uncovering our Values and our Food System: Introduction  
2. Uncovering our Food System through Pictures  
3. Building Healthy Food Systems through Community Organizing  
2. N/a  
3. N/a  
4. N/a |
| **Description**                                                | • Participants will discover, reflect, clarify, and articulate the commonly-held values of the membership and gain a deeper understanding of the implications of mission and vision.  
• Participants will spend approximately two weeks taking pictures of their food system. Participants will identify opportunities for improvement and reach consensus on next steps for working collectively towards food systems change.  
• This training will provide participants with a framework for understanding the basic principles of community organizing and how these methods can be used to create food systems change and build the capacity of their coalition.  
• Participants will learn the steps to building a strong group of coalition members. Participants will discuss and plan act. |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Completion Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training Session on Messaging</td>
<td>• Collective Action and Ind./Societal Frames&lt;br&gt;• Key recommendations&lt;br&gt;• How to talk about and understand the abstract food system in concrete terms&lt;br&gt;• Integrate collective action framing and key recommendations into issue campaign</td>
<td>December 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framing Report Training</td>
<td>The training will go over the information answered in the training report with the community groups</td>
<td>Dec. 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Assistance</td>
<td>Integrate collective action framing and key recommendations into issue campaign through providing resources, a toolkit, step-by-step assistance and consulting using the messaging planning</td>
<td>Oct. 2014-present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Meeting</td>
<td>• Assess and evaluate messages used throughout the campaign</td>
<td>Feedback was gathered from the group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Meeting with Results and Future Recommendations</td>
<td>Community-based groups will be asked for their feedback about the overall process.</td>
<td>Feedback was gathered from the group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1-Pager Tool

1. What is the problem? (1-2 sentences)
2. Who is to blame? (1-3 sentences)
3. Why should people care?
4. What are the solutions?
5. Why should people take action right now?
6. What core member values does this problem and solution reflect?
7. Who are your opponents? What will their arguments be against change? Can you flip their arguments?
8. How are people going to get involved?
9. When is your next event? What information do you want to give people to get involved?
APPENDIX C – ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF CHANGE

I. Building Advocacy Capacity Field Notes

Date:

Community and meeting location:

Meeting or event attended:

1. Describe the attendees of the meeting or event. Note representatives from *key institutions* in the community (schools, companies, libraries, hospitals, agencies, etc.) that are possible sources of support. Which stakeholders were present or had networks that could lead to access to desired stakeholders? Is there anyone that is not at the meeting that should be involved? Please explore why these people are not at the meeting. Were there obstacles such as timing and location that may have prevented them from being there? Have they been invited to be involved? If not, why not?

2. Describe the meeting purpose, details of the location, and mood of the room. Note if there was a clear agenda that was followed and if this was or leading to a major event. **Remember to note your feelings.**

3. How did the group address the following? (If it was not discussed, indicate):
   - Collective action framing
   - Key recommendations
   - SC framing report
   - Frame variants and strategies
4. How did the group discuss their issues? Individual level or physical and social environmental level? Provide details on how they are re-framing the issues?

5. Did the group discuss challenging power? If so, how was this discussed? Did they use the collective action framework?

6. Were any issues related to the critical consciousness about the food system was raised discussed? Provide details on the discussion and context of the discussion. Were there any other social issues raised as related to the food system or just as unjust issues that need to be addressed in the community? If so, provide details about the discussion.

7. How are people engaging in community based efforts? What motivations do they state for engaging? Have there been any costs are to challenging power (i.e. loss of social capital or relationships within the community; time or money costs)?

8. How is group consensus around a decision or issue being met (i.e. through discussion, through voting, 1 or 2 dominant leaders or shared leadership within the group)? Are minority or dissenting opinions addressed or discussed if so, why were these dissenting opinions not popular with the group? Are people encouraged to offer opinions, ideas or topics and if so, how are they encouraged to participate and act? Is there a particular way the meeting space is set up or the way the meeting is being conducted to exert power or disenfranchise certain people within the group?
9. Were there any barriers brought up to challenging power (i.e. political, pragmatic (time, logistics), mandated (i.e. perceived expectations to appease funders), lack of continuity between issues?

Note any other reflections/ comments

II. Qualitative Codebook for Manuscript One

1. Citizenship vs. Consumer Responsibility

Citizenship is a call to action change the food system or help prevent childhood obesity at the societal level. It can be a deeper call for change for the good of the community, country, and future generations. Consumer Responsibility is the act of shopping or choosing certain products that help prevent childhood obesity (i.e. parents shopping for healthier food for their children) or products that support a healthy food system (i.e. responsibility-sourced, organic, non-GMO, local, sustainable) For example, voting with your dollar by the products you buy.

2. Collective Action Phases

- Diagnostic:

  Define an issue, build consensus around an issue, and assign blame for the issue

- Prognostic

  Defines what solutions or actions need to take place

- Motivational

  With a specific, urgent call to action

III. Qualitative Codebook for Manuscript Two
1. Three levels of critical consciousness
   - Personal-neoliberal consciousness-changes in consumption behavior
   - Community wellbeing-liberal consciousness-changes in bringing good food to others-raising awareness
   - Radical-critical consciousness-promoting and organizing for structural change

2. Different types of problems defined by stakeholders
   - Populist
     Lack of economic opportunities for farmers, food is too cheap
     Corporate control of food system, lack of democratic participation
     Globalization, non-local food system
     People are not connected to the land or food
     People are inexperienced in growing or preparation of food
     Lack of knowledge about health, cooking, nutrition
   - Environmental
     Urbanization, loss of agricultural land
     Overuse of agricultural chemicals
     Water quality and depletion
     Proliferation of GMOs
   - Class
Inequitable distribution of wealth and resources

Poverty, low wages

Lack of access to healthy food by low-income people

3. Access to knowledge/resources—There is power in information and knowledge and access to resources. Access information, knowledge, and resources often reveals power structures that are otherwise hidden.

4. Access to policy and decision makers—Relationships are often the key to accessing knowledge, resources, and information. If groups aren’t organized or disenfranchised, they do not have these relationships and will not have access to knowledge, resources, and information.

5. Barriers to challenging power—When groups are doing things differently outside these established networks of relationships that shakes up the system, such as community organizing. It’s hard to organize disenfranchised groups, keep them engaged, and find people willing to sacrifice the relationships they do have established to challenge power. These barriers can include: lack of willingness to lose relationships, lack of time, money, resources to engage in work.

6. Values—These can be values explicitly described by groups in their mission and vision statements or values that are implied during issue campaigns.

7. Class—Class in terms of access to knowledge, relationships, and resources, issues related to poverty, unemployment, lack of time/money to engage in work.
8. Race-Anytime race was implicitly or explicitly mentioned as a factor in access to knowledge, relationships and resources. Race often intersects with class to marginalize people.

9. Connection with Food-Lack of transparency of the food system and ways to connect back to it. Food is connected with community, values, and traditions.

10. Consequences of the food system- health disparities related to obesity and diabetes; economic inequalities; ecological catastrophe; and alienation and disconnection between the between people and their land and food, food safety, traceability, food addiction, food access issues.

11. Lack of transparency in local food system- any time that food safety, lack of knowledge of food origin and ingredients, lack of knowledge of how food is produced, distributed, sold, and consumed, lack of knowledge of the consequences of the current food system was mentioned.

12. Illuminating the food system- Illuminating issues with the food system that are linked to social justice issues and values of the group. Access to information, resources and relationships is a way to illuminate the power structures within the food system. Illuminating the food system was achieved through COPASCities trainings, but also through action/challenging power/gaining access to information through community organizing.

13. Inclusiveness-Groups included or being left out of the conversation and decision making process in all levels of the food system.

14. Systems reproducing inequality-Linking systems of oppression (i.e. education system and health outcomes), lack of transparency of food system,
relationships, access to knowledge and resources keeps systems hidden and abstract, making them impossible challenge.

15. Power

- Power in the food system- Monopolies, lobbyists for Big Food, Industry influence over regulations and policy, capital in the food system, intellectual property rights, food marketing regulation, access to knowledge/resources at local, state, federal level

- Power exerted within community group-How group consensus is reached, how minority or dissenting opinions addressed or discussed, the way the meeting is being conducted or set up to exert power or disenfranchise certain people within the group

- Community power-community groups using community organizing techniques to develop issue campaign. This includes how communities are being heard, gathering information, building a base, revealing the power structure and systems reproducing inequality,