Title
Bonner County Idaho Just Got Healthier

Challenge
A major focus of the Bonner County Coalition for Health (BCCH) is chronic disease prevention. Within Bonner County, 59% of adults have a BMI > 25.0. 4.7% have heart disease, 6.8% have diabetes, 40.5% have hyperlipidemia and 29.8% have hypertension. These rates are higher than the state average of 3.9% heart disease and 26.3% hypertension. The US Census Bureau American Community Survey reports 19.5% of Bonner County children (aged 0-17) live in households with income below the federal poverty level. Another 21% of households are ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed). 49% of public school student’s quality for free or reduced price lunch. Poverty creates barriers to access of health services, healthy foods, and healthy lifestyles. 17% of house-holds experience food insecurity, and 75% of adults have inadequate consumption of fruits and vegetables. One of the primary goals of the BCCH is to improve local access to affordable healthy foods.

Solution
The BCCH is working on a few strategies for improved access to healthy foods. The first initiative is our "Change for Change" program, involving a partnership with a local grocery. The goal is to affect a change in food purchasing habits for the local residents. The store will provide 4 items for sale at a markedly reduced price. These items will be displayed prominently at the store entrance. The items will be an example of either a fruit, vegetable/legume, whole grain, or low-fat dairy, and must be WIC approved. Shoppers who purchase these items will be rewarded with a $1 coupon, and those purchasing all 4 will receive a $5 coupon that may be redeemed at the next grocery visit.

Results
Our first major success was an agreement with the President and Owner of the chain of Super-One Foods to support a proposal detailing the “Change for Change” initiative. The agreement is that shoppers will need to spend $25 total on their grocery bill in order to participate and receive the rebate-coupons. The store has agreed to start the program on Wednesday October 12, 2016. Every two weeks, the items will be rotated, with a goal not to repeat any item any more than once every 8 weeks so that new items are presented to shoppers regularly. In return for offering this program, BCCH will promote it via advertising, direct mailing to families of local students, and with posters displayed prominently at the offices of local physicians, the health district, and of the City of Sandpoint and of the County administration.

Summary
The “Change for Change” project is addressing chronic disease prevention by improving access to healthy foods to the residents of Bonner County. The "Change for Change" program will encourage and incentivize shoppers to try new healthy food items, including vegetables, fruits, whole grains and low-fat dairy that they
might not have been acquainted with, and opening a few new horizons. The program will be offered initially at Super-One Foods in Sandpoint, ID, starting October 12, 2016. Healthy recipes for each featured item will be provided to shoppers.

Sustaining success
The long term goal of the "Change for Change" initiative is to affect the incidence and severity of chronic disease in Bonner County by gradually changing eating habits by increasing access and decreasing cost of fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy items to local residents. Local physicians will be encouraged to promote this program and to write non-pharmacologic prescriptions for healthy foods. It is expected that residents will be encouraged to try new food items simply to get the rebate coupon of $5 every two weeks, to decrease their grocery expenses. The grocery chain may find an increase in shoppers participating in this program in Bonner County, and expand the same program in neighboring counties.

Get Involved
Community-wide support for "Change for Change" will be needed. This will involve area physicians who will be asked to place a descriptive poster and the physicians will be asked to encourage their patients to participate. Posters will also be placed in public places promoting the program. We will advertise in the local newspaper, in on-line resources, and with direct mailings to area residents. We will poll store patrons on their experience, and monitor store participation over time.

Quote
"What matters most is your overall way of eating and living".
Dean Ornish, MD

"One should eat to live, not live to eat".
Benjamin Franklin

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