

**Community Hunger Assessment, Intervention, and Resources Project  
Comprehensive Project Analysis  
for the Northfield Savings Bank Foundation  
2006-2009 Executive Summary**

The Vermont Campaign to End Childhood Hunger (VTCECH) is pleased to present this Executive Summary of our comprehensive analysis of the first three years of the Community Hunger Assessment, Intervention, and Resources (CHAIR) project to the Northfield Savings Bank.

The CHAIR project was launched in July 2006 in order to coordinate community efforts and build strong nutrition safety nets – one Vermont community at a time. The three-year project focused on two of Vermont’s most densely populated areas: Washington and Chittenden Counties. CHAIR is a comprehensive approach to addressing hunger: educating community members about the local causes and effects of hunger, and providing tools to improve nutrition and reduce hunger in their communities.

After three years, the project has been a tremendous success, serving as a model for anti-hunger outreach and exceeding initial project goals and improving food security for thousands of Vermonters produced many tangible results. Highlights include:

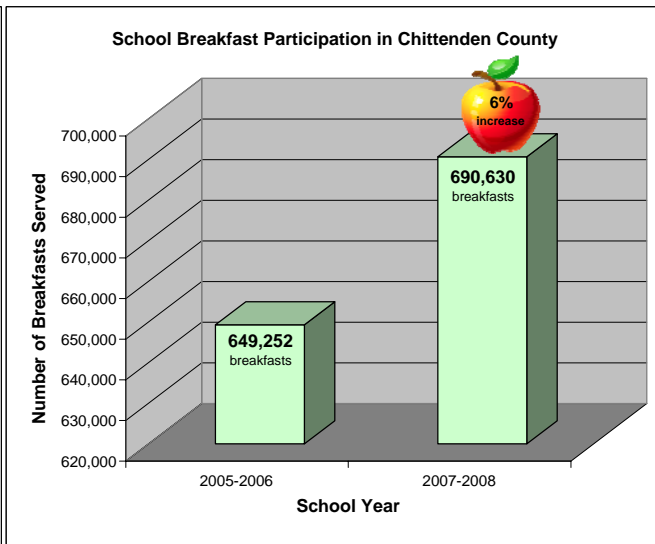
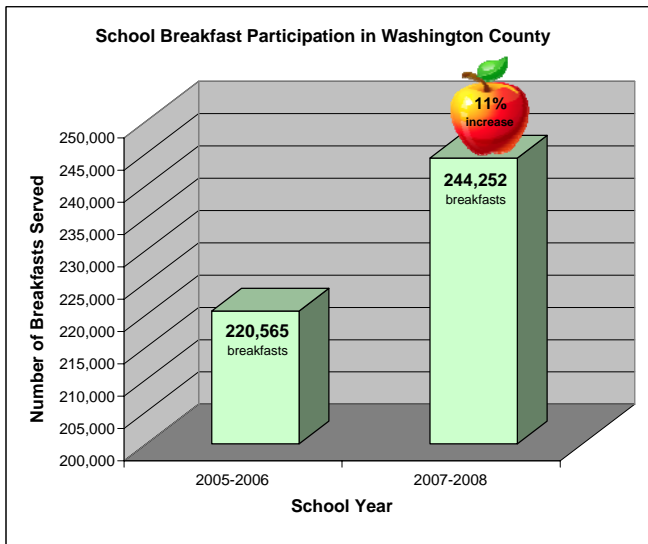
- ***Hunger Councils:*** VTCECH created Hunger Councils, a new model of community organizing, in each county in order to bring together over 70 policy makers and influential community members from the public and private sectors to learn about the issue of hunger, and to bring their visibility, credibility, networks, and authority to influence programs, policies, and practices that impact anti-hunger efforts. The Councils teamed up with VTCECH staff to increase participation and opportunities within each nutrition program – increasing availability of summer food, Cooking for Life classes, school meals, child care meals, and 3SquaresVT. The Councils now serve as a model strategy for other areas of the state.
- ***Focus Group Series:*** The CHAIR project provided the opportunity to hold a series of focus groups to gather qualitative food security data from low-income households in Washington and Chittenden Counties. Between November 2006 and May 2008, ten focus groups were conducted with a total of 87 individuals. The stories and recommendations gathered by the study were used to enhance regional food security data to better inform the work of VTCECH and its partners to strengthen the nutrition safety net for low-

income families in the region. VTCECH used this information to raise awareness among the general population, offer policy recommendations, and facilitate the implementation of best practices.

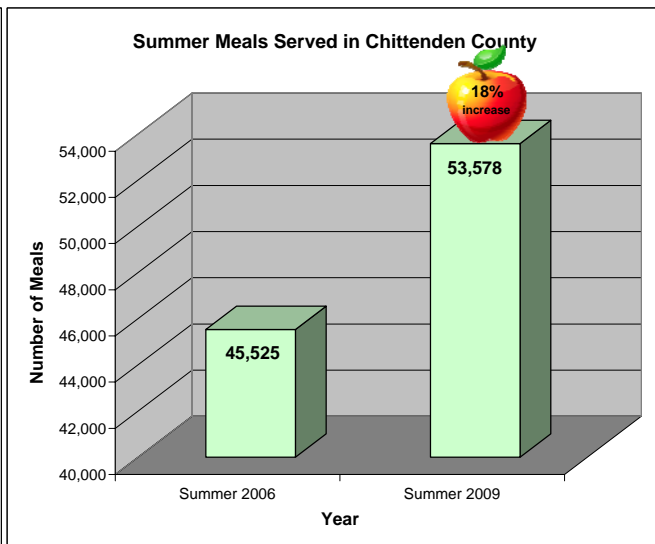
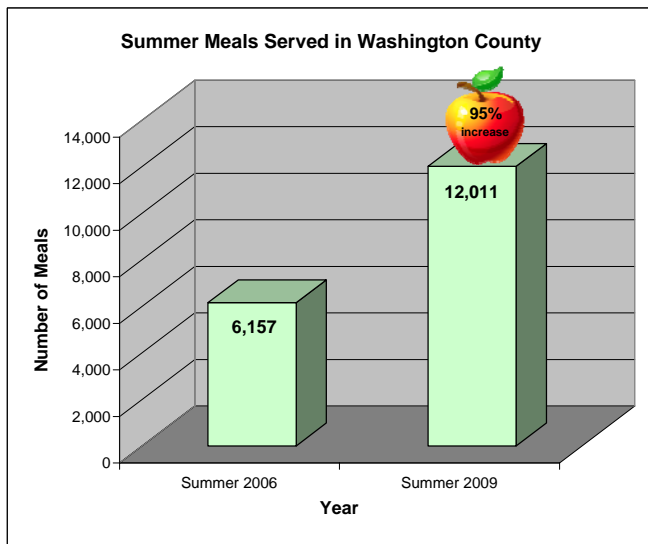
- ***Increased Public Awareness:*** The CHAIR project model included many strategies to educate and mobilize the greater community around the issue of food insecurity. For example, we coordinated over 130 presentations and trainings during the past three years, reaching approximately 4,000 people. We also worked to improve media attention around the issue, resulting in hundreds of media hits in local, state, and regional print and broadcast media outlets.
- ***Increased Access to Federal Nutrition Programs and Cooking for Life:*** The overall measure of the success of this model is increased participation in the federal nutrition programs that feed children where they are: school breakfast and lunch, summer food, child care meals, and 3SquaresVT; we also endeavored to increase access to our Cooking for Life nutrition education program. The Hunger Councils played a major role in reducing barriers to these programs; combined with an intensified program focus in the target region, we have seen impressive improvements in all program areas [*please refer to graphs on pages 3 and 4 for more information*].

Thanks to the generous support of the Northfield Savings Bank Foundation, more children and families are receiving high quality nutritious meals, and we are closer than ever to ending hunger in this region.

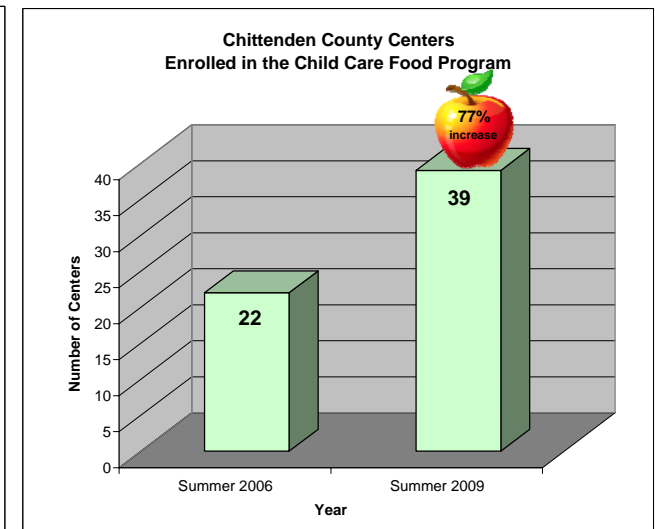
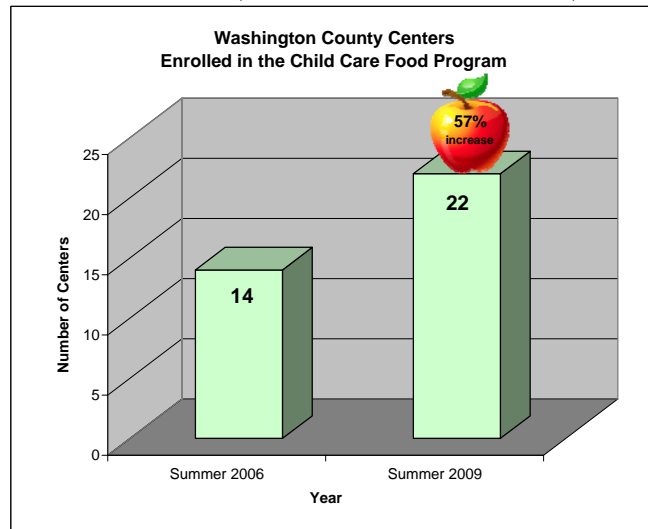
**Vermont Campaign to End Childhood Hunger  
Improvements in Federal Nutrition Programs and Cooking for Life  
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By comparison, during the grant period both Bennington and Caledonia Counties experienced a decrease in the consumption of school breakfast, indicating that without advocacy for improving access, students are less likely to have access to this important meal.

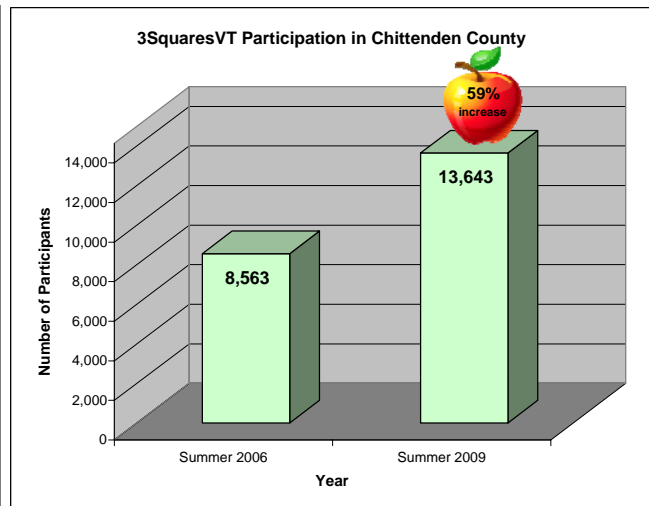
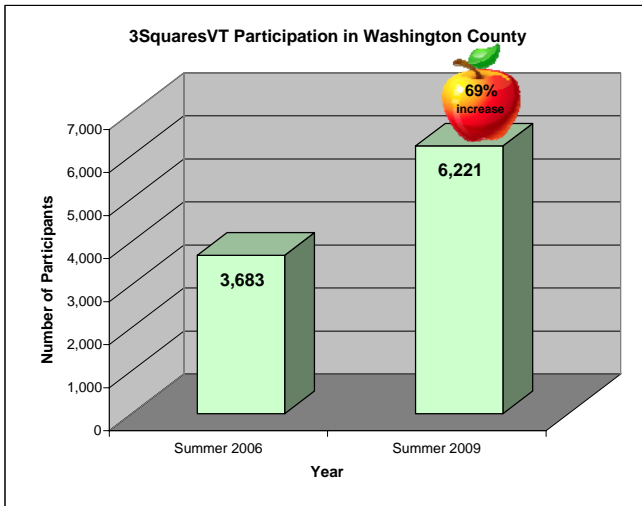


By comparison, in 2006, 103 summer food sites existed in the remaining counties in Vermont and served 137,781 meals. In 2009, the same number of sites existed and served 145,245 meals (5.5% increase in number of meals served).

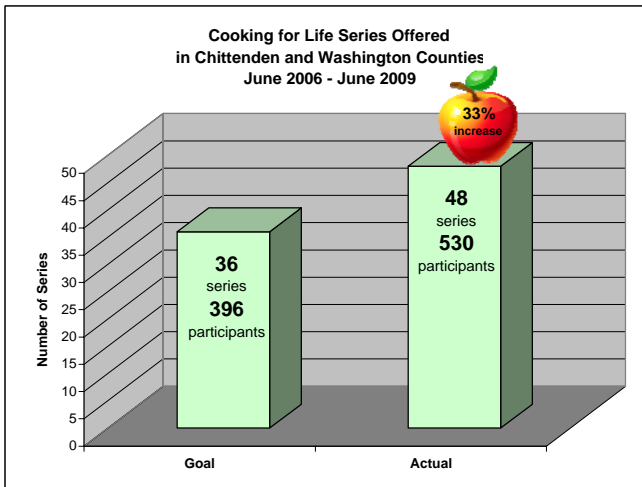


By comparison, enrollment in the rest of Vermont during the grant period increased only from 129 to 157 centers (18% increase).

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Although it was originally anticipated that the CHAIR project would result in a significant 3SquaresVT participation increase specifically for Washington and Chittenden Counties, it was quickly realized that the impacts of our outreach and advocacy efforts in the CHAIR area, including Hunger Council initiatives, led to an overall statewide participation increase of 65%.



These 48 Cooking for Life series involved 20 new program hosts in Washington and Chittenden Counties.