Background:

Homelessness at Kent State
Nationally, 56,000 college students are homeless (HUD, 2015). Students at risk for or are experiencing housing insecurity are significantly less likely to graduate on time (HUD, 2015). There are dozens of accounts of Kent State students’ experiences with housing insecurity and how it has affected their performance in classes. The graduation rate at Kent State is 37.2% after four years; housing insecurity can be contributing to such a low graduation rate (Kent State University, 2017).

Scope of Practice:

Goal: To reduce the prevalence of homelessness at Kent State University.
Objective: To raise awareness of housing insecurity as a public health issue at Kent State to students and administration.
Intervention: My class implemented an awareness based intervention in the student center. I distributed paper lunch sacks to students, faculty, and administration that contained recipes for low cost healthy meals, a snack, and educational information about housing insecurity.

Reflection:

Implementing the Hunger and Homelessness Week intervention expanded my knowledge of homelessness on university campuses and how it is affecting the student population at Kent State. It prompted me to want to take action to address housing insecurity at KSU and provide assistance to my colleagues who are struggling with homelessness.

Challenges

• Communication of roles, tasks, and objectives for each intervention team member was lacking and lead to confusion about how the intervention should have been implemented.
• Absence of quantitative research surrounding the scope of homelessness affecting Kent State students.
• Lack of ability to reach administration despite administration being important decision makers and influencers regarding homelessness at Kent State.

Recommendations

• Further quantitative research regarding the prevalence of housing insecure students at Kent State.
• An homelessness awareness based intervention targeted at administration.

References:


Community Partner:

Name: Flashes Fighting Hunger
Description
Kent State students, faculty members, and community organizations and members coalition to reduce food insecurity at Kent State University.
Project Purpose /Need:
To provide free healthy meals and sustainable food options to college students and community members. College students are significantly affected by food insecurity and need access to healthy meals to live quality lives and achieve in their classes.