

A Place-Based Alternative Approach to Food Security:

Lessons Learned from a Neighborhood House

Yan, M. C. and Sutherland, R. (2019). A Place-Based Alternative Approach to Food Security: Lessons Learned from a Neighborhood House. *Community Development Journal*, 54(4), 643–659. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsy009>

Background

As a **place-based community organization**, for the past 15 years, the DTESNH (Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House) has been working to feed local residents through a **'right-to-food philosophy.'** This aims for systemic reform rather than temporary hunger relief. Unlike traditional food banks, this provides service users with healthy meal options that are tailored to individuals. The DTESNH accepts people from all walks of life and everyone is welcomed.



Primary Issues and Ongoing Concerns



The DTES has a disproportionately high numbers of **Single Room Occupancies (SROs)**.



Charitable Food Systems focus too much on feeding as many people as possible with only few resources.



The stigma surrounding the DTES overshadows the positive aspects of the community.



Lack of funding for the DTESNH might result to fewer resources and a **decrease of community involvement**.

Methods

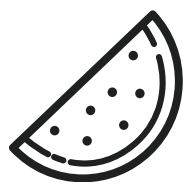
Former and current staff from the community participated in a **case study** by sharing their own **experiences** through **interviews**.

Information was also taken from **annual reports** and **records** provided by the DTESNH.

The result of the study indicates that DTESNH offers a **place-based alternative** to tackle food security issues by **nurturing and mobilizing the local community**.



Key Findings



DTESNH provides a non-charitable alternative approach to provide DTES residents a **healthier** meal program.

DTESNH takes pride in its place-based approach to **inclusivity and activism** which can **transform** the community.



With this research, organizations in the DTES are able to recognize different dietary needs and should work towards a participatory model to deliver **nutritious meals for everyone**.



While this was only a single case study, more studies should be conducted to promote solutions that provide residents with more **diverse** access to **nutrition**.

Key Words: Food sovereignty and security, systemic reform, community development.

SUMMARY & GRAPHIC BY MELISSA BAUTISTA, AUDREY CHOW, SHAYLE MUSSELL, WYATT SCOTT, AND JESSICA WINFIELD

THIS UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT WORK IS A PRODUCT OF A COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE MAKING RESEARCH ACCESSIBLE INITIATIVE (MRAI), RESEARCHERS, DR. EVAN MAURO AND THE STUDENTS OF ASTU 100 AT UBC. THIS STUDENT WORK HAS BEEN REVIEWED BY THE LEAD AUTHOR OF THE ORIGINAL ITEM. REVISIONS PROVIDED BY THE LEAD AUTHOR HAVE BEEN INCORPORATED INTO THE STUDENT WORK WITH SUPPORT FROM THE UBC LEARNING EXCHANGE AND MEMBERS OF THE MRAI. THE READER SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THAT THIS IS A STUDENT RESEARCH PROJECT/REPORT AND IS NOT AN OFFICIAL DOCUMENT OF UBC.

