Guidelines for Approaching Possible Food Insecurity

In the past year, did you worry that your food would run out before you could buy more?  
Yes

In the past year, did the food you bought not last and you didn’t have money to get more?  
Yes

I see it’s hard getting enough food.  
This is rough, for you and your family.  
Unfortunately, it’s a common problem.

How are you dealing with this?  
What else could you try?

Are you getting help?  
Who/what’s helping?  
e.g., family or friend, food pantry, WIC, food stamps, 2-1-1, religious group

Would you like (more) help?  
Yes

What kind of help would you consider?  
e.g., family or friend, calling 2-1-1, religious group, food pantry, WIC, food stamps

Offered help  
Gave parent handout  
Made referral in-house or community  
F/U

Supported parent’s choice  
Reassured  
Gave parent handout  
F/U  
No action needed

No, getting enough help

No, other reason

What might be the benefit of getting help?  
Encourage getting help

What makes it hard to get help?  
Suggest barriers, address them

What would make it easier to get help?

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Food Insecurity: Addressing Possible Barriers

Barrier: I don’t know where to get help

Response:

- Yes, it’s often hard to know where to go
- Would you like me to recommend good programs?
- We have someone who can help. Would you like to talk to him/her?
- Here’s a handout with info on good websites and nearby places that help

Barrier: I’d feel embarrassed

Response:

- I hear you. Lots of people feel embarrassed about getting help with food assistance
- Many families need help, and many are getting help. You’re not alone! This is not your fault
- Would you like me to help you get help?

Barrier: I don’t believe people should get help from the government

Response:

- I understand you don’t think people should get help from the government
- But, many people need help at different times, like after a hurricane or losing a job. And, no-one should be hungry
- And, this is so important – for you and your kids to be healthy and grow well
- Also, there are places offering help with food that having nothing to do with the government
- Would you be interested in finding one of those programs?

Barrier: The application is too much hassle

Response:

- Yes, I’ve heard about this. But, we’ve been able to help people deal with it
- Would you like me to help with this?
- We have someone who can help. Would you like to talk to him/her?
- Here’s a handout with info on good websites and nearby places that help
Barrier: I tried getting help and it did not work

Response:

- I understand you not wanting to try again. It’s hard when you go through the hassle for nothing
- But, this is so important for you, and your kids
- Would you like me to help find a good program?
- We have someone excellent who can help. Would you like to talk to him/her?
- Here’s a handout with info on good websites and nearby places that help

Barrier: I don't have the time

Response:

- I hear you that it feels like there’s not enough time. You’re busy!
- But, this is so important – for you, your family, your child
- Would you like me to suggest a program that should help?
- It won’t take a lot of time to sign up

Barrier: I don’t have transportation

Response:

- I see transportation is a problem
- Unfortunately, this is so common
- Would you like me to see if there’s something close to home or on a bus route?

Barrier: It’ll get better with time

Response:

- I understand you feel time will fix things
- What do you think that help could improve things sooner?
- Would you like me to suggest a program that should help soon?

Barrier: I don’t think it’s affecting my child(ren)

Response:

- I hear you that this may not be affecting your kids
- I see how much you care about your kids
- Do you think they’re getting the food they need to be healthy?