

## Prevention is the key

*“While Latinos are affected by a wide range of risk factors and diseases, nearly every health disparity they experience could be prevented or more effectively managed given timely access to health care.” –National Council of La Raza (NCLR)*

The causes of high rates of obesity, diabetes, and hunger among Latinos have less to do with biology and more to do with environmental and lifestyle factors that are preventable.

The good news is there is much we can do to reduce the risk of these diseases and health problems. By understanding how our environment and lifestyle affect health in our communities, we can take steps toward improving community health.



# Understanding Food Access

Here are some images that will help you think about what food access means.

Where can you buy your groceries?



At a corner store?

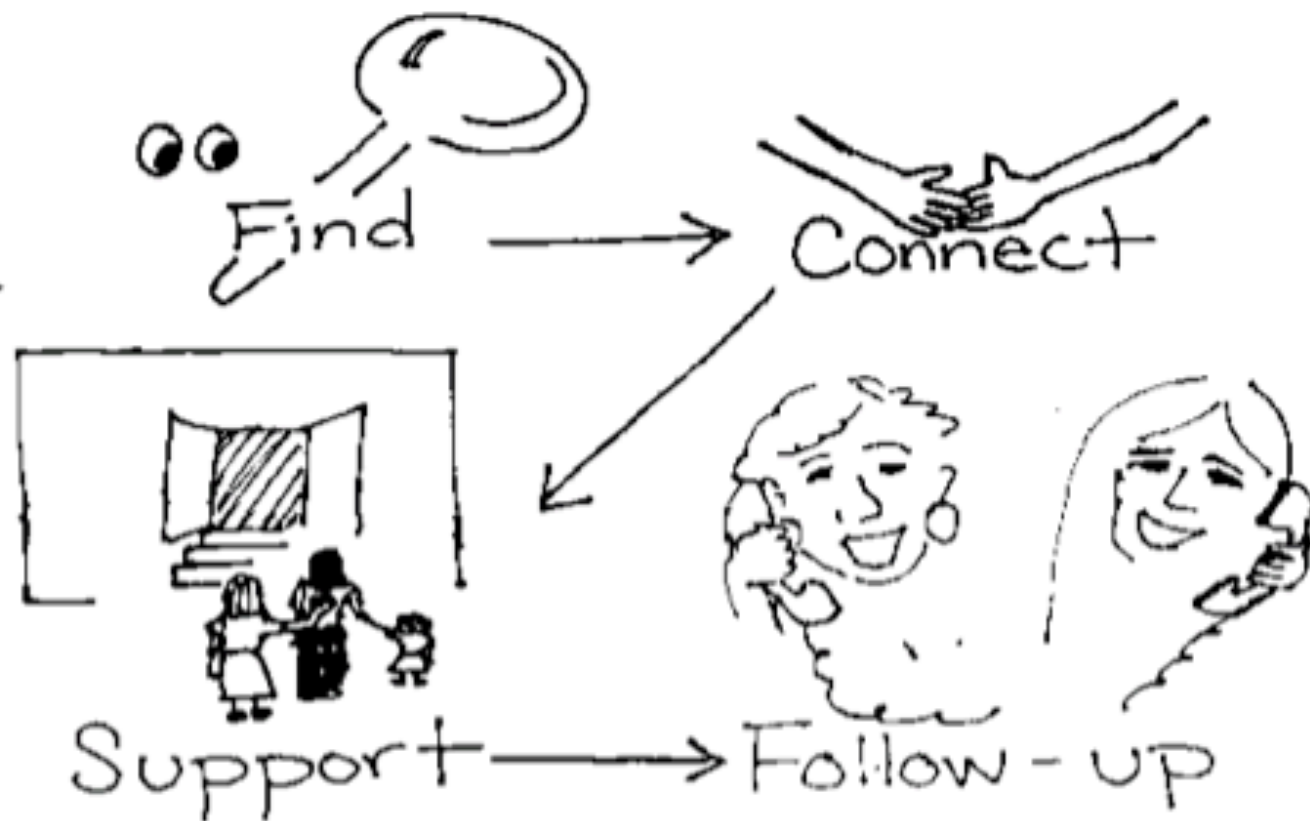


Or at a large grocery store?

How far you have to travel to shop?  
How expensive it is to get nutritious food?

## Find > Connect > Support > Follow up

You've heard about the existing nutrition assistance resources to support individuals and families in healthy eating. Those resources are solutions to the problem facing many people: not having enough money to eat the food they need for active, healthy living.



As promotores, you will be most successful in your efforts to help people in your community if you can **find** individuals and families who are experiencing this problem, **connect** with them and **support** them in trying to reach a solution, and **follow up** with them over time.

# Needs assessment

A **needs assessment** helps us figure out what is really going on in the community around a problem or question, and prevents us from assuming we already know all the answers.



## Not everyone will know to ask for help

Not everyone who needs help accessing healthy food or making healthy choices realizes that they need help. Even if they know they are struggling, some people may not know that resources exist to make their situation better or they may not be comfortable asking for help. Thus, it is important that you as promotores know how to identify **who might need help**. Promotores can reach those people who need help by looking for the warning signs of poor food access and unhealthy eating.



## Establish connection and build trust

After you have established a connection with a new client or community member, you likely talk with them to learn about them and their situation. This could be through a formal intake interview or it could be an informal conversation in a clinic waiting room, at your child's school, or after church. In many cases, the client may have come to you for help around a specific need like a health problem. But in other cases, you may have to talk to the client several times and build trust with them before they begin to open up to you about their situation and reveal the ways that they need help.

A client may come to you asking for help to get a free mammogram. They may never share with you that they are also struggling to pay rent and that they often skip meals so that their children have enough to eat.

