The PEPartnership:
Extending Resources Across Multiple Agencies
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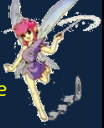
Slide 1	The PEPartnership: extending resources across multiple agencies	Good morning. I'm Christine Thompson, Coordinator of the Personal Essentials Pantry in Madison, Wisconsin. I'm here to talk about the PEPartnership, an extension of the ministry that the Personal Essentials Pantry has been doing for the last four years.
Slide 2	The PEPartnership meeting the need for personal and household hygiene products now that the Toilet Paper Fairy has left the building…	I'd like to begin with a look at the need area we serve, since it tends to be pretty much invisible. Essentially, contrary to popular belief, the Toilet Paper Fairy has left the building – and that leaves a whole lot of people in poverty with a whole lot of problems.
Slide 3	My day, and welcome to it.	Basically, there's a whole lot about personal and household hygiene that most of us take for granted – those of us who aren't constrained by the rules and regulations involved in getting help to deal with the poverty that *we* aren't experiencing. In fact, we tend to take things so much for granted that we sometimes don't even notice what we've got.
Slide 4	First things first….	So my day, and welcome to it. First things first… stumble into the bathroom, and take care of that pressing urge. Except that – oh, gosh – there's no toilet paper left. That's going to be decidedly awkward…. We won't dwell overlong on what I ended up doing; we'll just assume I found some reasonably non-disgusting way of coping, and move on to the next task of the day….

Slide 5	**Brush the teeth…**	Let's get rid of the morning breath, and brush the teeth. Oops – looks like the toothbrush has finally disintegrated, and the toothpaste has finally disappeared. Well, there's always the old "finger and baking soda" routine, I guess. Hate the taste, but needs must….
Slide 6	**Maybe the shower will relax me…**	Maybe the shower will relax me… …or maybe not. Looks like I'm out of soap and shampoo. Well, they say water's the universal solvent. Better hope that's true.
Slide 7	**Well, at least I can get dressed…**	Well, at least I can get dressed. Hmmm. I seem to be out of deodorant, *and* everything I've got in the way of office wear needs to be washed. Pity I don't have any laundry soap to wash 'em in. Okay, let's grab whatever smells least and feel smoothest. Yuck. I guess I better not get too close to anybody today….
Slide 8	**…Maybe have some breakfast?**	Maybe I'll just have some breakfast. Oh, that's right. No dish soap, either. Hmmm. Well, I can always munch the cereal straight out of the box….
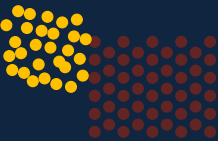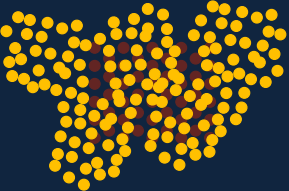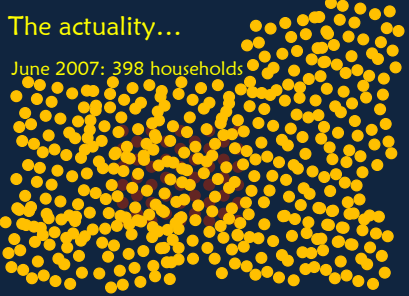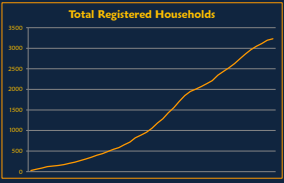
Slide 9	**30 minutes into the day…** …and it's already shot.	Well, I'm now a whoppin' 30 minutes into the day, and it's already shot. I'd go back to bed, if I thought it'd help.
Slide 10	**A bad day?** …or the norm?	For most of us, a day like this might occur occasionally – most of us have had the unfortunate experience of discovering, too late, that we've forgotten to refill the toilet paper spindle, or didn't realize that we were out of shampoo, or that the toothbrush had given its last. But for too many in our community, this frustration is the norm, not the exception.
Slide 11	**Food Stamps ≠ Grocery Stamps** • Meat for Sunday • Lunchmeat • Milk • Cheese • Orange Juice • Shampoo • Fruit: bananas? • Green beans • Toilet paper • Bread • Laundry soap • Bath soap	That's because most of *us* can spend our money exactly as we want to. But that's not the case if you're receiving public aid, say in the form of food stamps. Food stamps cover *food*; and *food* is not the same as *groceries,* as most of *us* tend to assume. And although it may look like a pretty short list of items that aren't covered, it adds up to a lot. The median family in the United States, according to the 2008 Consumer Expenditure Survey, spent almost one-quarter as much on personal and household hygiene supplies as they did on food. That's getting to be a pretty major category of expenditure that's being overlooked.
Slide 12	**Trying to fill the gap**	And so, people in poverty are left trying to fill the gap. And that means making choices. Unfortunately, it's not simply a case of recommending that people in poverty learn to better prioritize, to recognize what are "luxuries" and focus on the necessities.
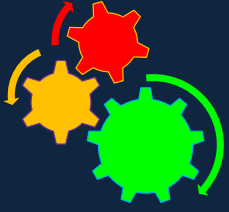
		Most of the time, people in poverty are having to make choices between *this* necessity and *that* necessity: Feed the kids? or pay the utility bills? Fill up the car so they can get to work? or buy laundry soap? Get that aching tooth taken care of? or pay the rent? And the area that we deal with – personal and household hygiene – is in fact one of those necessities. Unfortunately, most of the time everybody figures that somebody else is dealing with this need; and the problem with assuming that *somebody's* dealing with an issue is that it usually means that *nobody* is.
Slide 13	What we do isn't hunger…	What we do isn't hunger…
Slide 14	…but folks will eat a lot safer if they can wash the pots and pans they cook the food in.	…but folks will eat a lot safer if they can wash the pots and pans they cook the food in.
Slide 15	What we do isn't education…	What we do isn't education…

Slide 16	…but both kids and adults learn a lot better if they aren't worried about classmates teasing them about their clothes, their odor.	…but both kids and adults learn a lot better if they aren't worried about classmates teasing them about their clothes, their odor, their appearance.
Slide 17	What we do isn't employment…	What we do isn't employment….
Slide 18	…but it's a lot easier for folks to get and keep a job when they're able to shower, shave, shampoo.	…but it's a lot easier for folks to get and keep a job when they're able to shower, shampoo, shave, wash their clothes, use deodorant….
Slide 19	What we do isn't housing…	What we do isn't housing….
Slide 20	…but the landlord will be a lot happier if the floors and windows and toilet are cleaned occasionally.	…but the landlord will probably be a lot happier if the floors and windows and toilet are cleaned occasionally; and getting the security deposit back will almost certainly not happen without that.
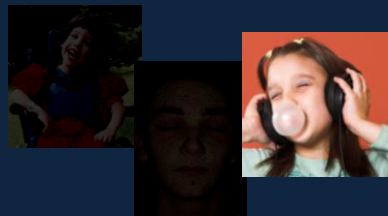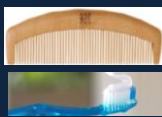
Slide 21	**What we do isn't health….**	What we do isn't health…
Slide 22	…but folks are much less prone to a whole host of health problems if they can brush their teeth on a regular basis.	…but folks are much less prone to a whole host of health problems if they can brush their teeth on a regular basis, and simple scratches are a lot less likely to turn infected if soap and band-aids are available.
Slide 23	The essentials of personal and household hygiene… …are not taken care of by some "toilet paper fairy."	The essentials of personal hygiene… …are not taken care of by some "toilet paper fairy" who stops by in the night to replenish the supply and restock the shelves in the bathroom…
Slide 24	The essentials of personal and household hygiene… …are not taken care of by some "toilet paper fairy." They are real needs, that have been overlooked by our social and welfare policies for far too long.	…nor are they luxuries that can be left off to one side until all the other needs are met. They are real needs, that have been overlooked by our social and welfare policies for far too long.
Slide 25	The essentials of personal and household hygiene… …are not taken care of by some "toilet paper fairy." They are real needs, that have been overlooked by our social and welfare policies for far too long. They are real needs, that affect all realms of daily and community living.	They are real needs, that affect all of the areas of life, from hunger abatement to housing availability to health care to employment to education to community involvement.
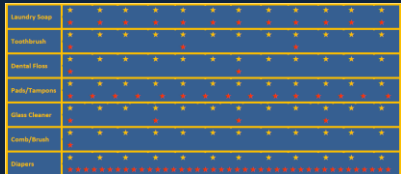
Slide 26	**And that's where we come in…**	And that's where we come in – focusing specifically on trying to provide the products essential to personal and household hygiene.
Slide 27	**June 2006: the start of the Personal Essentials Pantry** **What more can we be doing for our neighborhood?**	I want to take just a minute to go back to the start of the Personal Essentials Pantry…. The actual seed of the Pantry was planted on May 11, 2006, at an adult ed discussion group after Sunday morning worship. It was one of those lazy, getting-to-the-end-of-the year sessions, when someone asked, "What more can we be doing for our neighborhood?"
Slide 28	**You know…** **…food pantries are always being asked for…**	And the answer came back immediately, as James said, "You know, food pantries are always being asked for personal hygiene stuff; and the pantries never have it. We should do that."
Slide 29	**Personal Essentials Pantry** **Zion Church ELCA** *Mission Statement* We have been blessed by God with an abundance of gifts. In response, we share God's love and God's kingdom. We are: *Helping with the essentials of personal and household hygiene, showing God's grace and love through these tangible gifts.*	And as some of you may already know, that was all it took to get the Pantry started. The first two households were registered on June 8, 2006, three and a half weeks after that initial discussion. To the credit of the congregation, there wasn't a lot of stammering or stuttering about "should we" or "how can we possibly" – they just started in.
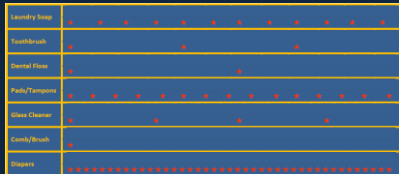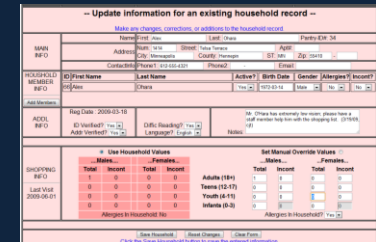
Slide 30		There may not have been much study or in-depth planning, but at least there was a goal. It was a goal that the congregation thought was *very* optimistic – that they be able to reach 50 households by June of 2007; 50 households within 12 months. Little did we know.
Slide 31		By the end of June 2006, we already had over half of that goal achieved, having registered 28 households.
Slide 32		By November, five months after opening, we'd achieved three times our initial goal, 150 households…
Slide 33		And by the time of our first anniversary, we were at 398 households – almost eight times what we hoped we'd be able to reach.
Slide 34		And the rate of new registrations didn't really slow down by any great degree. As of the end of June of 2010, a few weeks more than four years after we first opened, we had 3,460 households registered. And even if we just count the households we've seen within the last 18
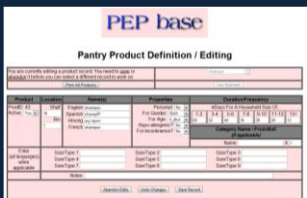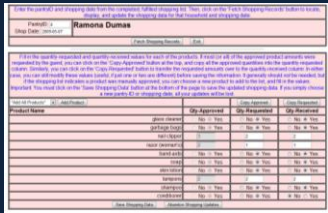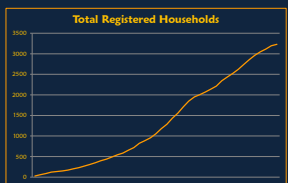
		months as "active" households, that's still 2,179 households – or, with our current average of 3.15 people per household, 6,856 people. Based on long-term analyses, some 3,428 of those individuals are children, and some 1,714 are children 3 or younger.
		And given the fact that, on any given day, anywhere from 10 to 40% of our intake is *new* registrations, we're probably not anywhere near reaching everyone in need.
Slide 35	Coping with the flood	Clearly, we weren't going to be able to respond to the need simply by keeping a closet full of a few supplies, and handing them out as people came by. We needed to have a systematic way of responding. But how?
Slide 36	Looking to the food pantries: 23 pounds of food, with a variety of food staples: enough to feed a family of 3 for 3-5 days	Food pantries have been in existence now for a lot of years, so there's a lot of information, and a lot of good resources, on how to set them up, how to run them. Allow free choice between food stuffs, allow "at will shopping," and provide a broad range of the components of the food pyramid, and you're in pretty good shape. And we've got pretty good information on how much food a given family needs for a given period of time: 23 pounds of food, if it's a good assortment, should feed a family of 3 for 3-5 days.
Slide 37	But personal and household hygiene products….	But personal and household hygiene products are another kettle of fish – so to speak. While it's true that we don't have to worry nearly so much about product expiration dates – it takes a *looooong* time for a bottle of shampoo to go bad – the products we deal with have much more variety in terms of function, use, and lifespan.
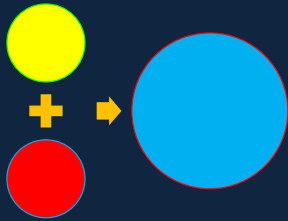
Slide 38	But personal and household hygiene products….	Families with no infants or toddlers, for instance, probably don't need diapers…
Slide 39	But personal and household hygiene products….	Families with no teenage or adult women probably don't need tampons…
Slide 40	But personal and household hygiene products….	And families with no teenage or adult men probably don't need men's deodorant.
Slide 41	And then there are exceptions…	On the other hand, there are families with special needs:
Slide 42	And then there are exceptions…	Some individuals have medical conditions that cause incontinence, so that they continue to need diapers well after the "normal" age for potty training – even into adolescence or adulthood.

Slide 43	And then there are exceptions…	Some families have members with allergies, and need fragrance-free products.
Slide 44	And then there are exceptions…	And some children reach puberty far earlier than "normal," and need deodorant, razors, menstrual protection products.
Slide 45	And products can't be swapped…	And unlike food pantries, where tuna, hamburger, and chicken are pretty interchangeable, few of our products can be swapped…. Shampoo and deodorant, laundry soap and toothpaste, combs and toothbrushes are all pretty much single-purpose. Using a toothbrush to comb your hair is pretty futile; and so is trying to brush your teeth with your pocket comb.
Slide 46	To add to the problem… **…different products have different life-spans**	To add to the problem, different products have different life-spans….
Slide 47	To add to the problem… **…especially as family size increases.**	…especially as family size increases.

Slide 46 table:

Product	Lifespan
Laundry soap	30 days
Toothpaste	60 days
Shaving cream	45 days
Dental floss	120 days
Baby wipes	20 days

Slide 47 table:

Product	Lifespan: Household sizes 1-2	Lifespan: Household sizes 3-4	Lifespan: Household sizes 5-6
Laundry soap	30 days	27 days	24 days
Toothpaste	60 days	55 days	50 days
Shaving cream	45 days	40 days	35 days
Dental floss	120 days	105 days	90 days
Baby wipes	20 days	18 days	16 days

Slide 48		Finally, some products can be shared, and some really, *really* should not be.
Slide 49		So we looked at our options. One method, of course, is to control distribution by controlling and regulating our guests. That's the route that a lot of pantries and agencies have taken – and in some circumstances, that can make a lot of sense. But we thought it might be worth giving it a shot by controlling product distribution on the basis of function and use, and the products' predictable lifespans.
Slide 50		The most fundamental reason for our deciding to control distribution on the basis of product function and utility is that the usual rule of "once per month" for allowed visits just plain doesn't work for our area. Here we've selected seven of the four dozen or so products we try to keep in stock, and shown the expectable duration for each product – that's the red stars – versus what would be given out if we followed the common "once per month" rule for guest visits – that's the gold stars. As you can see, there's only one product out of the seven – laundry soap –where the expectable product duration actually matches that "once per month" rule – but that's only true if the household has just one or two members. Otherwise, we run into the problem that we'd be giving out toothbrushes about four times more than necessary; dental floss about six times more than necessary; sanitary pads or

tampons about two-third *less* often than necessary; glass cleaner about three times more than necessary; comb and brush about twelve times more than necessary; and diapers less than one-fourth as often as necessary.

That's just plain not a good fit.

It's true, we could repackage things to make them fit the once-a-month scenario, but that means a lot of repackaging – glass cleaner, for example, would have to be divvied up – or buying things in smaller quantities, which means a lot more wasted packaging per useful product.

And unfortunately, I haven't really figured out how to hand out a quarter of a toothbrush or a twelfth of a comb.

Slide 51		And so, we decided to focus our attention on making sure that we knew enough about our guests – their families and their shopping history with us – to make distribution on the basis of product function a feasible strategy.
Slide 52		The PEPbase software that we designed is based on the presumption that we need to be able to control the *product*, not the *guest*. That makes much more sense – as well as being more gracious and grace-full for our guests.
Slide 53		The Household database gives us the information about household compo-sition and demographics. We know who's associated with what household; we know how many people are in it, how old they are, and what gender they are; we know if they have special needs; we know whether there are language or reading difficulties; we know where they live.

Slide 54	**PEPbase: The Product database** PEP base Pantry Product Definition / Editing	The Product database records the information for each product, essentially defining it. Is it for personal use only, or can it be shared by the entire household? Who would or would not be expected to use it? Is there anybody who absolutely *shouldn't* use it? How long should it last for this family? What's its name in Spanish? in French? in Hmong? Do we currently have it on our shelves, or is it out of stock?
Slide 55	**PEPbase: Shopping History database** Ramona Dumas	The Shopping History database is very simple: it tells us who got what, and when they got it, and how many of *it* they got.
Slide 56	**PEPbase: Connecting the info** Standard Product List Household Composition Shopping History Customized Shopping List	With the information from these three databases, the software has the information it needs to generate a customized shopping list for *this* guest at *this* visit, matching product use to household composition and product distribution to shopping history. We have the control we needed, but we've done it in terms of controlling the *product*, *not* restricting our guests. We've done it, essentially, by analyzing the need first, and then trying to match the control to the need, rather than matching the need to the control.
Slide 57	**Dealing with the flood:** June 2006 to June 2010: 28 to 3,598 Total Registered Households	But while PEPbase allowed us to much more effectively control distribution, it did nothing to help with the flood of households we were trying to serve. You'll remember this slide from a few minutes ago: this is the increase in registered households from our beginning in June 2006 through June of this year. And, as I mentioned, the slope hasn't

		really leveled out since June; as I was preparing this presentation, we were up to 4,141 registered households.
Slide 58	Going back to the food pantries...	And so, we decided that it might be time to enlist some help. We knew that, although food pantries never had *enough* of the products we carry, most food pantries tried to carry *some* of what we carry. Could we work in cooperation with some of these agencies to extend this ministry?
Slide 59	The start of the PEPartnership	And so, we started a proposal to the Madison Community Foundation, which looks to expand the capacity of existing programs rather than start new programs duplicating current services, to see about starting a PEPartnership.
Slide 60	Looking at the possibilities...	There were some aspects of this planned project that were immediately apparent to us.
Slide 61	Looking at the possibilities... • Geographic distribution	As a starting point, it would probably be good if the agencies in this new partnership were geographically distributed. One of the real problems that we saw was the travel time and costs for some of our guests – especially when we were low on stock. Some of our guests might be spending an hour or two in travel time, and receiving, oh, a toothbrush, lip balm, and a packet of diapers.
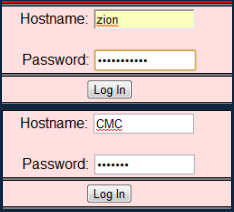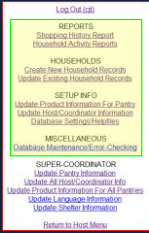
Slide 62	**Looking at the possibilities…** • Geographic distribution • Already doing some hygiene products	It would also, we thought, be good if the agency was already doing at least *some* of the products we were, so that they didn't have to totally change the focus of their mission.
Slide 63	**Looking at the possibilities…** • Geographic distribution • Already doing some hygiene products • Stable program	Certainly stability of the program should be considered: this was probably not the time to bring in agencies that were just starting up.
Slide 64	**Looking at the possibilities…** • Geographic distribution • Already doing some hygiene products • Stable program • Flexible in approach	It would also be important that the agency have some flexibility in their system, since we what we were proposing would involve at least some changes in procedures.
Slide 65	**Looking at the possibilities…** • Geographic distribution • Already doing some hygiene products • Stable program • Flexible in approach • Computer / Internet capable	Finally, since we were planning on using the PEPbase software over the Internet as the working tool for the new partnership, the agency would need to have – or be able to fairly quickly implement – computer and Internet capacity.
Slide 66	**…and the constraints**	But there were also some limitations that had to be taken into account, and dealt with.

Slide 67	**…and the constraints** • Prevent "double-dipping" by guests	If we were to truly be expanding capacity, it was important that the increased capacity not be used up by Pantry guests simply "double-dipping" across agencies, by stopping by our place and then heading over to the others in the network. That is, of course, a possibility with a lot of food pantries, but it's a little bit harder to hoard food, especially perishable food, than it is the personal and household hygiene products we carry.
Slide 68	**…and the constraints** • Prevent "double-dipping" by guests • Standardize product definition	It would also be important that all of us in the network use the same definitions for all products. If a guest were to receive shampoo, for instance, we'd want to know that, across all pantries providing shampoo, the bottle of shampoo be pretty much the same size.
Slide 69	**…and the constraints** • Prevent "double-dipping" by guests • Standardize product definition • Recognize limitations of individual agencies and budgets	We also realized that, although this increased capacity would involve some increased spending by all agencies involved, every agency would have its own limitations; we couldn't expect all of them to carry all of the product types we do.
Slide 70	**…and the constraints** • Prevent "double-dipping" by guests • Standardize product definition • Recognize limitations of individual agencies and budgets • Provide agency-specific data	Since accountability is key in the continued success of any agency – the ability to prove how many households have been served, with how much product, at how little cost – it would be vital to be able to provide agency-specific data for every agency within the network, as well as across the network.

Slide 71	**...and the constraints** • Prevent "double-dipping" by guests • Standardize product definition • Recognize limitations of individual agencies and budgets • Provide agency-specific data • Minimize duplication of administrative costs	Further, it would be important that this data could be provided in a way that would minimize administrative load. It should be possible for every agency administrator to request and receive reports about usage at their agency without every administrator having to individually collect and summarize that information.
Slide 72	**...and the constraints** • Prevent "double-dipping" by guests • Standardize product definition • Recognize limitations of individual agencies and budgets • Provide agency-specific data • Minimize duplication of administrative costs • Streamline product procurement	Finally, it would be good if we could streamline product procurement, so that each of us didn't have to be out individually soliciting product donations – and monetary donations – and, in effect, competing with each other.
Slide 73	**Recognizing PEPbase capabilities**	As I've indicated, we believed that we already had a very good platform to build on, in the PEPbase software.
Slide 74	**Recognizing PEPbase capabilities** • Household composition data	PEPbase records the information on all members of every household; and because it uses date of birth rather than age to determine age category, it would always be up to date. The software works well even if all data hasn't been entered, so can track and calculate household size and composition from the moment of registration.
Slide 75	**Recognizing PEPbase capabilities** • Household composition data • Error-catching routines	It automatically checks for possible duplicate records, thereby greatly reducing any chance of two (or more) pantries entering the same household as a new registration multiple times.

Slide 76	**Recognizing PEPbase capabilities** • Household composition data • Error-catching routines • Matching of household member to household identity	It has the ability to search for any member of any household and find the appropriate household record.
Slide 77	**Recognizing PEPbase capabilities** • Household composition data • Error-catching routines • Matching of household member to household identity • Shopping history by household	iIt knows (usually within one day; sometimes with a three-day lag) what every household has gotten, and when.
Slide 78	**Recognizing PEPbase capabilities** • Household compostion data • Error-catching routines • Matching of household member to household identity • Shopping history by household • Standard product definitions	It defines products by user characteristics and product lifespan; it even has information about the location of each product on the shelves, information which can be changed if we decide to move products around.
Slide 79	**Recognizing PEPbase capabilities** • Household composition data • Error-catching routines • Matching of household member to household identity • Shopping history by household • Standard product definitions • Internet-based and usable	Finally, it's Internet-based, so could be accessed by multiple pantries, and even used simultaneously if two partnership agencies should happen to be open at the same time.
Slide 80	**Expanding PEPbase capabilities**	There were, however, some capabilities that PEPbase did not have that were clearly necessary.

Slide 81	**Expanding PEPbase capabilities** • Add pantry id tags	We needed to add fields in a number of places to allow the program to record the identity of the pantry involved: which agency was this guest registering at? which agency was this guest shopping at?
Slide 82	**Expanding PEPbase capabilities** • Add pantry id tags • Add ability to list or delist products on a agency-by-agency basis	Since we knew that not all agencies would carry all of the four dozen or so products *we* carry, we knew that it was important for each agency to be able to specify *which* products they normally carried, and also to indicate whether each product was available and in stock at any particular moment.
Slide 83	**Expanding PEPbase capabilities** • Add pantry id tags • Add ability to list or delist products on a agency-by-agency basis • Refine data reports to include pantry-specific reporting	The data reports are still in process. However, a number of standard reports are currently available, and can analyze the data for the specific agency doing the inquiry, or for the partnership overall. We aren't going to spend a lot of time on these reports – I only have an hour, after all, if I'm to leave you any time for Q&A – but we will look at a few of them.
Slide 84	**Expanding PEPbase capabilities** • Add pantry id tags • Add ability to list or delist products on a agency-by-agency basis • Refine data reports to include pantry-specific reporting • Add ability to modify forms and policy information on agency-by-agency basis	Finally, we're adding the ability for each agency to modify some of the forms to customize them – putting the specific agency name, for instance, at the top of the registration sheet and shopping lists, and fine-tuning the information about agency policies that appears on the registration sheet.

Slide 85	**PEPbase in use** Hostname: zion Password: •••••••••• Log In Hostname: CMC Password: ••••••• Log In	So, let's take a look at the system in use. I've got quite a bit of text in my script, but I think I'll probably be glossing over most of this – it's a lot of detail, and probably more detail than most of you need or want, so we'll skim pretty quickly. We're beginning at the log-in slide, which is where we enter the information to let PEPbase know and record which pantry or agency is operating the program, which will then be recorded with the household registration and/or shopping visit.
Slide 86	**Super-coordinator Options** Log Out (cjt) REPORTS Shopping History Report Household Activity Reports HOUSEHOLDS Create New Household Records Update Existing Household Records SETUP INFO Update Product Information For Pantry Update Host/Coordinator Information Database Settings/Helpfiles MISCELLANEOUS Database Maintenance/Error-Checking SUPER-COORDINATOR Update Pantry Information Update All Host/Coordinator Info Update Product Information For All Pantries Update Language Information Update Shelter Information Return to Host Menu	The highest-level functions are restricted to the Super-Coordinator (that's me). A parentheses here: The menu options shaded in pale yellow and outlined in bright green are also available to the Agency Coordinator, as you'll see; but the Super-Coordinator has further capabilities to update information on the pantries involved in the partnership, including information on hosts and coordinators for each pantry, and to update the information common to all agencies – products, languages, shelters, etc.
Slide 87	**Coordinator-Level Use** Log Out (StMartin) REPORTS Shopping History Report Household Activity Reports HOUSEHOLDS Create New Household Records Update Existing Household Records SETUP INFO Update Product Information For Pantry Update Host/Coordinator Information Database Settings/Helpfiles MISCELLANEOUS Database Maintenance/Error-Checking Return to Host Menu	Each Agency Coordinator can then work within that framework of common information to select which products that pantry will carry, and to modify information specific to their pantry or agency – agency name, policies, etc. We also keep the ability to enter and modify household information – date of birth, names, etc. – at this level.

Slide 88	**Selecting the agency's products**	The main change in this new Partnership version of PEPbase is the Agency Coordinator specification of the products carried by their agency. They must work within the product specifications set by the Super-Coordinator, but within that set they can decide which products their agency will carry – and amend that list at any time they so desire – and indicate where on *their* shelves the product is stored.
Slide 89	**Host-level use**	The Host level is the most fundamental level of use, and is specifically kept fairly uncomplicated. Since we presume that the Host at any agency will almost always be under pressure of handling registrations, we don't want to clutter up the procedures with a lot of detail or data entry. The Host is basically limited to locating or registering guests, updating the status of products as they go out of (or into) stock , and updating shopping reports (though in all honesty this is almost always done after the service shift is over; it's not that complex, but it does take time that we don't want to take away from serving the guests).
Slide 90	**The PEPartnership Members**	As I mentioned earlier, one of the considerations in inviting agencies to be a part of the PEPartnership was geographic location. As you can see, Madison has some pretty big lakes – they make for some great scenery and skylines, but they really snarl up navigation. It's pretty much impossible to get from here to there in a straight line – and where there are straight lines, they're usually complicated by one-way streets.

Slide 91	The PEPartnership Members	Our pantry – the Personal Essentials Pantry – is located on Madison's near east side. We're fortunate to be on or near a couple of main bus lines, on both weekdays and weekends, and about a block away from a major bike path, so we're reachable by car, by bus, on foot or on bike. However, it's a pretty long hike for, say, folks from Middleton on the western edge of Lake Mendota, or from the south end of town, where you have to get around Lake Monona. It's not even that wonderful a drive from the far north or far east ends of town.
Slide 92	The PEPartnership Members	The Catholic Multicultural Center, therefore, just off South Park Street – a major entryway into the city, and in an area that's faced economic problems for some time now, and has a lot of families in poverty – was a logical choice for the partnership. They already have a number of fantastic programs, and were already trying to do some personal and household hygiene products. They also already had computer and Internet capabilities. They're easily reachable by bus; although they're only served by one bus line, it runs days and weekends.

CMC has now been up and running as a member of the Partnership since mid-September, and is seeing fairly steady business, as you'll see in some of the reports in a few minutes. |
| Slide 93 | The PEPartnership Members | We're also working with an agency on the far east side; they're still in the start-up process, but we hope to have them up and running full speed by early in the new year…. |

Slide 94	**The PEPartnership Members** 	…along with a third agency in the central, downtown area. They, too, should be up and running sometime in the early spring.
Slide 95	**The PEPartnership Members** 	A fourth agency on the far west side is interested in joining the partnership, but is in the midst of some major changes to their current programs. Our hoped-for timeline here is sometime in the second quarter of next year.
Slide 96	**The PEPartnership Members** 	We're still interested in working with other agencies in the area – perhaps up by Waunakee? out toward the Allied Drive area? down by McFarland? out toward Sun Prairie? We probably won't start any active recruitment until sometime in the second quarter next year, but we'll certainly chat with anybody interested at any time.
Slide 97	**The reality of implementation**	So, to the realities of implementing the Partnership. They say that, in war, no campaign plan survives the first contact with the enemy. How did our thoughts about the partnership and its operation do in meeting reality?
Slide 98	**The reality of implementation** • Training needs	We knew that there would be a need for training. The PEPbase system is pretty straightforward, as computer programs go, but even the simplest program has its quirks. We'd anticipated that we'd need at least a couple of training sessions with each agency, and that's been the case. In our proposal to the Madison Community Foundation, we'd requested

		financial support for both training time and technical support time, and I'm very glad we did. The good folks at the Catholic Multicultural Center caught on pretty quickly and easily, but it still required a couple of two-hour sessions down there, and then our technical support staffer on site for their first actual shift using PEPbase. Since then, however, we've had only a few questions come in from them; it would seem that our assessment of PEPbase as having a short and fairly shallow learning curve was pretty much on-target. However, I am very much aware of the fact that I still need to get a full user's manual put together for the revised PEPbase software, and that there may well be more questions as we bring the reports and forms modification capabilities on-line.
Slide 99	**The reality of implementation** • Training needs • Space and time commitments	It was also important to look at what each agency needed to do with regard to organizing their space and their time. It's one thing for an agency to have a shelf or two devoted to extra stuff; we've got some of that ourselves. It's quite another to decide where you're going to stock the 8 to 10 products that you've decided to be serious about, and how you're going to integrate the process of order fulfillment into your existing system: it takes attention to both space and time. In the case of the Catholic Multicultural Center, they were able to make use of an existing small room for the product, and to make the paperwork for the personal and household hygiene products – the PEPbase products – part of what guests did when they registered for the CMC food pantry. Any guests wanting PEPbase products first registered for and got the food pantry forms, and then shifted one

		computer down and got the PEPbase forms. Then, as guests went in to do their selection from the food pantry, they handed the PEPbase shopping list to a CMC staff member, who filled the order and brought it to them as they finished in the food pantry. We don't yet know how the other agencies will do things, but our experience with CMC has shown us the need for flexibility and adaptation. Just because a given system and procedure works well in *our* setting doesn't mean that it'll be great in other settings; we can advise, but we can't dictate.
Slide 100	**The reality of implementation** • Training needs • Space and time commitments • Agency culture	Similarly, agency culture has to be given some attention. Are computers welcomed by agency staff? or are they anathema? If they're anathema, how can we work with the agency staff and volunteers to understand the benefits of going to a computer-based system? If the agency in question has always done "standard boxes" of product, we'll have to take some to explain why we decided to go to a function-based ordering system, where the characteristics of both the household and the product determine who can get what, when. If the agency has always had a "one visit per month only" policy, what happens when some of the PEPbase products have lifespans of much less than one month?
Slide 101	**The reality of implementation** • Training needs • Space and time commitments • Agency culture • Product procurement questions	One of the biggest questions is the question of product procurement. These products aren't really part of the standard food pantry pipeline (although we're again getting a fair number of products from Second Harvest of Southern Wisconsin, our local foodbank). What are the trade-offs between us serving as a single-point ordering source versus each

agency getting recognized as needing these products? How can we best keep track of who needs how much of what?

So far, we're been working as the single-point ordering agency for both Second Harvest and the grocery wholesaler we deal with. CMC specifies directly what they want us to order from the grocery wholesaler; but because there isn't exact information on what Second Harvest will have each week, we order more-or-less generically, and then divvy up when we see what comes in. We're starting to do that same thing with in-kind donations that come in to us. Will that stay the same as the other agencies gear up to active status? Possibly; possibly not.

Slide 102	The reality of implementation • Training needs • Space and time commitments • Agency culture • Product procurement questions • Data entry

One of the issues that we thought would be a big question has turned out to be quite minor: that's the issue of the data entry. I mentioned, as we looked at the PEPbase program, that things could continue to function even if the full data on every household member didn't get entered; that as long as we had the counts by gender and age group, the program would continue to generate a list with the appropriate products for that household. However, one thing that is crucial is to update the program with information on what was given to whom on each visit. If we don't have that information in the program, families can (and often will) ask for the same products week after week after week.

I confess that, even though we knew from our own experience that the data entry should be fairly easy – it takes only about an hour and a half to two hours for even our busiest weeks, with 100-120 households served – we thought we might find ourselves having to do all of the data entry for every pantry in the

		partnership. I was afraid that other agencies might find the data entry load too daunting. In fact, at least as far as CMC's example, it's proven to be essentially a non-issue. We had a few questions from CMC's Coordinator on their first session – was it crucial that addresses and dates of birth be verified? – and that was it; their data entry gets done in about half an hour to an hour each week, half the time or less that they spend on their TEFAP reporting.
Slide 103	**The reality of implementation** • Training needs • Space and time commitments • Agency culture • Product procurement questions • Data entry • Funding	We haven't done a lot with funding issues as yet. The budget for the grant itself provided only a little bit of funding for start-up product supplies; after that, each agency is responsible for its own funding. We are beginning to work on some joint funding drives, and dividing the monies proportionately based on each pantry's load. It may well be that, as with the product pipeline questions, it does make more sense to do more funding activity as the Partnership rather than as individual agencies, and thus emphasize the fact that we are working in cooperation and unison, not in competition.
Slide 104	**Advantages (and disadvantages)**	So, has the Partnership brought the benefits we hoped for?

Slide 105

For the other pantries involved:

Advantages
- Improvements to supply pipelines
  - Cooperative purchasing
  - Redistribution of donations
- Data recording and analysis
- Better assurance of equitability of product distribution *(no "double-dipping")*
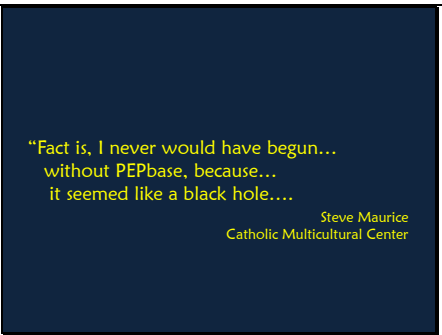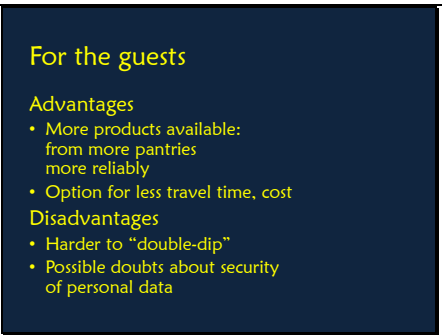
Disadvantages
- More products that to purchase, track

For the other pantries involved, we believe – we fervently hope – that that they'll benefit in terms of the supply pipeline for these products. Although we're only a few months into this project, we've already established mechanisms for doing centralized purchasing from both our wholesale supplier and our local food bank, and we're beginning to share donations back and forth as one or the other of us has a surplus.

A big advantage, at least as we see it, is the increased information about product distribution and household demographics, at least for PEP products. One question in front of us is whether the other pantries involved will begin to use PEPbase as the registration method for their food pantry guests as well as personal and household hygiene; it won't allow them to track the food that they've distributed, at least as the product database is currently configured, but it could allow them more information about their households, and reduce any double-registrations.

The most evident benefit, of course, is the fact that they now have much better assurance that the products they're distributing are not going out unfairly: there's much reduced risk of over-providing a few households at the expense of under-providing the many.

On the other hand, they do have the potential for more expenses because they're offering more products. So far at least, the products that our partner agencies are choosing to distribute are products that they *already* tried to have available, so the disadvantage of obtaining more product is offset by the fact that they know it's being distributed more equitably.

Slide 106	"Fact is, I never would have begun… without PEPbase, because… it seemed like a black hole…. Steve Maurice Catholic Multicultural Center	In fact, the Coordinator at the Catholic Multicultural Center, in responding to my request that he review a draft of this presentation, said, "The fact is, I never would have begun systematically distributing personal care items without PEPbase because, to me, it always seemed like a black hole of potential wasted resources, and abuse. PEPbase allows me to assure donors that their money and donations are not being squandered."

Slide 107	**For the guests**
	
	 Advantages
	 • More products available:
	  from more pantries
	  more reliably
	 • Option for less travel time, cost
	 Disadvantages
	 • Harder to "double-dip"
	 • Possible doubts about security
	  of personal data
		For our Partnership guests, the chief advantage is that they should find more products, more available, more reliably, and with less travel required. We began our Pantry, after all, in response to James' comment that families were always asking food pantries for these products, and that the food pantries never had enough. We hope that, with expanded capacity through the PEPartnership, this becomes less of a problem: more agencies DO have these products, and in sufficient quantities to meet the need (though, again, with the controls needed to prevent over-supply to a few at the expense of the many).
		
		 We'll be very interested to see how use of the Partnership agencies changes over time: Will we see more families making more use of the pantry closest to them, and less use of more distant pantries? Will we see more families making use of all pantries to ensure that they can get all the products they need?
		
		 On the other hand, it may be that some of our families find that products that they used to be able to get from all of us they now get less frequently, as all of us follow the same rules, and have access to the common information of who got what and when they got it. We hope that our

		rules are reality-based, and therefore will not in fact impose further hardships – but we can't yet be sure of that. We're only fairly optimistic. It's also possible that we may raise doubts among our guests as to the security of the information that we have about them. All of us in the partnership follow Federal guidelines as to privacy and security, but a lot of us, both in poverty and out of it, have been known to be skeptical about "Big Brother."
Slide 108	**For funders and contributors** Advantages • More assurance that funds are used equitably, efficiently, effectively • Better data on how much of what, when • Potential centralizing of donations through network rather than individual agencies Disadvantages • None that we can think of	We're hoping that the partnership actually eases fund-raising, and encourages contributions. One of the big benefits of all of us using the same policies applied to the same information means that we really have much more confidence that we're not facilitating cheating. We certainly will have better data as to what's been distributed, and when. We'll also have better data as to the demographics of our guests. Finally, as we build confidence within the network as to our ability to work together, we should be able to do more joint fund-raising, as a single partnership rather than as individual agencies each pestering all of the likely contributors.
Slide 109	**For policy-makers** Advantages • More (and better) information on need, demographics • More centralized source for information Disadvantages • None (except perhaps increased pressure to think about the information they now have)	I don't know how much attention policy-makers will be paying to this effort, but I am looking forward to having better data to give them on this far too ignored need area. The food pantries and food banks have been able to develop very impressive bodies of data on hunger and food security in this country, and to push agencies and legislators to action. I am hopeful that we can begin to do the same for our focus area. Of course, that means that they may

		have to spend time actually thinking about the issue….

Slide 110	**For the Personal Essentials Pantry**
	
	Advantages
	• Reduced reliance on us as single provider
	• "Power of numbers" in seeking funding, donations
	• Increased awareness of the need
	Disadvantages
	• Increased support work
	  – Data analysis
	  – Communication
	  – Product redistribution
		Of course, we at the Personal Essentials Pantry didn't go into this wholly and completely out of the goodness of our hearts. Frankly, we're hoping that with other agencies involved we'll have a little less pressure on us. It can be overwhelming to look at a day's activity and realize that we came close to breaking our own record on the number of families served, and that a good half of them are *new* registrations, *and* that we ran out of more than half of our products less than halfway through the day.
		
		We know we're nowhere near reaching everyone in need, but we're hoping that maybe, with the help of the others in the partnership, we can share the burden among lots of us instead of being the only responders.
		
		There is, of course, some increased load on our overhead activities, our support of the other agencies in terms of data analysis, communication, product distribution, etc., but frankly it's not all that bad, and we expect it to steadily decrease over time.

Slide 111	A quick look at some reports…	I don't want to drown you in numbers, but I thought I'd show you a few reports that we've generated on the partnership activity so far – since mid-September, when CMC came on board.

| Slide 112 | | This is a study series we plan to run annually, looking at how our population compares in age to the general population. |

It's a little difficult to compare directly, because PEP divide minors into three categories – infants, youth, and teens – where the Dane County demographics divide minors into only two categories – 0-5 and 6-17. However, if you look at the total of the blue, red, and green sections within the PEP chart and compare it to the blue and green sections within the Dane County chart, you'll see that we have a significantly higher percentage of children 18 and under – some 38% compared to 28.4% for Dane County.

On the other hand, we have, at least in 2010, a significantly smaller percentage of individuals 65 or older – they represent 3% of our service population, compared to almost 10% within the general population. I'd like to think this means that seniors are by and large experiencing less financial need than other sectors; I'm afraid their under-representation within our population means that they aren't as aware of us, or have more difficulty getting to us.
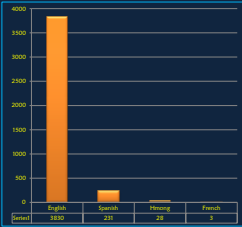
| Slide 113 | | As I looked at the age analysis, I realized that the slice for the 65+ group looked smaller than I remembered, so I compared it to the 2009 study. You can see the relative percentages of each age group within each year's study in the chart on the right. |
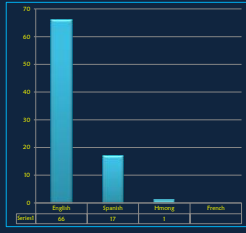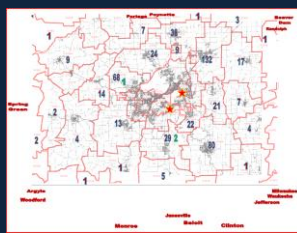
And, as you can see, the percentage of our guests who are 65 or older has gone way, way down relative to the 2009 values. Unfortunately, we don't yet know the significance of this. One way of trying to identify the cause is to run a similar breakdown on new registrations on a

		month-by-month basis; we can also start looking at the percentages in households that go "inactive" – that is, that we haven't seen in at least 18 months. We'll also want to work with the Wisconsin Elder Economics Security Index project, and see how our information fits in with their studies.
		We hope that the ability to run this type of study automatically from within PEPbase will improve not only our understanding of the population we serve, but our ability to share information with policy-setting agencies and legislators.
Slide 114	**Gender studies** **Analysis of PEP Member Gender Across All Ages: 2010** **Analysis of PEP Household Gender by Age Range: 2010**	We also run studies looking at gender. We're all, I think, familiar with the research that shows that women and children are disproportionately affected by poverty – and certainly our quick look at the age study confirmed that children are over-represented within our population. At first glance, it might appear that our area is an exception to the rule that women are disproportionately affected: they're only 55% of our total service population, compared to 50.1% of the general population of Dane County. That is a slight difference, but not terrifically out of whack. However, when we examine the gender differences across age groups, we find that our data does tend to reinforce the research. Males and females are present in just about equal numbers in minors 0-17, and in seniors 65+; but in the 18-64 range, females outnumber males by about 800, or about 14%; males make up 43% of that age group, and women make up about 57%. This is, of course, the age group that we would consider likely to include "head of household." In

		comparison, this split in 2009 was 42.5% to 53.5%, so we're seeing an increase.
		Again, these reports are being built into PEPbase's standard capabilities, so that coordinators of all agencies can run these studies for the partnership service population overall, or for just those households using their specific agency.
Slide 115		PEPbase allows us to provide information to our guests in their own language; wherever a household's record indicates that a non-English language is needed, the policy information that the guest receives at registration, and each visit's shopping list, print out in that language (with English subtitles on the shopping lists, since not all staff members at all agencies speak all languages).
		The vast majority – about 94% – of our households do use English, but we have a reasonably significant number who need one of the three languages we currently support – Spanish, Hmong, or French. As you can see, Spanish is the second most prevalent, with 231 households, or about 6%, indicating that they would appreciate that courtesy. Hmong is next, with 28 households – although, as many of you may be aware, Hmong has only been a written language for some 50 or 60 years, so many Hmong speakers can't read it. Finally, we have a cluster of households from French Colonial Africa who cope better with French than they do with English.
		This is, however, a study that allows us to see great variation between pantries. This chart is for the PEPartnership households across all pantries….

Slide 116		…and this one is for the Catholic Multicultural Center, which has a focus on Latino ministries. Since they've only been operational since mid-September, their numbers are of course smaller; also, these are only the households who *registered* with CMC, not necessarily all who *use* CMC. However, where 94% of the PEPartnership households can use English as their main language, only about 79% of the CMC households can; a little over 20%, or one fifth, of their households need Spanish. Information like this, of course, can assist agency coordinators as they try to ensure that the services they offer are accessible to their guests.
Slide 117		We also, of course, have the ability to look at geographical distribution of our households by ZIP code, across all agencies in the Partnership and on an agency-specific basis. On this map, which looks at registrations across greater Dane County, we have two blue numbers indicating that CMC has households registered; the other numbers, which are red, along with the city names, indicate households that registered first with the Personal Essentials Pantry. Logically enough given its location on the south side, CMC has 2 households registered from Oregon, just south of the South Beltline; it has also one household coming from Middleton.
Slide 118		We enlarged the Madison portion of the map to let us better show ZIP codes within Madison itself, and the counts for these areas. As you can see, Catholic Multicultural Center has already started picking up a fair amount of the load within its immediate area; 45 households have already been registered from within

its 53713 ZIP code, and there are another 20 from areas just to its north and west. In addition, though, CMC is starting to help out some of the households who live further away, but whose travels may take them close to CMC on occasion – or, frankly, who may have gotten frustrated if we were constantly running low on a particular product, as has been the case all too often this year.

Slide 119

Visits per Month

Visits per Household:
Jan 1, 2009 : Aug 31, 2010

One of the concerns, of course, when we remove restrictions and allow visits on an "as often, as needed" basis, and especially across multiple agencies, is whether the privilege is going to be abused.

In the event, however, that concern seems to be largely unwarranted. The total N of this study – the total number of households making visits between January 1 of 2009 and August 31 of 2010 – is about 2400. Of that number, more than half – 1315 – made one and only one visit. An additional 689 households made 2, 3, or 4 visits during that time. Only 394 households – less than one sixth – made five or more visits.

One of the questions still remaining, however, is whether this indicates that we have indeed stepped in to avert a crisis, or whether guests simply got frustrated with the process or with the number of products they requested but weren't able to receive, and walked away. The former would be very good news; the latter, not so much.

This is another crucial report for the individual agencies to be able to run specifically for their agencies as well as for the Partnership overall.

Slide 120

Bean-counting?

I won't bore you with more numbers here, since the major focus of this presentation is intended to be the PEPartnership and the ways in which we've been able to stretch resources.
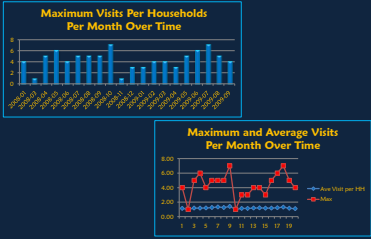
However, I do want to stress the importance of being able to run studies like these, and of looking at the results. Data analysis tends to have a bad rap in our area, largely I suppose because it's so often an outside agency – like the Federal government – insisting on data and numbers that don't necessarily mean much to what we're doing.

Having the ability, on the agency level as well as at the Partnership level, to generate reports like these – and there are another half-dozen in the works, as well as reports that may come up in response to requests from Coordinators from the individual agencies – means that we do have information that can help us directly. It gives us information we can provide to funders and donors for accountability; it gives us information we can feed to policy makers and legislators; and it gives us information we can use to better budget and plan within each agency and across the Partnership.

The trick is to make sure that we know *why* we're collecting the data and how we're going to *use* the data. We also need to be sure we understand not only what the data *can* tell us, but what it *can't*.

Finally, to the highest degree possible, we need to make the data as easy to collect and summarize as possible.

Slide 121	**Into the unknown…**	And that takes us into the unknown….
Slide 122	**How much is "enough"?** I shall not today attempt to further define… pornography. But I know it when I see it. *Judge Potter Stewart* We can't define what constitutes "enough" housework or personal hygiene… but we know it when it isn't there.	We really don't have a good handle on what constitutes "enough" for housework – which is probably one of the reasons that this area doesn't get included in financial or labor calculations. We can all point to cases that we know are insufficient, but there's no ceiling on what's "enough." If we can figure out maintenance costs for cars, though, shouldn't we be able to figure out what's needed for this area?
Slide 123	**We don't know the pipeline…**	Gleaning, or recovering usable products that would otherwise have been thrown out, is now a pretty solid tradition in food pantries. It not only makes food available more cheaply, but it saves us as society generally a pretty penny in what we don't have to put into landfills. Personal and household hygiene products, however, don't usually have "sell by" dates, so they don't end up in the clearance bin quite as often. We do, though, have anecdotal evidence that there are some possible channels to explore – paper companies that toss cartons of product simply because the carton got dinged, beauty salons that toss product because it looks bad to put it on sale, products that get dinged and scuffed in transit. We're hoping to get more and better information on what might be available, so that we can re-purpose what would have been thrown out rather than buying new.

Slide 124		We do know that there are differences in skin care and hair care needs across different ethnicities, but we don't really have a good handle on what other cultural differences there may be, and how we might accommodate them. The PEPbase software can at least handle multiple languages – but we don't really know how to accommodate marked differences in the way that different cultures handle menstrual protection, housecleaning, toilet training, haircare, infant care….
Slide 125		We have plentiful evidence from food pantries that most households need crisis help rather than long-term help; and we know that if we can get assistance to families as they enter poverty, rather than waiting until some arbitrarily defined span has passed to prove that they're in poverty, they get out of poverty more quickly. Data so far seems to indicate the same thing for our households – but we need longer-term data to really complete the picture.
Slide 126		And now to your questions…