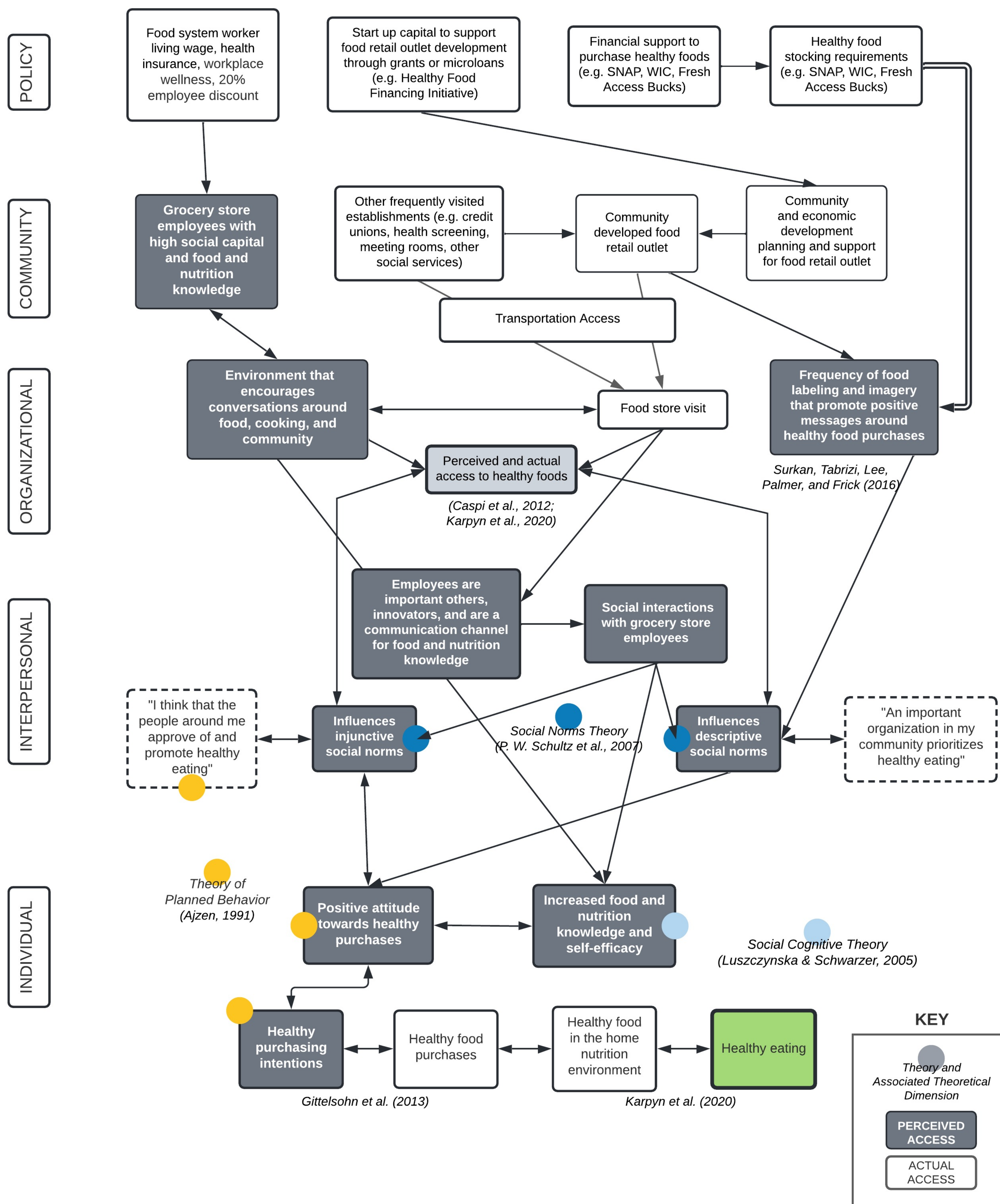


Social ecological food security model

A systems perspective on improving access to healthy foods

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BACKGROUND

- Poor diet quality and food insecurity are major problems in the United States and lead to preventable death and disease (CDC, 2021).
- Addressing community food security and healthy eating patterns in low-income, low-food-access areas requires multifaceted interventions to address structural disparities and individual behaviors (Bowen et al., 2015).

MODEL FEATURES

- Utilizes a systems perspective to target multiple levels of influence including policy, community, organizational, interpersonal and individual to improve actual and perceived access to healthy foods.
- Integrates three theories of behavior change—Social Norms Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, and Theory of Planned Behavior—to increase the likelihood of impact and long-lasting change.
- Provides a more robust explanation of the factors influencing food insecurity and demonstrates why some common types of interventions have not been successful.
- Highlights the interconnections between levels of influence, perceptions, and behavior to identify key targets for interventions and potential outcomes.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The model can be used to guide the development of interventions to support nutrition, health, and equity in community food systems.
- Food insecurity is inherently complex, and effective solutions require a systems approach.
- Every nutrition environment is unique and requires community engaged processes and a dedication to public health to improve health outcomes.

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