

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF CHILD HUNGER

Food insecurity is harmful to all people, but it is particularly devastating to children. Proper nutrition is critical to a child's development. Not having enough of the right kinds of food can have serious implications for a child's physical and mental health, academic achievement and future economic prosperity. In the United States today, nearly 16 million children face hunger. Consequently, in Nevada one in four kids are facing greater obstacles to reaching their fullest potential. **The future of America lies in our children. When hunger threatens the future of a child, it threatens the future of our nation as well.**

One in every four children in Nevada is food insecure.

55% of Nevada's students qualify for free or reduced school lunch.

Child hunger is a health problem.

- Hungry children incur developmental impairments that limit their physical, intellectual and emotional development.
- Undernourished children more likely than well nourished children to catch common illnesses, and to become more seriously ill than the average child due to a weakened immune system.
- Hungry children are sick more often, and more likely to have to be hospitalized (the costs of which are passed along to the business community as insurance and tax burdens).

Child hunger is an educational problem.

- Under nutrition before the age of 3 fundamentally changes the neurological architecture of the brain and central nervous system, harming a child's ability to learn. These changes are permanent.
- Hungry children perform poorly in school and have lower academic achievement because they are not well prepared for school and cannot concentrate.
- Hungry children have more social and behavioral problems because they have less energy for complex social interactions and cannot adapt as effectively to environmental stresses.



Child hunger is a workforce and job readiness problem.

- Workers who experienced hunger as children are not as well prepared physically, mentally, emotionally, or socially to perform effectively in the contemporary workforce.
- Workers who experienced hunger as children create a workforce pool that is less competitive, with lower levels of educational and technical skills, and seriously constrained human capital.
- Children who struggle in school with lower grades, difficult social interactions, and repeating grades are also at a much greater risk of dropping out in high school. A study of dropouts estimates that over the course of their working career, a dropout will earn \$500,000 less than a high school graduate and almost \$2 million less than a college graduate. Society, in turn, bears the costs of increased health problems, lost worker productivity, and lost tax revenue as individuals achieve and earn less.

Child Food Insecurity: The Economic Impact on our Nation, a research report on the impact of food insecurity and hunger on child health, growth, and development commissioned by Feeding America and The ConAgra Foods Foundation, John Cook, PhD, Project Director Karen Jeng, AB, Research and Policy Fellow, 2009.

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Hunger in America is the largest, most comprehensive study of charitable food assistance in the nation. The study is conducted every four years by Feeding America and local food banks including the Food Bank of Northern Nevada and shows the depth of need for northern Nevada families.

Key Findings

WIDESPREAD USE OF FOOD ASSISTANCE



30% OF CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS HAVE A MEMBER WHO HAS SERVED IN THE US MILITARY

89% OF CLIENTS LIVE IN PERMANENT HOUSING



MORE THAN HALF OF CLIENTS SERVED ARE CHILDREN AND SENIORS

CLIENTS STRUGGLE WITH HEALTH ISSUES



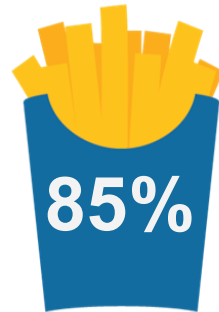
53%

OF CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS HAVE A MEMBER WITH HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE



32%

OF CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS HAVE A MEMBER WITH DIABETES



OF CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS REPORT PURCHASING INEXPENSIVE, UNHEALTHY FOOD TO FEED THEIR FAMILY

46% OF CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS HAVE MEDICAL BILLS TO PAY

CLIENTS MAKING TOUGH CHOICES TO KEEP FOOD ON THE TABLE



CHOOSE BETWEEN FOOD AND UTILITIES



CHOOSE BETWEEN FOOD AND TRANSPORTATION



CHOOSE BETWEEN FOOD AND MEDICAL CARE



CHOOSE BETWEEN FOOD AND HOUSING



CHOOSE BETWEEN FOOD AND EDUCATION

CHARITABLE RESPONSE IS NOT ENOUGH



38% OF CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS REPORT CURRENTLY RECEIVING SNAP (FOOD STAMPS)

44% OF CLIENTS PARTICIPATE IN ONE CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM

COPING STRATEGIES FOOD INSECURE FAMILIES USE TO GET BY

43% OF CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS REPORTED USING 3 OR MORE COPING STRATEGIES IN THE PAST YEAR



85%

PURCHASE INEXPENSIVE, UNHEALTHY FOOD



44%

RECEIVE HELP FROM FRIENDS OR FAMILY



36%

WATER DOWN FOOD OR DRINKS



44%

SELL OR PAWN PERSONAL PROPERTY



17%

GROW FOOD IN A HOME OR COMMUNITY GARDEN

LOW WAGES, UNDEREMPLOYMENT DRIVING NEED

55% OF CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS WERE EMPLOYED IN THE PAST YEAR

49% OF EMPLOYED CLIENTS WORKED LESS THAN 30 HOURS PER WEEK

70% OF CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS LIVE IN POVERTY

A FAMILY OF 3 IS AT THE POVERTY LEVEL WITH A YEARLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME AT OR BELOW \$19,530

ONE SENIOR LIVING AT THE POVERTY LEVEL HAS A MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF \$950 OR LESS