

Hunger Action Month

Hunger is a silent epidemic, affecting one in five Ohioans. Though we cannot tell who is hungry by the clothes people wear, the jobs they work, or the color of their skin, over 2 million people in this state do not have access to enough food for an active and healthy life. **The face of hunger may not be what you think:**

- Over 1 in 4 Ohio children is at-risk of hunger.
- Only 7% of food bank client households are homeless; 32% have at least one adult working.
- Of the top 10% of food insecure counties, most are in rural areas.
- Over 9% of seniors living alone are food insecure.



Food insecure households often have to make tough choices between food and paying for other household necessities. Consider these statistics from an extensive survey of Feeding America food bank client households:

- 52% report having to choose between paying for utilities or heating fuel and food.
- 43% had to choose between rent or a mortgage and food.
- 38% had to choose between transportation and food.
- 43% report choosing between medical bills and food.

Perhaps most eye-opening of all is the number of people in our community struggling with hunger. According to the *Map the Meal Gap* study, nearly 700,000 Ohio children are food insecure and 32% of them live in homes with incomes that make them ineligible for federal nutrition assistance.

What YOU Can Do To Help

Volunteering

The Ohio Association of Foodbanks works in partnership with 12 Feeding America food banks and 3,300 local agencies, over 80 percent of which are faith-based. Many food pantries and soup kitchens in this network report relying entirely on volunteers and have no paid staff. **Volunteering your time can make a huge difference.** In addition to providing hunger relief, volunteerism helps raise awareness of hunger and promotes community involvement in solving the problem.

Giving

Food banks, pantries, and other local food providers rely heavily on charitable contributions. **Donating resources helps local charities serve vulnerable families right here in our community.** In addition to food donations, they need funds to help store, package, and distribute food to those who need it. **You can make a secure donation directly to hunger relief in Ohio at ohiofoodbanks.org/feedohio.**

Education

The first step in fighting hunger is educating people about the problem. **That's why one of the most powerful things you can give to combat hunger is your voice.** Raising awareness of the problem can encourage a local, state, and national response to adopt policies to address hunger.

- To **learn about volunteer opportunities** or to **organize a food or fundraising drive** for the FeedOhio campaign please visit www.ohiofoodbanks.org/feedohio.
- To **spread the word** about hunger and **raise awareness**, visit www.ohiofoodbanks.org.

September is Hunger Action Month.
To learn more, visit
<http://hungeractionmonth.org>

