

Hunger 2017: Families On The Brink

“I’ve spent nights sometimes where I can’t sleep because I’m trying to figure out if I have enough to pay bills and get groceries to feed my kids.” – Candace Field, mom

Overview

In a new report released by No Kid Hungry, **nearly two-thirds of low-income parents (64%) said a single unplanned expense would make it difficult to feed their families.**

For the report, “Hunger In Our Schools,” we surveyed teachers, students and parents about the implications of childhood hunger.

We learned that three out of four educators (76%) say they regularly teach students who struggle with hunger. And a majority (59%) of low-income students say they come to school hungry.

There is a solution. Programs like school breakfast have a significant impact on test scores, classroom behavior and the future success of students.

More Survey Results

The threat of hunger hangs over many low-income families. Many parents are worried about their ability to afford enough food.

64% say an unexpected expense of \$1500 would make it difficult to feed their children.

62% have worried food would run out before there was money to buy more within the past year.

59% say that, within the past year, the food they bought didn’t last and there wasn’t money for more.

23% say they have limited the size of a child’s meal because there wasn’t enough money for food.

92% of families in this survey are working families - at least one adult in the household works full-time, part-time or multiple jobs.

By The Numbers

Many families are one unexpected expense away from hunger. Here are a few average costs for common unexpected expenses.

\$2,500

Average cost of non-surgical treatment for a broken arm.¹

\$850-2500

Average cost to replace a broken hot water heater for the home.²

\$1800-3500

Average cost to replace a broken car transmission.³

\$1,233

Average cost of an outpatient emergency room visit.⁴

Many Americans Are Just One Unexpected Bill Away From Disaster



64%

of low-income parents say it would be difficult to feed their children if they encountered an unexpected expense, like a \$1,500 car repair or medical expense.



The Power Of School Meals

Hunger affects children in every community in the United States. Ending hunger means ensuring every child has reliable access to the healthy food they need.

Free and reduced-price school meals can close the gap between kids who have enough to eat and those who don't. These programs can make sure kids have access to food when they need it, regardless of zip code, age, time of year or time of day.

But the traditional method of serving the meal before the school day starts is ineffective. As a result, only a fraction of the students who may need this meal are unable to access it.

When schools make breakfast part of the school day, serving it once school starts instead of before, it reaches more of the kids who need it.

This has a significant impact on test scores, attendance rates, discipline problems and the lives and future well-being of students.

METHODOLOGY

Hunger In Our Schools was conducted by the research firm Salter Mitchell in the spring of 2017. Data from kids and parents came from a 20-minute online dyad survey with N=500 low-income parents at or below 185% of the federal poverty level and their children, aged 13-18, who attend public school in the United States. Margin of error was $\pm 4.4\%$. (If more than one eligible child was in the household one was selected at random.) Data from educators came from a 10-minute online survey of N=325 teachers (K-12), administrators and school support staff in the United States. The margin of error was $\pm 5.4\%$.

ABOUT NO KID HUNGRY

No child should go hungry in America, but 1 in 6 kids will face hunger this year. Using proven, practical solutions, No Kid Hungry is ending childhood hunger today by ensuring that kids start the day with a nutritious breakfast, are able to get the nutrition they need during the summertime, and families learn the skills they need to shop and cook on a budget. When we all work together, we can make sure kids get the healthy food they need. No Kid Hungry is a campaign of national anti-hunger organization Share Our Strength. Join us at NoKidHungry.org.

Breakfast Works

School breakfast can have a powerful impact on kids facing hunger.

56%

Only 56% of low-income students who rely on free or reduced-price lunch are participating in school breakfast.

80%

of teachers say hunger affects a student's ability to concentrate.

76%

of teachers see poor academic performance.

62%

of teachers see increased behavioral and discipline problems.

Learn More

For the full report:
tiny.cc/HIOS

For all press inquiries, contact:

Christy Felling
Share Our Strength/No Kid Hungry
cfelling@strength.org
202.320.4483