

Hunger Facts

The United States has one of the highest poverty rates among industrialized nations.

What do hunger and food insecurity mean in the United States? USDA defines food insecurity by households that do not have adequate access to healthy food for an active, healthy lifestyle. Food insecurity with hunger means that families go without food for some days out of the month and in severe cases children go without food for one or more days a month. It is the lack of access to enough food to fully meet basic needs at all times due to lack of financial resources. Some people may find themselves skipping meals or cutting back on the quality or quantity of food they purchase at the stores. This recurring and involuntary lack of access to food can lead to malnutrition over time and other debilitating effects.

US Hunger and Poverty Stats

- In 2011, 60.4 million people (19.8 percent) were in poverty.
- In 2011, 16.2 million children under the age of 18 (22 percent) were in poverty.
 - 7.4 million (9.9 percent) of all children under 18 lived in families with incomes below 50 percent of the federal poverty level.
 - 25.3 percent of related children under age six in families lived in poverty.
- In 2011, 3.5 million (9 percent) seniors 65 and older were in poverty.

NH does not measure hunger directly – hunger and food insecurity are measured by proxy utilizing poverty statistic.

In 2011

- 118,637 people in NH lived below federal poverty line; 9% of NH households experience food insecurity – not knowing whether they will be able to access enough food throughout the year.
- The federal poverty income guideline for a family of four in 2011 was \$22,350
- 14,060 people (9.6%) were living in poverty in Merrimack County in 2011.
- 24.7% were children under the age of 18
- 13.7% were seniors aged 65 or over

Other facts:

- Majority of NH poor and food insecure work
- Statistics regarding Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
 - New Hampshire experienced a 2% increase in usage from March to April 2012
 - New Hampshire experienced a 96.2% increase from April 2007 to April 2012.
- Competing basic human needs, food, shelter, clothing cannot be met with low wage jobs

Sources: US department of agriculture, US Census Bureau, food research and action center www.frac.org