

September 14, 2023

Community-Clinical Approaches and Partnerships to Alleviate Food Insecurity

Lauran Larson, MPS



Learning Objectives

- Recognize why food insecurity is a serious issue and how it contributes to chronic disease and creates challenges in a person's life.
- Differentiate between food insecurity and nutrition insecurity.
- Describe the screen, intervene, and refer model that the State Partnerships Improving Nutrition and Equity project is developing in clinics.
- Describe other approaches to reducing food and nutrition insecurity.
- Examine ways that various organization types can have an impact on food insecurity.



Definitions

Food Insecurity	A lack of consistent access to enough food for every person in a household to live an active, healthy life. (USDA)
Nutrition Insecurity	A lack of consistent and equitable access to healthy, safe, affordable foods essential to optimal health and well-being. (USDA)



Food Insecurity in Oklahoma

- 561,640 people in Oklahoma are facing Hunger¹
- 182,930 of these people are children¹
- Hunger costs Oklahoma over \$1.4 billion each year through increased illness and decreased academic achievement alone ²
- We are only 1 of 5 states that has a food insecurity rate of higher than 14.5%²
- “On average, households that were food insecure at some time throughout the year were food insecure in 7 months during the year.” ³



1) Feeding America (2023). Hunger in Oklahoma. Retrieved from <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/oklahoma>
2) Hunger Free Oklahoma (2023). Hunger in Oklahoma. Retrieved from <https://www.hungerfreeok.org/hunger-in-oklahoma/>
3) Frequency of Food Insecurity. 2022, October. Economic Research Service. U.S. Department of Agriculture. Retrieved from: <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-u-s/frequency-of-food-insecurity/#:~:text=For%20three%2Dfourths%2C%20very%20low,occurrence%20was%20frequent%20or%20chronic.>

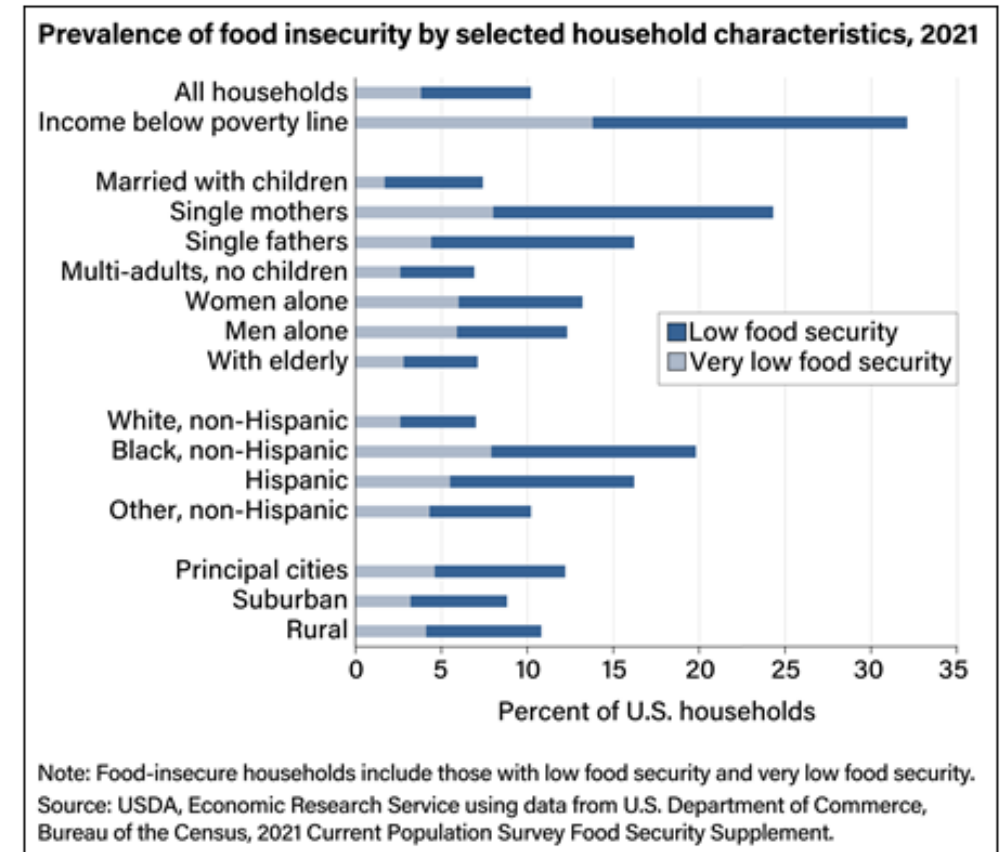
Disparities in Food Insecurity Rates

Racial and ethnic disparities for food insecurity exist

- Food insecurity among Black or Latino individuals is higher than white individuals in over 9 out of every 10 counties¹
- While nearly 40% of the food insecure population in the U.S. is white, Black, Native American, and Latino individuals are 2 to over 3 times more likely to live in food insecure households.²

A potential factor is neighborhood conditions (physical access to food and lack of transportation)

- 9 out of 10 high food insecurity counties are rural¹
- The [USDA](https://www.usda.gov) found that only 26% of Native communities are within one mile from a supermarket, compared to 59% of all people living in the United States.³



1) Feeding America (2023). Food Insecurity Report Briefs. Retrieved from <https://www.feedingamerica.org/research/map-the-meal-gap/overall-executive-summary>

2) Feeding America (2022). New Study from Feeding America Shows Extensive Disparities in Food Insecurity at the County Level. Retrieved from <https://www.feedingamerica.org/about-us/press-room/disparities-in-food-insecurity#:~:text=While%20nearly%2040%25%20of%20the,live%20in%20food%20insecure%20households>.

3) Feeding America (2023). Hunger Impacts Native American Families and Communities. Retrieved from <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/native-american>

4) Chart retrieved from <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/ag-and-food-statistics-charting-the-essentials/food-security-and-nutrition-assistance/#:~:text=Food%20insecurity%20rates%20are%20highest,and%20very%20low%20food%20security>.



What causes food insecurity and nutrition insecurity?

To put it simply, people cannot afford or access healthy foods.

- Poverty
- Unemployment
- Disability
- Lack of access
 - Lack of transportation
 - Limited time and resources

Nutrition Insecurity

- Lack of access to nutritious options
- Surplus of access to fast food & unhealthy food outlets
 - These foods can be addictive and delicious, delivering joy during times of stress
- Trade offs – healthy food is more expensive
- Nutrition education



Negative Effects of Food Insecurity

Health and Wellbeing Outcomes

Stress	Malnutrition	Anemia
Anxiety	Undernutrition	Chronic Illness
Fatigue	Starvation	Obesity
Diabetes	Hunger	Hypertension

Childhood Outcomes

Low birth-weight	Behavior and social problems
Delayed development	Lower high school graduation rates
Decreased language acquisition	Lower reading and math scores

1) Cook, J. T., & Frank, D. A. (2008). Food security, poverty, and human development in the United States. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1136(1), 193–209.

<https://doi.org/10.1196/annals.1425.001>

2) Gundersen, C. & Ziliak, J. P. (2015). Food Insecurity and Health Outcomes. *Health Affairs*, 34(11). Retrieved from <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/pdf/10.1377/hlthaff.2015.0645>

3) Hunger Free Oklahoma (2023). Hunger in Oklahoma. Retrieved from <https://www.hungerfreeok.org/hunger-in-oklahoma/#:~:text=Hunger%20costs%20Oklahoma%20over%20%241.4,hypertension%2C%20diabetes%2C%20and%20obesity>.

4) Perkins SC, Finegood ED, Swain JE. Poverty and language development: roles of parenting and stress. *Innov Clin Neurosci*. 2013 Apr;10(4):10-9. PMID: 23696954; PMCID: PMC3659033.



Negative Effects of Food Insecurity

Family Burden

- Children identify food insecurity accurately and more reliably in their household than their parents/caretakers.
- Food insecurity is associated with poorer maternal physical and mental health and higher levels of family/parental conflict.
- Any level of food insecurity is linked to reduced family health and overall well being.

Financial Burden

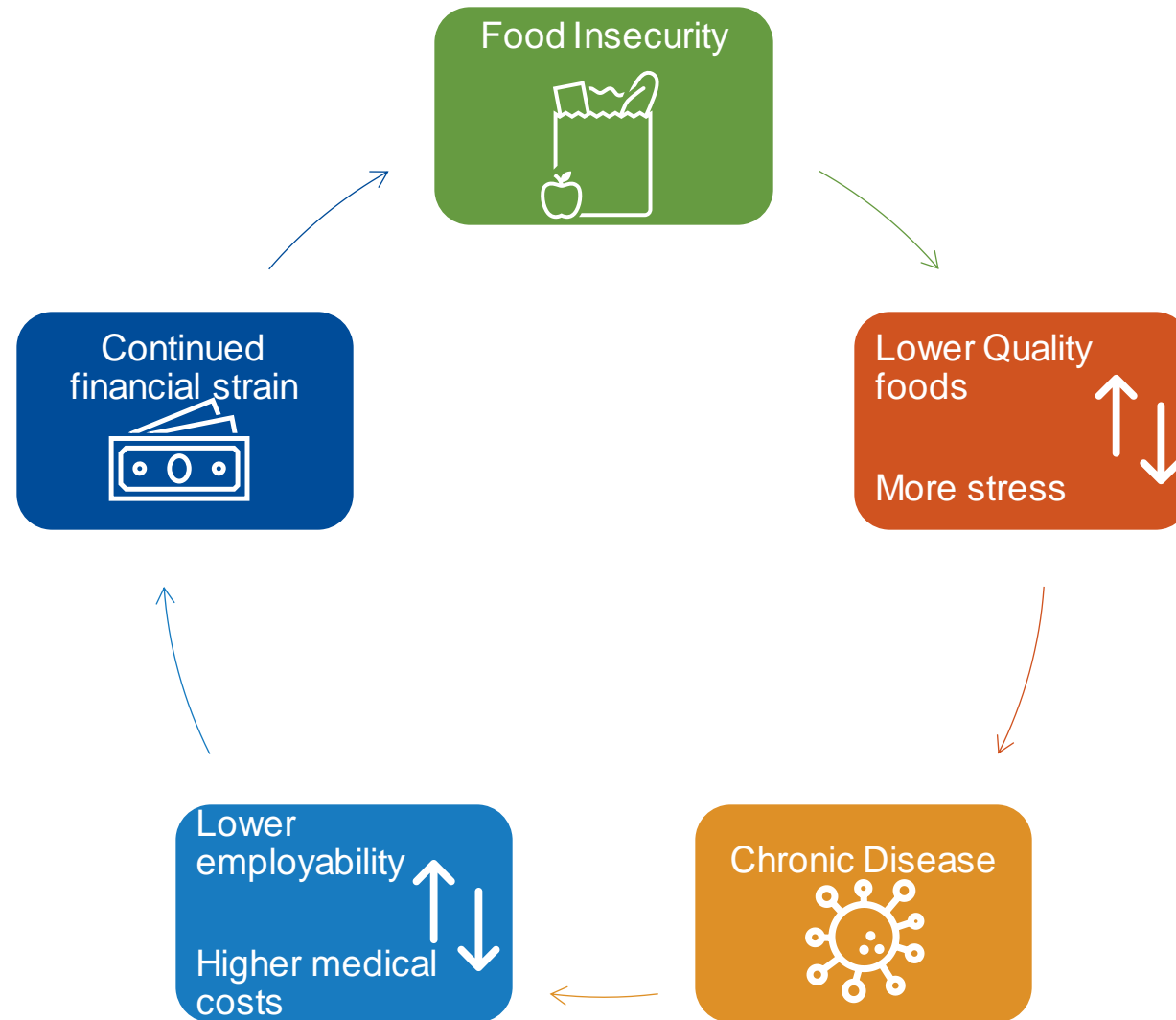
- One estimate of the annual economic burden of food insecurity in the United States puts it at over \$167.5 billion.¹
- “The 5 states with the highest per capita health care costs associated with food insecurity were Mississippi, Texas, Louisiana, Florida, and Oklahoma.”²



1) Odoms-Young A, Bruce MA. Examining the impact of structural racism on food insecurity: implications for addressing racial/ethnic disparities. *Fam Community Health*. 2018;41(Suppl 2 Food Insecurity and Obesity):S3-S6. pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29461310

2) Berkowitz, S.A., Basu, S., Gundersen, C., Seligman, H. K. (2019) State-Level and County-Level Estimate of Health Care Costs Associated with Food Insecurity. *Preventing Chronic Disease Public Health Research, Practice, and Policy* 16(E90). Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2019/pdf/18_0549.pdf

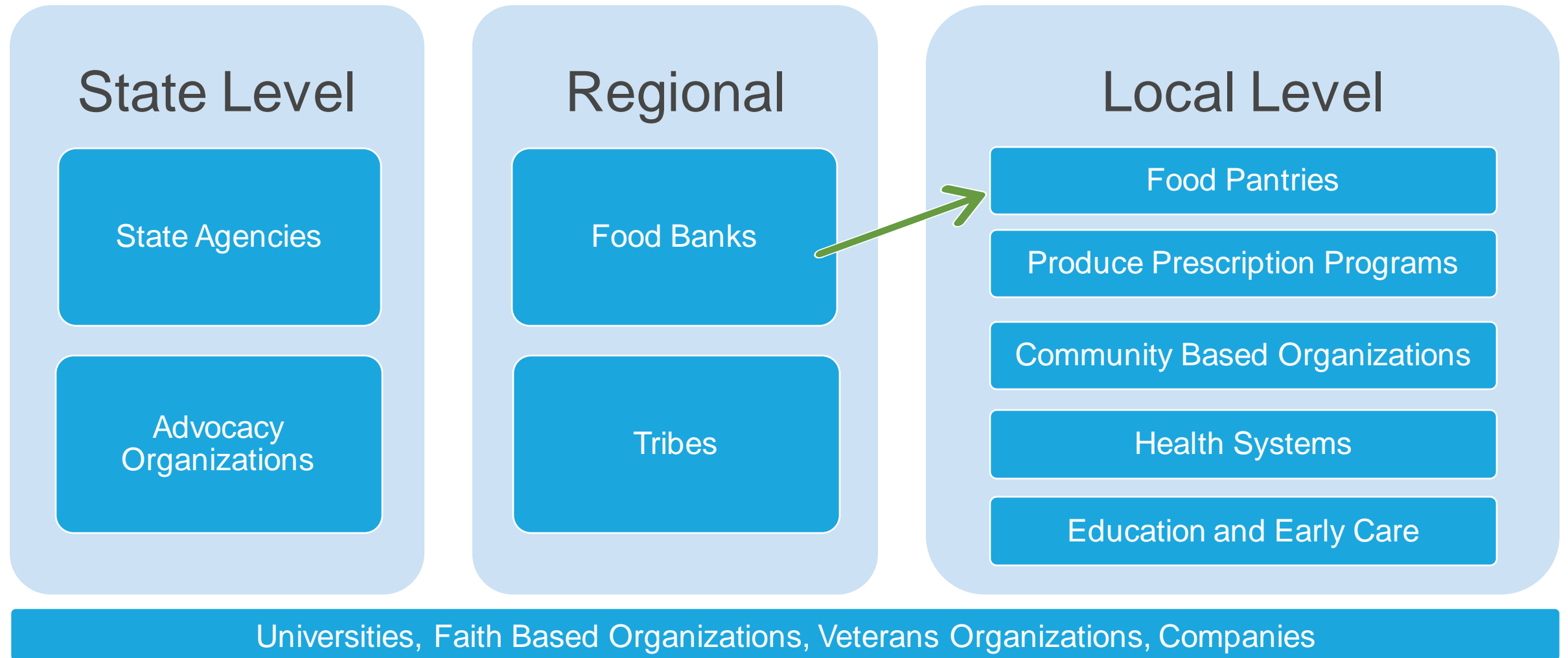
The Cycle of Hunger and Health



Source: <https://www.secondharvestmidtn.org/cycle-of-hunger-and-health-issues/>



Some organizations working to address food insecurity



And more! **All organizations** can play an active role in reducing food insecurity!



Know and Promote Federal Food Assistance Programs

Acronym	Full Name	Brief Description	Parents & Kids	Healthy Eating	Low-income Seniors	Supplying Food Banks
<u>SNAP</u>	<u>Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program</u>	Provides timely, targeted, and temporary benefits to low-income Americans to buy groceries.	✓	✓	✓	
<u>TEFAP</u>	<u>The Emergency Food Assistance Program</u>	Provides USDA commodities to families in need of short-term hunger relief through emergency food providers like food banks.	✓	✓	✓	✓
<u>CSFP</u>	<u>The Commodity Supplemental Food Program</u>	Provides food assistance for low-income seniors with a monthly package of healthy USDA commodities.		✓	✓	✓
<u>CACFP</u>	<u>The Child and Adult Care Food Program</u>	Provides nutritious meals and snacks to children and adults in designated child and adult care centers.	✓	✓	✓	
<u>NSLP</u>	<u>The National School Lunch Program</u>	Provides nutritionally balanced lunch to qualified children each school day.	✓	✓		
<u>SBP</u>	<u>The School Breakfast Program</u>	Provides nutritionally balanced breakfast to qualified children each school day.	✓	✓		
<u>SFSP</u>	<u>The Summer Food Service Program</u>	Provides free meals and snacks to low-income children during the summer months.	✓	✓		
<u>WIC</u>	<u>Women, Infants, and Children</u>	Provides nutritious foods and nutrition education for low-income, at risk women, infants.	✓	✓		

Source: <https://www.feedingamerica.org/take-action/advocate/federal-hunger-relief-programs>



Pilot and Special Programs

Food is medicine

- Produce prescription programs
- Medically tailored meals

Meal delivery programs (meals on wheels)

Food voucher programs

- Double Up Bucks

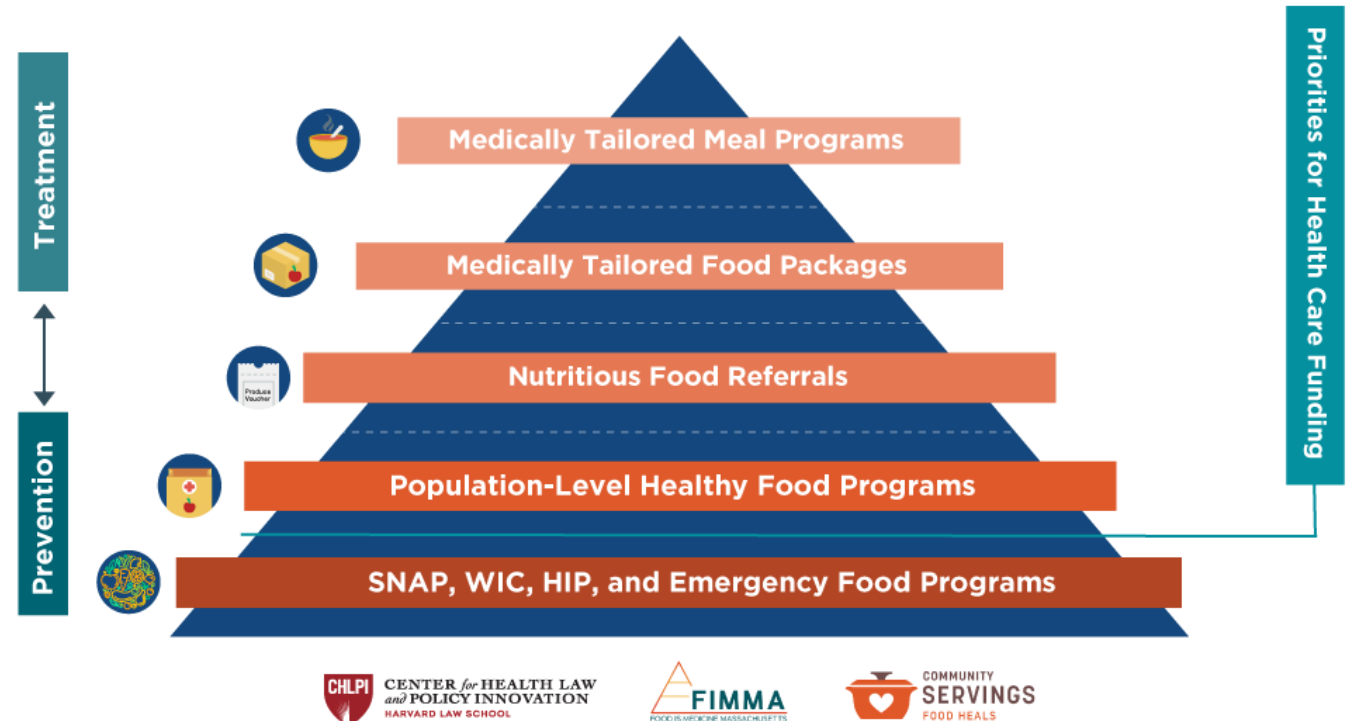
Local programs

- Backpack programs
- Food pantries

Transportation support (bringing food closer or providing transportation resources to help recipients get to food)

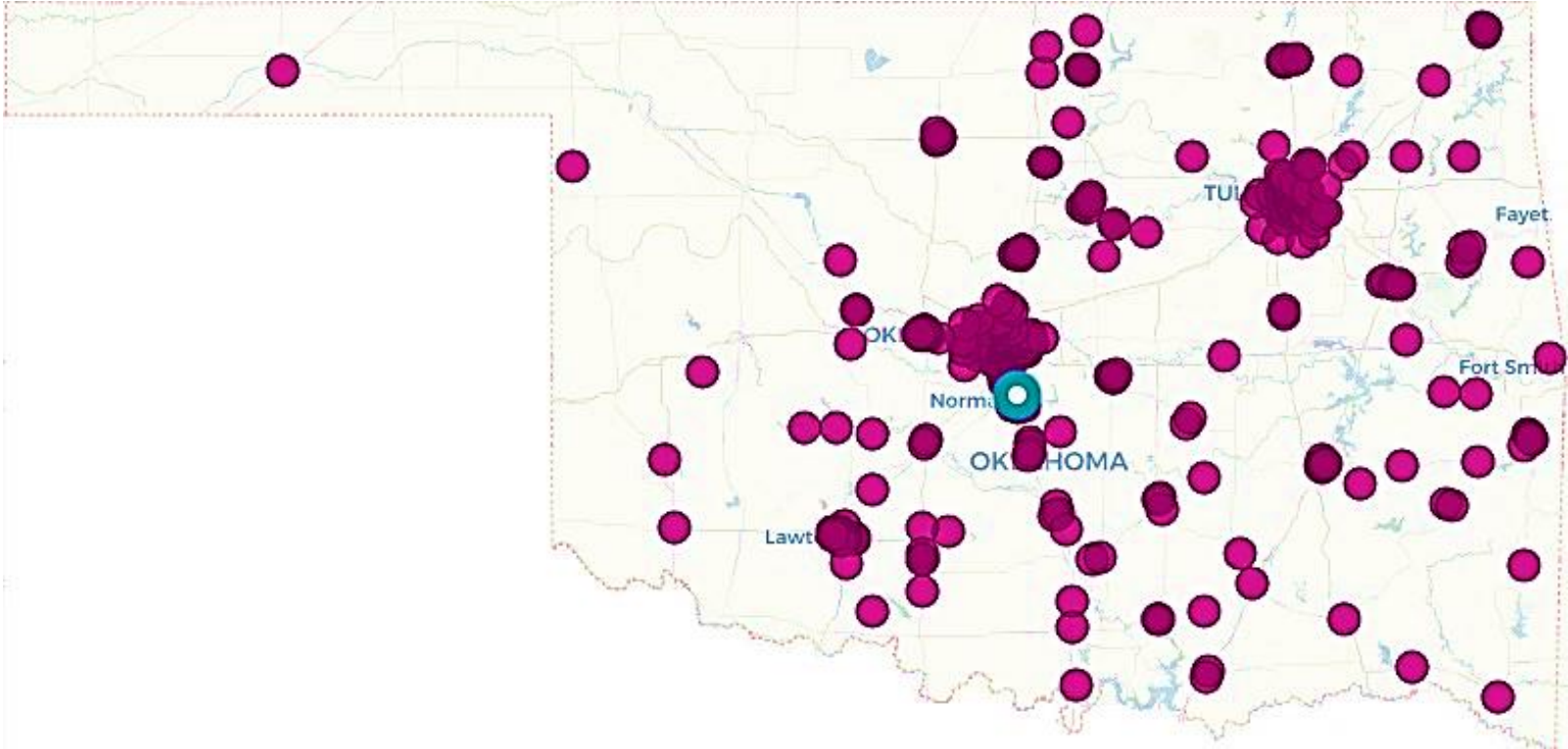
- Example: Oklahoma Dept. of Transportation Mobility Management Program

FOOD IS MEDICINE PYRAMID



Gaps in Program Usage

Summer Feeding Sites 2023

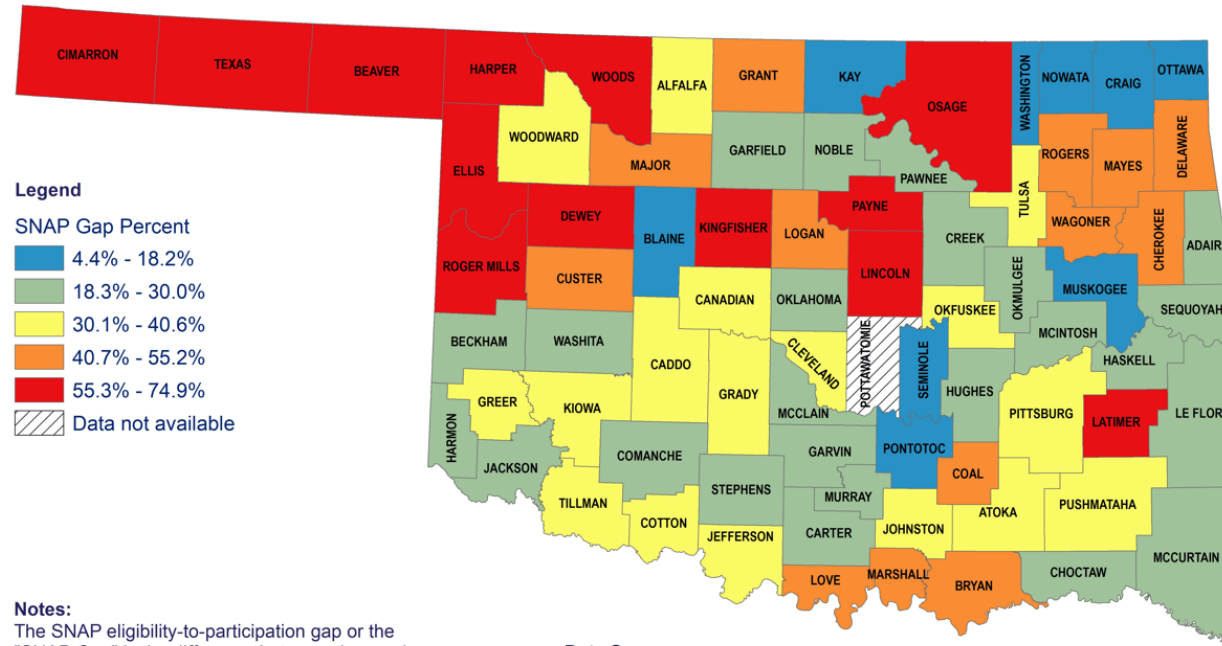


meals4kidsok.org/locations



Gaps in Program Usage

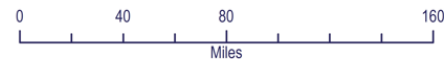
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Gap Map



Notes:
The SNAP eligibility-to-participation gap or the "SNAP Gap" is the difference between the number of individuals and families who are eligible for SNAP and the total number enrolled.

Data Source:
Hunger Free Oklahoma
Data received February 2023

Created: 09.06.2023



Projection/Coordinate System: USGS Albers Equal Area Conic



Disclaimer: This map is a compilation of records, information and data from various city, county and state offices and other sources, affecting the area shown, and is the best representation of the data available at the time. The map and data are to be used for reference purposes only. The user acknowledges and accepts all inherent limitations of the map, including the fact that the data are dynamic and in a constant state of maintenance.



Map Disclaimer:

SNAP Gap data was calculated based on 2020 Census data and SNAP Participation data published by Oklahoma Human Services. This data set is intended to be a tool for work planning, prioritizing activity, or discussion; with the current data limitations, it lacks the strength to be used for regular measurement purposes. This is an imperfect measure as Census data is often 1-3 years behind OKDHS data, the 2020 Census was known to have sampling errors, and the participation cut off for SNAP is 130% (census only reports 125%). This estimate also does not exclude tribal members who may be participating in FDPR, colleges students with no income, and undocumented individuals each of which is ineligible for SNAP with very few exceptions. This data should not be disseminated without written approval of 14 Hunger Free Oklahoma. Much more accurate measures could be achieved if more robust data sharing agreements were put in place amongst state agencies administering federal programs and partners.



Benefits of Increasing Utilization of Programs

SNAP > DUO



Economists estimate that every dollar a household redeems through SNAP generates about \$1.70 in economic activity.¹

School Meals > Community Eligibility Provision

Percent of eligible schools offering all students no-cost school meals through CEP



Figure from <https://www.hungerfreeok.org/hunger-in-oklahoma/>

See Excel of Oklahoma Schools eligible and near eligible:
<https://sde.ok.gov/sites/default/files/Community%20Eligibility%20Proxy%20for%20Districts%20and%20Sites%202023.xls>



1) Feeding America (2023). Hunger in Oklahoma. Retrieved from <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/oklahoma>

Community-Clinical Linkages

Screen

- While there are multiple screening tools available, the following two questions are a validated screener (Hunger Vital Sign™)
 - “ Within the past 12 months we worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more.”
 - “ Within the past 12 months the food we bought just didn’t last and we didn’t have money to get more.”

Intervene

- Develop a plan to take action when patients answer yes and implement that plan (ideally with immediate assistance)

Refer

- Know your local and state resources and connect patients to those programs

There is a great deal of shame involved in asking for help around food, but when your doctor tells you to go get healthy food from a food pantry, it proves to be a very effective way to get someone to walk through the food pantry door.

–Kate Leone, Chief Government Relations Officer, Feeding America ¹



Community-Clinical Linkages in Action: State Partnerships Improving Nutrition and Equity (SPINE)

WHAT WE DO



PARTNER

The SPINE Partnership works with FQHCs, CHDs, and clinics



SCREEN

To establish food insecurity and/or social determinants of health screenings



FOOD PANTRY

To establish an on-site food pantry



REFER

To develop a referral system for ongoing community resources

KEY PARTNERSHIPS

- Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma
- Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma
- Oklahoma Primary Care Association
- Oklahoma Hospital Association
- Hunger Free Oklahoma (HFO)

1.5 YEAR IMPACT

Focused on **promoting equitable** and **sustainable food** and **nutrition security** through a NACDD 2-year grant

- 12 FQHCs, Clinics, and Hospitals established
- 6 FQHCs, Clinics, and Hospitals in progress
- 11 County Health Departments in progress



The Workflow

Each workflow will follow a customized approach, however the three steps to success are outlined below.

PREPARE



SCREEN



INTERVENE

- **Educate** and **train** staff to identify and talk about food insecurity, nutrition programs and local food income sources
- **Establish logistics** (food box storage, deliveries, etc.)
- **Address** food insecurity through the **institutional workflow**
- **Practice empathy** when having sensitive conversations about food insecurity

- **Identify** households at risk for being **food insecure** via the modified PRAPARE Screening Tool, PRAPARE, or Hunger Vital Sign

- Administer **medical interventions** when appropriate
- **Connect patients** and their families to **nutrition programs** and **resources** that improve their health outcomes
- **Document** and **track interventions** in medical records
- **Advocate** and **educate** to address food insecurity and its root causes



SPINE IMPACT

Aug/Dec 2022 – Apr 2023

“Last month, 19 out of the 23 families served by the clinic pantry were also signed up for SNAP and WIC benefits. Many parents have expressed how great it is that we have this in the clinic and that we were able to help with so many needed resources.”

FOOD BANK OF EASTERN OKLAHOMA

Health & Wellness Center clinics in Stigler, Checotah, Eufaula, Poteau, Sallisaw, Warner, Wilburton – launched in **August 2022**



Total households served:
237 (581 individuals)



Total food boxes distributed:
242



Total pounds distributed:
3,588

REGIONAL FOOD BANK OF OKLAHOMA

Shortgrass Community Health Center, Hollis – launched in **Dec 2022**

OU Super Niño’s Clinic, Oklahoma City – launched in **Dec 2022**



Total households served:
226



Total food boxes distributed:
243



Total pounds distributed:
3,847



Total households served:
49



Total food boxes distributed:
83



Total pounds distributed:
2,742



Eastern Oklahoma

Colleen Almeida Smith - calmeidasmith@okfoodbank.org
Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma www.okfoodbank.org

Central and Western Oklahoma

Keeley White - kwhite@rfo.org
Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma www.rfo.org



How can your organization reduce food and nutrition insecurity?

- Raise awareness and remove stigmatization of available resources.
- Creative strategies to get resources to rural communities – Get innovative! Example: [Dollar General selling produce](#)
- Consider ways of meeting human basic needs to free up their finances to purchase foods. Examples: food utensil donations, promoting utility bill assistance, advocating for affordable housing, toiletry and personal item donations/drives, etc...

Common themes

- Promoting our federal programs - These are the backbone of reducing food insecurity
- Removing stigma, normalizing receiving help when needed
- Coordination and collaboration between organizations – No single organization can tackle this huge issue alone.



Schools and Early Childhood

Schools

- Adopt wellness policies that support and encourage enrollment in federal programs
- Increase access to breakfast (Example: Breakfast in the Classroom)
- Become a USDA Summer Food Service Program site
- Become an Afterschool Meal Program through the CACFP
- Adopt backpack programs and on-site food pantries
- Screen families for food insecurity and provide resources

Early Childhood

- Participate in federal programs (CACFP)
- Adopt wellness policies which support good nutrition practices
- Promote Breastfeeding
- Provide resources



Communities

- Build grassroots support for new emergency or permanent food pantries in areas with no access
 - Example of Town of Jones food pantry at City Hall
- Promote federal programs
- Promote healthier food retail environments
 - Advocate for grocery stores in areas of Low Income and Low Access
 - Very unique example: [Tulsa dollar store zoning](#)
 - Integrate food policies into urban planning (example: zoning for corner stores, grocery stores, farmers markets)
- Support urban agriculture (example: community gardens, backyard gardens)
- Promote affordable housing
- Create/ Engage with food policy councils
- [Procure healthier foods](#): large-scale healthy food purchasing and procuring local foods (Example: Adopting healthy food service guidelines)



Emergency pantry at Jones City Hall



Higher Education

- Create food pantries or grocery distributions
- Food recovery programs (Example: donate leftover catering foods)
- Promote enrollment in federal programs
 - SNAP application assistance
 - Widely advertise federal programs (Example: if a student shows an EFC of \$0, automatically promote programs)
- Meal swipe donation programs
- Partner with community resources wherever possible to address overall needs
- Reduce stigma to increase utilization of services
- Address transportation barriers (safe ride services)
- Finally (if applicable): Conduct research on food insecurity and identify possible solutions



Some sources of many:

<https://www.communitycommons.org/collections/Innovative-Initiatives-on-College-Campuses-Addressing-Food-Insecurity>

<https://frac.org/blog/reducing-food-insecurity-among-college-students>



Congregations

- Many faith-based organizations are considered anchor institutions, by providing social services such as hosting food pantries accessible by members and the public.
 - Out of 200 food banks and 60,000 local food pantries, kitchens, shelters, and meal programs associated with Feeding America, 55% are faith based. ¹
 - If your congregation is in an area of extremely limited resources, please consider becoming a food pantry for your community.
 - Promote healthy donations to the pantry through flyers and regular communications. Lists of healthy shelf stable items help!
 - Partner with local grocery stores for donations of overstocked wholesome foods.
 - A faith based location can serve as a summer school feeding site.



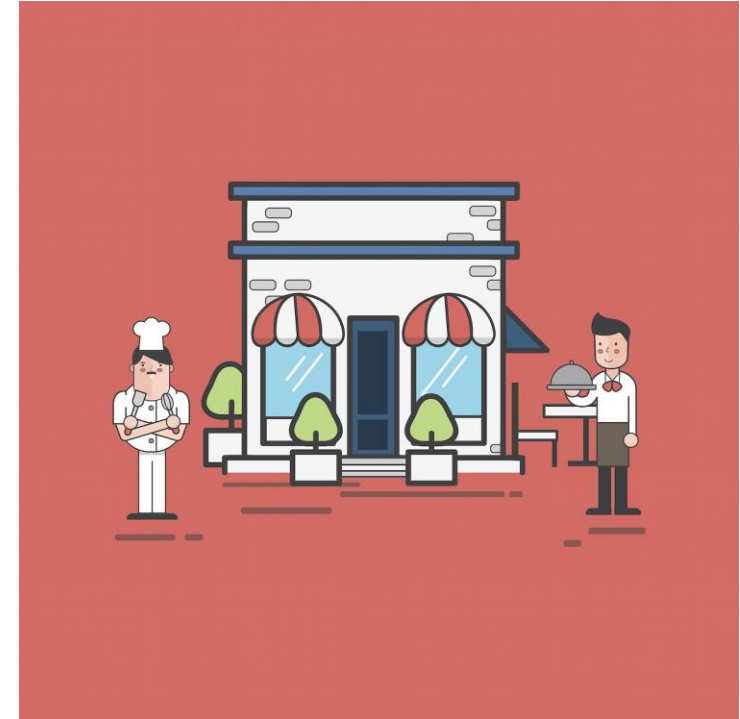
Businesses

- Meet the needs of your employees
- Donate to charitable food assistance programs – Dollars go further than foods donated due to purchasing agreements food banks have
- Conduct fundraising campaigns – Food banks can create matching donation campaigns where your dollar can go twice as far
- When conducting food drives, use healthy donation lists to solicit healthier donations
- Allow employees to volunteer on the clock or arrange volunteer days. Food pantries and banks are often understaffed or rely on volunteers. Volunteering makes for great team building!
- Where applicable, align worksite nutrition policies with federal food service guidelines. Procuring healthy foods in large quantities drives demand for more nutritious foods



Restaurants

- The food service sector generates approximately 26.7 million tons of food waste per year.¹
- Reducing food waste
 - Food rescue and food recovery programs
 - Food Banks have Retail Recovery Programs
- Pricing strategies that promote healthy menu options
- Source from local farmers – This fuels the local economy and increases employment and income opportunities in your area
- Coordinate food drives for local food pantries



1) Estimates of generation and management of wasted food in the United States in 2019. (2023, April). *2019 Wasted Food Report*. (EPA 530-R-23-005) United States Environmental Protection Agency.

Questions?

Lauran.Larson@health.ok.gov