Hunger and malnutrition have devastating effects on our children’s ability to learn and grow into tomorrow’s productive citizens.

Hunger among our youngest Ohioans is growing and will dramatically affect already-rising health care costs, educational achievement, future worker productivity and the ability of our State and nation to compete in the global economy.

Yet, hunger is entirely preventable.

It will take all of us, working together, to solve this damaging condition yet it can, it must and it will be done.

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The Numbers

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
Each year the USDA measures food insecurity and very low food security across the United States. In September of 2011, the USDA released data on food insecurity for 2010. They found that

In Ohio:
- Ohio is 6th in the nation for high food security rates with 16.4 percent of Ohioans considered food insecure in 2010
- Ohio’s increase of 7.9 percentage points from 2009 is the largest increase in food insecurity of all states since 1996-1998
- Ohio’s food insecurity rate is higher than all surrounding states and the U.S. average

Nationally:
- An estimated 21.6 percent of children lived in a household that struggled with food insecurity at some time during 2010, with 16.2 million children food insecure.
- Households with children reported food insecurity at a significantly higher rate than those without children, 20.2 percent compared to 11.7 percent

Feeding America – Map the Meal Gap
Feeding America produced the first comprehensive report about food insecurity at the state and county level in 2010 and expanded in August of 2010 to include local level data on child food insecurity. This report determined that 26.5 percent (731,040) of Ohio children struggle with food insecurity. 40 percent of all food insecure Ohioans are not income eligible for federal nutrition programs like SNAP, school meals, or WIC because they live in households above 185 percent of the federal poverty level.

Ohio Child Food Insecurity--Map the Meal Gap
Food Research and Action Center – Food Hardship in America 2010

The Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) examined rates of food hardship (rates of households reporting that there were times over the past year when the households lacked enough money for food that the family needed) for both households with and without children during 2010. The report estimated that:

- 26.3 percent of households with children experienced food hardship in 2010, compared to 16.6 percent of households without children
- The Youngstown-Warren-Boardman metropolitan statistical area (MSA) ranked 3rd of all MSA’s (33 percent) while the Dayton MSA ranked 22nd, (27.6 percent) of all households with children experiencing food hardship

Hunger in Ohio, 2010

Ohio’s 12 Feeding America Foodbanks and their network of more than 3,300 local agencies fed 2.1 million Ohioans, 35 percent of which are children 17 and under.

Every four years, Mathematica Policy Institute, Inc. in partnership with Feeding America, the nation’s largest organization of emergency food providers, completes a national study on emergency food providers and their clients. From the in-depth interviews with over 4,000 Ohio households, Hunger in Ohio 2010, found that:

- 84 percent of client households with a child under the age of 18 experienced some form of food insecurity
- 39 percent of client households with a child under the age of 18 experienced very low food insecurity

Hard Choices Between Food and Other Necessities (Hunger in Ohio, 2010)

- Food vs. Utilities
- Food vs. Rent/Mortgage
- Food vs. Gas
- Food vs. Medicine/Medical Care
- Food vs. Transportation
Cost of Child Hunger

Nutritional Habits Start Early

Children develop nutritional habits very young, so it is important to ensure that children have access to fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. However, these foods are often more expensive to purchase than foods high in added sugars and saturated fats.

According to the Archives of Pediatric Medicine, even one experience with hunger has negative impacts of children 10 and 15 years later.

Food insecurity among children results in:
- More frequent nurses visits at school
- Higher rates of depression and anxiety
- Higher rates of diabetes and other chronic conditions
- Higher rates of internalizing behavior problems
- Increased likelihood of needing to repeat a grade at school
- Lower math scores
- More likely to be at developmental risk
- More likely to have colds as preschool children
- More likely to have iron deficiency anemia as infants or toddlers

“Hunger in America: Suffering We All Pay For”

“Hunger in America: Suffering We All Pay For” was released in October 2011 and found Ohio’s Hunger Bill to be $6.97 billion dollars in 2010.
Key Partners in Addressing Hunger among Ohio Children

Federal, State and Local Governments: Federal, State and local governments have critical roles to play in ending hunger. Critical federal nutrition programs are administered by states and support for state-funded programs and leadership to make ending hunger a priority are essential roles in addressing hunger among Ohio children.

Businesses Help to Address Hunger: Private sector partners can help address hunger in a myriad of ways: contributing in-kind help or technical assistance to anti-hunger groups, donating food, making cash donations, including those to promote enrollment in nutrition safety net programs, and supporting policy improvements.

Faith and Community Based Organizations: Many of Ohio’s food pantries and soup kitchens are sponsored by faith-based organizations. Faith and community based organizations operate critical child-focused programs and connect Ohioans with other services available.

Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks: The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks represents Ohio’s 12 Feeding America Foodbanks, serving all 88 counties through nearly 3,300 member food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters. In addition to operating statewide programs like the Ohio Food Purchase and Agricultural Clearance Program and The Ohio Benefit Bank™, Ohio foodbanks distribute CSFP and TEFAP throughout the state in partnership with the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services and provide supplemental programs that address the unique needs of vulnerable populations like seniors and children. According to the USDA’s most recent report, more people used the emergency food network in the Midwest region than in any other region of the United States.ix

Contact: Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks, www.oashf.org, email nora@oashf.org or call (614) 221-4336.

The Ohio Food Purchase and Agricultural Clearance Program (OFPACP): OFPACP is a public private partnership that has operated in Ohio for 14 years with funding provided by the Ohio General Assembly and administered by the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services. The statewide partnership directs surplus and unmarketable agricultural products from over 70 Ohio farmers and producers through the State’s network of foodbanks onto the tables of Ohio families, ensuring even our most vulnerable populations have a source of nutritious, Ohio-grown, raised and produced food. The program prevents waste, reduces loss for farmers and growers, is the most nutritious food in the foodbank warehouse and, most importantly, provides the most wholesome of food to struggling Ohio families for pennies on the pound.
In State Fiscal year 2011, OASHF member foodbanks distributed more than 150 million pounds of food and grocery items throughout the State. More than 25 percent of this food (over **32.4 million pounds**) was provided through OFPACP.

**The Ohio Benefit Bank (OBB™):**

The Ohio Benefit Bank is an online service that connects Ohioans to much needed federal and state resources to help their family become more economically self-sufficient. The OBB is a public-private partnership between the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks and the State of Ohio, including nine state and four federal agencies.

A recent study found that many low-income households were not accessing the benefits that were available to them. Some variables that kept Ohioans from accessing these programs included:

- Many can’t afford to take time off work to pick up and complete paperwork
- Others are overwhelmed by the amount of paperwork required
- Some don’t have transportation to get to the various application offices to apply for assistance

The OBB, an internet based program, provides access to over 20 work support programs and services (including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Home Energy Assistance Program, Health Care, Free and Reduced Price School Meals, WIC and a wide variety of free tax filing and tax credits, among many more) bringing all of these resources together in one location. The OBB allows Ohioans to complete the necessary applications in one location either at home via the internet ([www.ohiobenefits.org](http://www.ohiobenefits.org)) or at a community location with the help of trained counselor. Ohioans can access the OBB in all 88 counties through more than 3,500 trained counselors at more than 1,100 community, faith-based, and public sites. To date Ohioans have accessed nearly $600 million in potential tax credits and work supports through the OBB.

**Contact:** Maryjo Mace-Woodburn, Director of Work Support Initiatives, Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks ([www.oashf.org](http://www.oashf.org)), (614) 221-4336, ext. 268, maryjo@oashf.org

**Volunteer and National Service Organizations:** Volunteers play important roles in addressing child hunger, from supporting Summer Food Service Program sites, maximizing partnerships and community resources, organizing food donations, to screening families for SNAP (the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as food stamps) benefits and supporting policies to address the problem. The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) “improves lives, strengthens communities, and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering.”
In 2010-2011 FY:

- AmeriCorps provided more than 1,400 individuals the opportunity to provide intensive, results-driven service to meet education, environmental, health, economic, and other pressing needs in communities across Ohio last year. In the Summer of 2011, nearly 100 Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbank’s AmeriCorps Summer Associates increased participation at SFSP sites more than 43% compared to 2010 and meals were increased more than 25% during that same time.

Contacts: Tina Dunphy, State Director, CNCS State Office, (614) 469-7441, tdunphy@cns.gov and William B. Hall, Executive Director, Ohio Commission on Service & Volunteerism, (614) 728-2916, William.hall@ocsc.state.oh.us

Federal Nutrition Programs

Federal nutrition programs comprise a critical safety net of nutrition programs for Ohio children and their families. While many programs are available access barriers, a lack of knowledge about programs and inadequate benefit levels leave gaps in the nutrition safety net through which a child and family can fall into food insecurity.

Free and Reduced Price School Meals

Students are eligible for free school meals if their households have incomes below 130 percent of the federal poverty level. Students are eligible for reduced priced meals if their households have incomes between 131 and 185 percent of the federal poverty level. These numbers are a standard for measuring poverty in a school district. In 2011, the Ohio Department of Education data showed that:

- A record 46 percent (or 840,000) of Ohio school age children are eligible to receive free or reduced priced school meals, compared to less than 30 percent of students a decade ago.
- Schools in neighborhoods that are traditionally full of middle class families have seen the largest increase in demand for free or reduced meals

Students may also be eligible for free school breakfasts if their school offers the program. For more information on the school breakfast program and how Ohio’s schools can offer the program and maximize participation visit the “Learning Supports: Food and Nutrition” page of the Ohio Department of Education’s website: www.ode.state.oh.us/
**Child and Adult Care Food Programs**

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) provides meal reimbursements for licensed or approved child and adult care centers to help promote understanding of nutrition in overall health and develop positive food-related attitudes and behaviors. Eligible public or private nonprofit child care centers, outside-school-hours care centers, Head Start programs, and other institutions which are licensed or approved to provide day care services may participate in CACFP, independently or as sponsored centers. Meals served to children are reimbursed at rates based upon a child’s eligibility for free, reduced price, or paid meals. CACFP is administered by the Ohio Department of Education and more information can be found by visiting the “Learning Supports: Food and Nutrition” page of the Ohio Department of Education’s website: [www.ode.state.oh.us/](http://www.ode.state.oh.us/)

**Afterschool At-Risk Program**

The at-risk afterschool meals component of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) offers federal funding to afterschool programs that serve a meal and snack to children in low-income areas. The Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 recently expanded this program to all states. Under CACFP, at-risk afterschool meals and snacks may be reimbursed if they are served on weekends or holidays, including vacation periods (for example, spring break), during the regular school year only. The afterschool at-risk program is administered by the Ohio Department of Education. For more information on the afterschool at-risk program visit the “Learning Supports: Food and Nutrition” page of the Ohio Department of Education’s website: [www.ode.state.oh.us/](http://www.ode.state.oh.us/)

**Summer Food Service Program**

Just as learning does not end when school lets out, neither does a child’s need for good nutrition. The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) provides free, nutritious meals and snacks to help children in low-income areas get the nutrition they need to learn, play and grow throughout the summer months when they are out of school.

Locally, SFSP is run by approved sponsors, including school districts, local government agencies, camps and private nonprofit organizations. Sponsors provide free meals to a group of children at a central site such as a school or community center. The sponsor receives reimbursements from USDA, through ODE, for the meals served to children that meet program guidelines. SFSP is administered by the Ohio Department of Education. In the summer of 2011, 1,491 sites provided summer meals to an average daily attendance of 131,896 children, bringing over $10 million in federally reimbursed nutritious meals to children in need in Ohio. To find out more about the SFSP visit the “Learning Supports: Food and Nutrition” page of the Ohio Department of Education’s website: [www.ode.state.oh.us/](http://www.ode.state.oh.us/)
**Special Milk Program**
The Special Milk Program provides milk to children in schools and childcare institutions who do not participate in other Federal meal service programs. The program reimburses schools for the milk they serve. Schools in the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs may also participate in the Special Milk Program to provide milk to children in half-day pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs where children do not have access to the school meal programs. The Special Milk Program is administered by the Ohio Department of Education. For more information about the special milk program visit the “Learning Supports: Food and Nutrition” page of the Ohio Department of Education’s website: [www.ode.state.oh.us/](http://www.ode.state.oh.us/)

**Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program**
The Ohio Department of Education’s (ODE’s) Office for Child Nutrition awards Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Grants to Ohio schools each year as part of a U.S. Department of Agriculture program administered by the office. Funds awarded through this program are used primarily to provide fresh fruits and vegetables to students free of charge throughout the school day. Program participants must be in an elementary school where at least 50 percent of the student enrollment qualifies for free or reduced-price school meal benefits. For more information about the program or for the 2012-2013 application, visit the “Learning Supports: Food and Nutrition” page of the Ohio Department of Education’s website: [www.ode.state.oh.us/](http://www.ode.state.oh.us/)

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)**
WIC helps income eligible pregnant and breastfeeding women, women who recently had a baby, infants and children up to five years of age who are at health risk due to inadequate nutrition. WIC provides nutrition education, breastfeeding education and support; supplemental, highly nutritious foods such as cereal, eggs, milk, whole grain foods, fruits and vegetables, and iron-fortified infant formula; referral to prenatal and pediatric health care and other maternal and child health and human service programs.

In 2011, WIC served a monthly average of 279,171 participants including 63,062 women, 68,971 infants and 146,139 children. The Ohio WIC program is administered by the Ohio Department of Health. For more information on WIC in Ohio visit the “Access to Health Services” page of the Ohio Department of Health’s website at [http://www.odh.ohio.gov/](http://www.odh.ohio.gov/)

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**
The Supplemental Food Assistance Program (SNAP), known as Food Assistance in Ohio and formerly known as food stamps, provides low-income people with benefits on an Electronic
Benefit Transfer (EBT) card that they can use to obtain food at most grocery stores and other food outlets. The federal government funds 100 percent of SNAP benefits and provides approximately half of a state’s costs to administer the program.

46.7 percent of all Ohio households participating in SNAP had at least one child in the home. Nationally 46.6 percent of all SNAP participants are children.

The Ohio Department of Job & Family Services (ODJFS) administers the SNAP program in Ohio. In partnership with the Ohio Department of Education, ODJFS has implemented monthly “direct certification” allowing a child participating in SNAP to also participate in the free school meal program, serving more children at nutritional risk while eliminating unnecessary paperwork and increasing efficiency. For more information on SNAP visit: http://jfs.ohio.gov/factsheets/foodassistance.pdf

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

TEFAP is a federally funded program that provides shelf stable meat, dairy, canned fruits and vegetables, and other food commodities to states, mainly through local foodbanks. Foodbanks redistribute the products to faith-based and secular food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters that directly serve the public. TEFAP households, except those receiving prepared meals, must meet the state’s income eligibility criteria.

In State Fiscal Year 2011, TEFAP provided 27 percent of all food distributed through the emergency food assistance network in Ohio. TEFAP is an essential resource for the record number of Ohioans standing in food lines, nearly 35 percent of whom were children in State Fiscal Year 2011. Yet even as the need for emergency food remains high, agricultural markets are currently very strong. As a result, there is little need for USDA to intervene in agricultural markets by purchasing “bonus” TEFAP foods that have helped the emergency food network cope with rising demand over the past three years. Any decrease in TEFAP and bonus commodities will severely impact the amount of food available and hurt the health and nutritional status of children and families relying on emergency food. TEFAP is administered by the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services and distributed through Ohio foodbanks. For more information on TEFAP visit: http://jfs.ohio.gov/factsheets/foodPrograms_factSheet.pdf
Ohio’s foodbanks also provide supplemental programs intended to meet the specific nutritional needs of children.

**BackPack Programs**
The BackPack program, operated by foodbanks in Ohio, is designed to meet the needs of hungry children at times when other resources are not available, such as weekends. The food is child-friendly, nonperishable, easily consumed, and vitamin fortified. The backpacks are discreetly distributed to children on the last day before the weekend or holiday vacation. BackPack programs are almost entirely privately funded. Ohio foodbanks and serve over 12,000 children a nutritious weekend food supply through partnerships with over 175 schools, after school and other community organizations.

**Kids Café Programs**
Kids Café programs, operated by foodbanks in Ohio, provide free meals and snacks to low-income children through a variety of community locations where children already congregate such as churches or public schools. In addition to providing meals to kids, some Kids Café programs also offer a safe place, where under the supervision of staff, a child can get involved in educational, recreational, and social activities. Kids Café programs serve over 9,800 children through partnerships with over 150 schools, after school and other community organizations.

Hunger is directly linked to poverty and Ohio’s children are increasingly at-risk. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010 estimates, Ohio’s children are experiencing high rates of poverty. xiii Half of all children under the age of 5 lived in households with incomes under the self-sufficiency standard of 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.

Hunger is entirely preventable. It will take the commitment and energy of all partners and stakeholders to end childhood hunger in Ohio, but it is an investment worth making.
Child Hunger in Ohio


6 August 2010 report in Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine


8 Brandeis University Center on Hunger and Poverty “The Links Between Nutrition and Cognitive Development of Children,”
http://www.centeronhunger.org/cognitive.html

9 Shepard, D., Setren, E., and Cooper, D. (October 2011). Hunger in America; Suffering we all pay for. Center for American Progress.

10 The exclusion of the homeless and under representation of those who are tenuously housed—bias estimates of emergency kitchen use downward, especially among certain subgroups of the population.


12 http://www.nationalservice.gov/state_profiles/pdf/OH_OV.pdf

http://www.ode.state.oh.us/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&topicrelationid=835&contentid=13197&content=101533

14 United States Census; American Community Survey Data, 2010 1 year Estimates. American Fact Finder.
http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml?refresh=t