

<http://www.bread.org/learn/hunger-basics/hunger-facts-domestic.html?log-event=sp2f-view-item&nid=40163543>

Hunger Facts: Domestic – Hunger persists in the U.S.

- 35.5 million people—including 12.6 million children—live in households that experience hunger or the risk of hunger. This represents more than one in ten households in the United States (10.9 percent).¹
- 4.0 percent of U.S. households experience hunger. Some people in these households frequently skip meals or eat too little, sometimes going without food for a whole day. 11.1 million people, including 430 thousand children, live in these homes.¹
- 6.9 percent of U.S. households are at risk of hunger. Members of these households have lower quality diets or must resort to seeking emergency food because they cannot always afford the food they need. 24.4 million people, including 12.2 million children, live in these homes.¹
- Research shows that preschool and school-aged children who experience severe hunger have higher levels of chronic illness, anxiety and depression, and behavior problems than children with no hunger.²
- For more information on U.S. food security refer to this [page](#).

People facing hunger are increasingly turning to the Food Stamp Program for assistance in feeding their families.

- In 2006, the most recent year for which data is available, approximately 38 million people were eligible to participate in the Food Stamp Program. About 65 percent of these actually participated, a rate that has increased by 16 percent since 2001.³
- In 2007, an average of 26.5 million people used food stamps each month.⁶
- Declining poverty and unemployment since 2004 have likely contributed to more economic opportunities for many low-income Americans. The increases in food stamp participation since 2005 may well be the result of successful outreach efforts that have encouraged a greater number of eligible individuals to participate in the program.

Churches and charities are straining to serve rising requests for food from their pantries and soup kitchens, especially from working people.

- The U.S. Conference of Mayors reports that in 2006 requests for emergency food assistance increased an average of 7 percent. The study also found that 48 percent of those requesting emergency food assistance were members of families with children and that 37 percent of adults requesting such assistance were employed. Unemployment, high housing costs, poverty or lack of income, and high medical costs led the list of reasons contributing to the rise.⁴
- Almost half the cities surveyed in the Mayors' report (45 percent) said they are not able to provide an adequate quantity of food to those in need. And 63 percent of surveyed cities reported they had to decrease the quantity of food provided and/or the number of times people can come to get food assistance. An average of 23 percent of the demand for emergency food assistance is estimated to have gone unmet in the survey cities, up from 18 percent last year.⁴
- America's Second Harvest, the nation's largest network of food banks, reports an estimated 24 to 27 million people turned to the agencies they serve, as accounted for in their 2006 findings.⁵

Cites and links to source material:

¹ [Household Food Security in the United States, 2005](#). USDA Economic Research Service. November 2006.

² [Pediatrics](#), Vol. 110 No. 4. October 2002.

³ [Trends in Food Stamp Participation Rates: 1999-2005](#). USDA Food and Nutrition Service. June 2007.

⁴ [Hunger and Homelessness Survey 2006](#). US Conference of Mayors. December 2006.

⁵ [Hunger in America 2006](#). America's Second Harvest. March 2006.

⁶ ["Food Stamp Program Average Monthly Participation."](#) USDA Food and Nutrition Service. February 2008.

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