



factsheet

Hunger

In the 18 southeast Texas counties served by the Houston Food Bank

The Need

- On a given day, 66,000 people in southeast Texas experience the pain of hunger and have no food: 5,000 are children.
- 800,000 individuals receive food assistance each year through the Houston Food Bank's network of hunger relief charities.
- One in four children (25%) in southeast Texas is food insecure, or at risk of being hungry; overall, one in five people (18%) is food insecure.

The Face of Hunger

- **They're working:** Two-thirds of food insecure families with children have at least one working adult.
- **Not homeless:** 97% of people served by the Houston Food Bank have permanent housing.
- **Seniors:** 20% of people served by the Houston Food Bank are age 60 or older.

Difficult Choices

Hungry families report they must often choose between paying for food and other necessities.

- Food vs. utilities - 72%
- Food vs. rent or mortgage - 60%
- Food vs. medical care - 74%
- Food vs. transportation - 70%

Chronic child hunger symptoms

Extreme thinness
Puffy/swollen skin
Dry, cracked lips
Chronic sickness
Saving or hoarding food
Inability to concentrate

Coping Strategies

What do hungry families do if they don't have enough to eat?

- Purchase cheap, unhealthy food - 78%
- Water down food or drinks to make them last longer - 42%
- Get help from family and/or friends - 47%

A gift of \$1 provides 3 meals for a hungry child, senior or adult | houstonfoodbank.org/donatenow

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Child Hunger

A Child's Face of Hunger in Southeast Texas

- About 5,000 children are hungry on any given day
- About 47% of the people who receive Houston Food Bank assistance are children
- In Harris County more than half of children (under 18 years) are eligible for the Free-and-Reduced Breakfast/Lunch Program

**Texas (27.4 %)
has one of the highest rates
of children who are food
insecure, that is, without**

Affects of Hunger

- Proper nutrition is vital to the growth and development of children.
- Research indicates that hungry children do more poorly in school and have lower academic achievement because they are not well prepared for school and cannot concentrate.

Food Insecurity

Food Insecure people don't have consistent access to enough nutritious food. These kids live that...

"Without fail, the last week of school [before the holidays] several students become worried about not receiving food bags [from the Houston Food Bank Backpack Buddy program]. When they find out they are receiving enough food bags to cover them over the holidays their eyes begin to sparkle and worries turn to relief. All the kids are very appreciative of receiving bags to take home this week."

~ a school rep at a participating Backpack Buddy school

Chronic child hunger symptoms

Extreme thinness
Puffy/swollen skin
Dry, cracked lips
Chronic sickness
Saving or hoarding food

"One kindergarten student asks a few times a week if today is the day she will get food. The family really appreciates it."

~ a school rep

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Houston Food Bank

The Houston Food Bank feeds 800,000 hungry people each year by distributing food through nearly 600 hunger relief agencies in 18 southeast Texas counties.

Mission

Leading the fight against hunger

What We Do

From our 308,000 sq. ft. warehouse, our fleet of trucks delivers food to most of our hunger relief agencies, while the rest come to us to pick up. We serve:

- Church and community food pantries
- Soup kitchens
- Shelters for the homeless and abused
- Meal sites for children and the elderly

Thanks to strong community partnerships, the Houston Food Bank stretches every \$1 donation to provide a full day of meals for children, adults or seniors.

Programs

Backpack Buddy: At participating schools, backpacks are filled for the weekends with kid-friendly food for at-risk children.

Core Connections Network: Clients at hunger relief charities are connected with nutritious food, combined with comprehensive social services and education about health issues, so they can build a better future.

Keegan Kitchen: Prepares meals for programs run externally like Meals on Wheels and US Vets. This is also where meals are prepared for Kids Cafe.

Kids Cafe: Healthy meals and snacks served year-round on weekdays, along with nutrition and health education at locations throughout the Houston area.

Nutrition Education: Teaches nutrition habits to promote health, which may reduce risk of diseases, such as diabetes. Training is based on USDA nutritional guidelines.

Red Barrel: Offers a convenient way for grocery shoppers to donate nonperishables to neighbors in need.

Senior Box Program: Provides a monthly box of food to low-income seniors and other eligible individuals. USDA's retail value per box = \$50.

Serving for Success: Provides more food for hungry people through a collaboration that prepares individuals within the criminal justice system and others for success in the workplace and the community.

Social Services Outreach: Raised awareness and assistance in application for state-funded social and health services.

Teachers Aid: School supplies for teachers in low-income schools.

Food **distributed** in FY '15:
74 million
nutritious meals

We're **efficient**:
95 cents of every dollar
feeds the hungry

By 2018, our goal is to distribute 100,000,000 nutritious meals each year