Mid-South Food Bank and Food Insecurity

Food insecurity refers to the lack of access to enough nutritious food for an active, healthy life for all members of the household.

In the 31-county area served by Mid-South Food Bank, more than 20 percent of the population struggles with food insecurity and hunger. Nearly one-third of them have incomes slightly higher than the poverty level and do not qualify for government food assistance such as SNAP (food stamps). Even if they are receiving SNAP benefits, the average amount buys groceries for only two weeks.

Mid-South Food Bank provides a vital resource for healthy food for children, families and seniors in need.
Feeding Children

Children who don’t get enough to eat are at greater risk for illness, have more behavioral and social problems and are less prepared to learn, resulting in lower scores on standardized tests.

The Food for Kids BackPack Program provides enough wholesome food for the weekend, when free school meals are not available. Each BackPack contains enough food for three nutritious meals a day. The single-serve, easy to open food requiring little or no preparation includes cereal, shelf stable milk, protein, vegetables, fruit and fruit juice. Backpacks also have nutrition activity sheets with games, puzzles or coloring pages.

Kids Cafes serve children a free nutritious meal in a safe environment. They also learn the importance of healthy eating and making good food choices through fun nutrition-themed activities.

Healthy School Pantries are located in schools, providing boxes of nutritious food for students and their families to take home and prepare wholesome family meals.

Feeding Families

Food insecure households must make difficult life choices, such as whether to pay for food or for other necessities such as utilities, medicine, housing or transportation. For some families in crisis, food has become optional. Parents sacrifice their own nutritional needs so children can eat.

Hunger’s Hope, our largest program, distributes nutritious food through our network of Partner Agencies, including food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, youth programs, senior programs, rehabilitation and residential centers, daycares and schools.

The Mobile Pantry Program targets underserved areas throughout the Mid-South, particularly in rural communities. The Mobile Pantry provides truckloads of perishable foods such as produce, meat, bread and dairy. Each mobile pantry distribution is unique to the geographic location and the needs of the community.

Feeding Seniors

Good nutrition is critical to the health and quality of life for seniors. Because of fixed, low incomes, many Mid-South seniors live below the poverty line and are experiencing food insecurity and hunger. They are among the most vulnerable citizens in our area.

Seniors can receive food through our Senior Grocery Program, which provides food boxes to eligible low-income senior citizens aged 60 and over. The Senior Grocery boxes include no-sugar canned fruits and low or no-salt vegetables, fruit juice, cereal, meat protein like beef stew and tuna, and non-meat protein like peanut butter and beans, plus healthy snacks. The program works to improve the health of elderly individuals by providing nutritious food that seniors can prepare and consume at home to supplement their diets with nutrients that may otherwise be missing.

Make a secure online donation at www.midsouthfoodbank.org/donatenow