Childhood Food Insecurity in Jefferson County, Wisconsin and the U.S.: Trends, Causes, and Policy Options
An Estimated 11.6% of Wisconsin Children were Food Insecure in 2013

An Estimated 1 in 5 Jefferson County Children was Food Insecure in 2011
Despite the Recession Ending in 2009, Food Insecurity Remains at Elevated Levels.

Food Insecurity was High Among Children Even Pre-Recession
Food Insecurity Defined

- Food Secure = Enough Food at All Times
- Food Insecure = Reduce Quality/Variety or Reduced Intake at Times
Why Are Children Food Insecure?

- Poverty Plays a Role, but New Research has Identified Additional Factors
- Parents Physical & Mental Health
- Parents' Marital Status & Contributions
- Child Care Arrangements
- Vulnerable Populations
- Income Measurement
What Triggers Food Insecurity?

- Household Changes in Income
- Permanent vs. Current Income
- Duration of Food Insecurity
Public Policy Response to Food Insecurity

- SNAP or Foodshare
- School Meal Programs
- WIC

Known Impact is Complicated by Lack of Causal Ties
Beyond the Safety Net: What Do We Know?

- Families Who Have Good Financial & Decision-making Skills Fair Better
- Families with High Stress Levels Fair Worse
Possible Policy Considerations

- Modernizing the Benefit Formula to Account for Changes in 21st Century Families
Possible Policy Considerations

- Consider Additional Contributing Factors & Need to Improve Policy in Those Areas
Possible Policy Considerations

- Consider Cost Effective Changes to Benefits Programs to Improve Access and Take Up Rates
Possible Policy Considerations

Any New Policy or Change in Policy Should Carefully Weigh Costs and Benefits
Next Steps to Better Understanding Food Insecurity

- Improve Data Collection & Inquiry
- Study Additional Factors
References


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