The State of Senior Hunger in America

Across the United States, millions of people are food insecure, which means having limited access to enough nutritious food to live a healthy lifestyle. As of 2017, 7.7% of seniors age 60 and older, or 5.5 million seniors overall, are food insecure. Although essentially unchanged from 2016, the current rate of food insecurity among seniors significantly elevated above the rate before the Great Recession (6.3% in 2007), and is still more than double the number of food insecure seniors in 2001 (2.3 million). With the projected growth of the senior population for the coming decades, senior food insecurity is likely to remain a personal and public health challenge in the years to come.

The State of Senior Hunger in America 2017 sheds light on the extent to which food insecurity affects seniors age 60 and older in the United States, offering deeper insights into the experience of food insecurity among the aging population. Specifically, the report finds that

- Senior renters are four times more likely to be food insecure than senior homeowners.
- Seniors who live with a grandchild are twice as likely to be food insecure than seniors who do not.
- Single seniors (divorced, separated, never married, or widowed) are eight times as likely to be food insecure as their married, counterparts.

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Hunger in our country and learn more about the efforts of our Unsung Heroes who create hope for so many hungry families. Many of you who have partnered with us over the years have heard about the new warehouse being built. We are happy to share some photos of our Ribbon Cutting and Blessing with you as well.

There really is no reason someone in our country — or for that matter in our great state of Indiana — to ever go without a meal when we have so much food readily available.

Please join us, because together, we can solve hunger.

John C. Etling
Agency Director

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The food insecurity rate among seniors living in the South (9.2%) is higher than the rate among seniors living in the Midwest (7.35%), West (7.2%) and Northeast regions (6.0%).

Federal nutrition programs such as SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program), serve as the first line of defense against food insecurity for people of
How do we make it all work?

Frequently, our staff at the Terre Haute Catholic Charities Foodbank are asked ‘how do you make this all work?!’ In other words, how are we able to consistently provide food to our 80 agencies across our seven county service area? The answer is simple — teamwork.

We are blessed with an amazing team — one that is dedicated to serving our neighbors in need of food — and our foodbank staff impacts lives on a daily basis. The staff does so much, but alone they cannot do it all. What makes all the difference is the group of volunteer men and women that regularly help us help others. They are selfless and humble; each blessed with many skills and each with a servant’s heart. Two of these servants are Penny Fredrick and Stacy Pierce.

Penny and Stacy are both valued volunteers for the Foodbank. Helping with events like the Soup Bowl Benefit and delivering food to 14 mobile pantries in our rural communities of Clay, Parke, and Vermillion Counties — no small feat! They consider their true ministry however to be Providence Food Pantry in West Terre Haute. Stacy started volunteering at the pantry in 2004 and invited Penny to join in 2009. Both immediately sensed the need for the pantry and fell in love with the feeling that came with serving others. Penny, then employed full-time, went as far as to modify her work schedule to allow her to serve one full day a week at the pantry.

Over the years they have played an integral role in growing the pantry and securing food items to stock its shelves. Both are quick to share that they are just one small piece of the puzzle, “The pantry is a community pantry, meant to serve its community but also made possible by the community” states Stacy. Penny adds “All of this, all of this food, the people we serve, this space, none of it would be possible without support from the community — the Sisters (of Providence), Helping Hands, local churches — we are here because of them.”

Penny and Stacy travel to the Foodbank to ‘go shopping’ for Providence Pantry, always bringing with them smiles and positive outlooks. When you walk into Providence Pantry, these smiles are shared by each volunteer and become contagious! Without the commitment and support of volunteers like Penny and Stacy, Catholic Charities would not be able to have the geographical outreach and impact that we are so proud of. We are only able to help others because of the help that we receive.

To learn more about Providence Food Pantry or to volunteer, call (812) 533-5805 or visit 707 National Ave, West Terre Haute each Thursday from 8:30am - 10:30pm

The 2019 release of The State of Senior Hunger study includes two reports authored by Dr. James P. Ziliak and Dr. Craig Gundersen. This executive summary is based on analyses within the first report, The State of Senior Hunger in America in 2017, and a separate summary focuses on analyses within the second report, Hunger Among Adults Age 50-59 in 2017. All reports and references can be found at feedingamerica.org/stateofseniorhunger.
New Foodbank Opens with Blessing and Ribbon Cutting

We are excited to announce the opening of the new Terre Haute Catholic Charities Foodbank! On April 29, individuals from across the community joined us to get a sneak peak of the new warehouse during the Ribbon Cutting and Blessing.

Archbishop Charles C. Thompson of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis was present to bless the building. “What an incredible witness this gives. It is so much in line with Catholic social teaching and Scripture, especially the one Pope Francis constantly reminds us of in Matthew 25, that ‘what you do for the least of my brothers and sisters, you do for me,’” Thompson said to those in attendance. “Feeding the hungry and all those things we’re called to do to be attentive to the needs of those around us.”

Duke Bennett, mayor of the City of Terre Haute, in addition to David Haynes, president of the Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce; Jacob Hellmann, owner of Keymark Construction; Michael Waldbieser, Michael R. Waldbieser Engineering; and dozens of others were in attendance to celebrate. John C. Etling, agency director for Catholic Charities in Terre Haute, thanked all of those who provided their time, talent and treasure to make this a reality especially Earl and Tina Elliott, co-chairs of the Closing the Meal Gap Campaign, “who worked tirelessly to see this project through to completion.”

The new 10,000 square foot facility more than doubles the space of the former facility and has room to expand to help even more food insecure individuals in our communities. And, it includes some features not found in the old facility like a loading dock for large truck deliveries, two ground level docks for agency pick-ups and pallet racks to hold a minimum of 200 pallets of non-perishable food in addition to 96 pallets of refrigerated and frozen product.

The staff is now fully moved into the new facility and is beginning to enjoy the benefits of their new warehouse. If you missed the Blessing and Ribbon Cutting and would like a tour of the warehouse, contact Jennifer Buell at (812) 232-1447, Opt. 3