

## Vermont Hunger Facts

### What is Food Insecurity?

**Food insecurity** is defined as the lack of access to enough food to fully meet basic needs at all times due to lack of financial resources. Adults in households determined to be food insecure are so limited in resources that they are running out of food, reducing the quality of food their family eats, feeding their children unbalanced diets, or skipping meals so that their children can eat.

### Food Insecurity in Vermont

- **13%** of all **Vermont households** are food insecure  
**85,000 Vermonters**
- **21%** of **Vermont children** live in food insecure homes  
**25,400 Vermont Children**
- **6%** of **Vermont seniors** are living with food insecurity  
**7,800 Vermont Seniors**

The food insecurity data here are 3-year averages, from 2010-2012, from the Current Population Survey of the United States Census.

### What is Food Insecurity with Hunger?

Households that are classified as **food insecure with hunger** are those food insecure homes in which adults have decreased the quality and quantity of food they consume to the point where they are likely to be hungry on a frequent basis, or in which children's intake has been reduced to the point that the children are likely to be hungry on a regular basis and adults' food intake is severely reduced.

### Food Insecurity with Hunger in Vermont

- **30,000 Vermonters** living in food insecure homes struggle with hunger  
**5% of Vermonters**
- **7,900 Vermont children** live in households experiencing food insecurity with hunger  
**7% of Vermont Children**
- **3,800 Vermont seniors** are food insecure with hunger  
**3% of Vermont Seniors**

The food insecurity data here are 3-year averages, from 2010-2012, from the Current Population Survey of the United States Census.

## Hunger & Malnutrition in Children Has a Lifelong Effect on Health, Well-Being, and Development\*

### Children living in food insecure homes are at a greater risk for:

- Poor quality diets and nutrient deficiencies
- Chronic and acute illness
- Cognitive, physical and emotional delays
- Increases in aggression, depression, and hyperactive behavior
- Lack of school readiness
- Poor school performance and academic achievement

### Federal Nutrition Programs Improve Health and Well-Being

- Participation in **3SquaresVT** (formerly called Food Stamps) reduces food insecurity and improves children's diet quality
- Participation in **3SquaresVT** and/or **WIC** decreases risk of poor health, anemia, and malnutrition
- **3SquaresVT** and **WIC** participation is associated with decreases in child abuse
- Participation in **3SquaresVT** and **school meals** reduces obesity in school-age girls
- Children in families receiving **3SquaresVT** benefits have higher achievement in math and reading
- Children who participate in **school meals** have improved diets and lower risk for diabetes
- Participation in **school meals** improves student behavior, social interactions, and academic performance

\*For references/sources, contact Hunger Free Vermont at [info@hungerfreevt.org](mailto:info@hungerfreevt.org) or 802-865-0255.