

Issue Alert

Winter 2007



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The New Face of Hunger: The Working Poor

Child poverty in Indiana is up. More students are eligible for free and reduced priced lunches. More households are applying for food stamps. Of those households, 75 percent had one or more individuals in the workforce – the working poor.¹ Relief agencies are utilizing national, state, and local resources in an effort to provide food assistance to children and families in need.

Approximately 15 percent of Indiana's households experienced low food security or very low food security in 2006. This means the availability of food in a household is uncertain, insufficient, or limited due to economic, physical, or other constraints. Some characteristics or experiences of individuals with low and very low food security include: concern over a shortage of food; purchased food will not last until the buyer can next afford a trip to the grocery store; inability to afford balanced meals; decreased meal size; skips meals; does not eat for entire day or possibly longer; did not eat even though they were hungry; and weight loss due to lack of food.¹

The lack of food leads to negative social, emotional, and physical outcomes. Research indicates hungry children have a greater likelihood of receiving lower grades in school, being suspended or expelled, suffering from depression, and having suicidal thoughts.³ In addition, food insecurity in children

can lead to more hospitalizations and health care visits.⁴ And the bottom line is this: caring for those with low or very low food security, charity to feed the hungry, and the loss of productivity caused by hunger and hunger-related issues are estimated to cost Indiana \$1.9 billion annually.⁵

Nutrition Facts:

Serving Size: Indiana

Amount Per Serving: 1,645,031 Indiana Families

Families with low food security	11.1%
Families with very low food security	4.1%
Families with children receiving food stamps	14.4%
Unemployment rate	5%
Families with children living below poverty	17.9%
Families receiving free or reduced-priced school lunches	11%

Contains: Data from Food Research and Action Center, 2006 American Community Survey, Indiana Business Research Center, and Indiana Department of Education-Division of School and Community Nutrition.

¹ U.S. Census. (n.d.) 2006 American Community Survey.

² National Research Council. (2006). Food Insecurity and Hunger in the United States: An Assessment of the Measure. Panel to Review the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Measurement of Food Insecurity and Hunger, Gooloo S. Wunderlich and Janet L. Norwood, Editors, Committee on National Statistics, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

³ Alaimo, K., Olson, C., and Frongillo, E. (2002). Family food insufficiency, but not low family income, is positively associated with dysthymia and suicide symptoms in adolescents. *The American Society for Nutritional Sciences J. Nutr.* 132:719-725.

⁴ Cook, J., Frank, D., Berkowitz, C., Black, C., Casey, P., Cutts, D., Meyers, A., Zaldivar, N., Skalicky, A., Levenson, S., Heeren, T., and Nord, N. (2004, June). Food insecurity is associated with adverse health outcomes among human infants and toddlers. *The Journal of Nutrition*, 134:1432-1438.

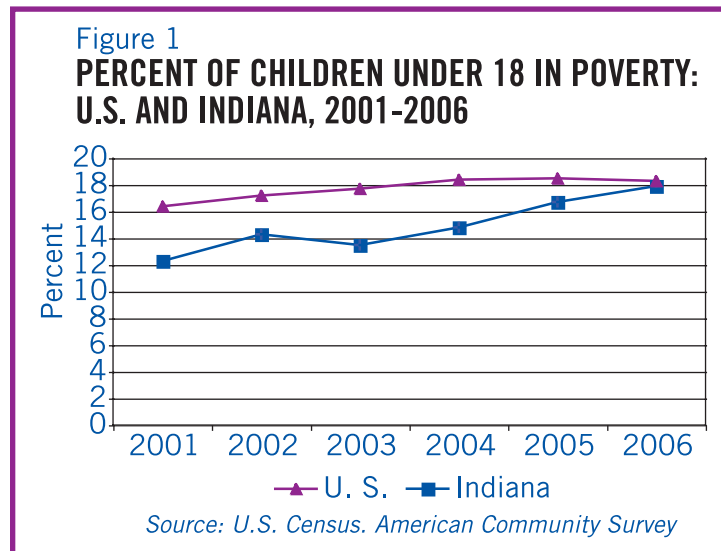
⁵ Brown, L., Shepard, D., Martin, T., and Orwat, J. (2007) The economic cost of domestic hunger: Estimated annual burden to the United States. Sodexo Foundation. Retrieved on October 22, 2007, from www.sodexohousa.com/pdf/coh/CostofHunger.pdf

Components of Food Insecurity in Indiana

Poverty

Economic conditions are linked to hunger. Families below poverty, with low wages, or no employment are more likely to suffer from low or very low food security.⁶ Other factors include cost of local food, housing, and other basic needs; household management skills; health; and household composition.⁷

- In 2006, 17.9% of Hoosier children were living in poverty, compared with 18.3% nationally. Indiana had the 31st highest child poverty rate among the 50 states.
- Since 2001, Indiana has had a 46% increase in the number of children living below poverty (Figure 1).⁸
- In 2004, child poverty ranged from a high of 22.4% in Lake County to a low of 4.5% in Hamilton County.⁹



poverty level, or less than \$41,300 for a family of four).¹¹

- In May 2006, Indiana's average hourly wage was \$16.92, compared with \$18.84 nationally, ranking Indiana in the bottom half.¹²
- In 2006, 32% of Indiana's children lived in families in which no parent had full-time, year-round employment, slightly lower than the national rate, 34%.¹³

Employment/Income

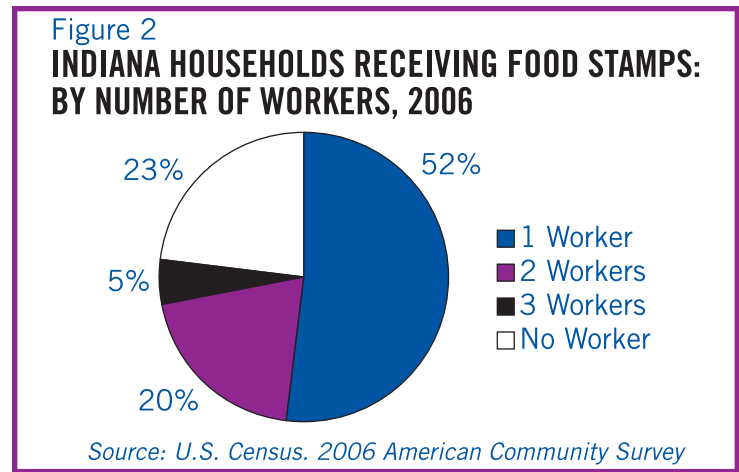
- In 2006, 5% of Indiana's labor force was unemployed, compared with 4.6% nationally, giving Indiana the 11th highest unemployment rate in the US.¹⁰
- One in four working Indiana families is considered low-income (earning less than 200% of the federal

Programs to Fight Childhood Hunger

Food Stamps

The Food Stamp Program is a federal food assistance program for low-income households. To be eligible, a household must earn at or below 130% of the poverty guidelines and meet other requirements.

- Three in four households receiving food stamps had one or more persons in the work force (Figure 2).
- In SFY 2006, the average monthly number of food stamp recipients was 570,627, or 9.0% of Indiana's population.



⁶ Bartfield, J., and Dunifon, R. (2005, October). State-level predictors of food insecurity and hunger among households with children. United States Department of Agriculture. Retrieved on November 1, 2007, from www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/CCR13/ccr13.pdf.

⁷ Nord, M., and Andres, M. (2003, February). Putting food on the table: Household food security in the United States. United States Department of Agriculture. Retrieved on November 1, 2007, from www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves/Feb03/Features/PuttingFood.htm

⁸ U.S. Census (2007) 2006 American Community Survey, Table R1701 and R104). Retrieved on August 31, 2007.

⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, Data Integration Division, Small Area Estimates Branch. 2004 Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates. Retrieved May 19, 2007 from www.census.gov/hhes/www/saiep/county.html

¹⁰ Indiana Business Research Center, IU Kelley School of Business. Labor Force Estimates. Retrieved May 23, 2007 from <http://www.stats.indiana.edu/laus>

¹¹ Indiana Coalition on Housing and Homeless Issues, February 2007. "Investing in Indiana's Working Families to Build a 21st Century Economy."

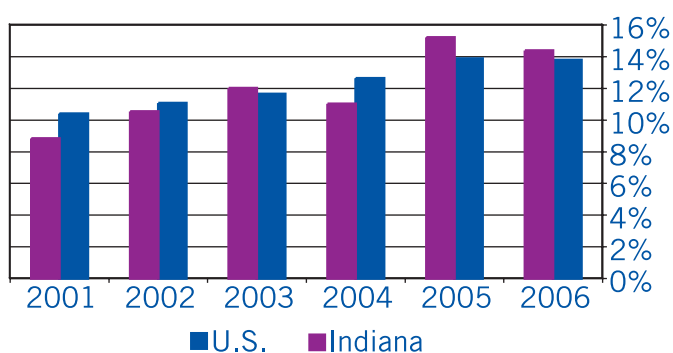
¹² Bureau of Labor Statistics May 2006. Wages by Area and Occupation. Retrieved May 19, 2007.

¹³ Kids Count Data Online (n.d.) Children living in families where no parent has full time, year-round employment: 2005. Retrieved on August 1, 2007 from www.kidscount.org/sld

- 49% of food stamp recipients were children under age 18.
- The average 2006 Indiana value of food stamps per person was \$94 a month. The total Indiana value of food stamps received was \$647 million in SFY 2006.¹⁴
- Indiana ranked 19th highest of the 50 states for the percent of households with children receiving food stamps (14.4%), higher than the national average of 13.8% (Figure 3).¹⁵

Figure 3

HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN UNDER 18 RECEIVING FOOD STAMPS



Source: U.S. Census. 2006 American Community Survey

National School Breakfast, Lunch, and Summer Programs

At the federal level, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service administers the National School Lunch Program. Locally, the Indiana Department of Education is responsible for implementation. The program provides nutritious breakfasts, lunches, and after-school snacks to low-income children. Children from families with incomes at or below 130% of the federal poverty guideline qualify for free lunches. Reduced-price lunches are available to children whose family income is between 130% and 185% of the federal poverty income guideline.¹⁶ In SY 06-07, 28.2% of public school students received free lunches and 7.9% received reduced priced lunches; up from 20.2% and 6.1% respectively in 2000.¹⁷

America's Second Harvest

Second Harvest is the nation's largest hunger relief organization. Two of its programs serving hungry children are the Backpack Program and Kids Café. The **Backpack Program** distributes backpacks filled with nonperishable, healthy food for children to take home over the weekend and extended breaks. This program fills the gap between school lunch and breakfast programs so a child does not go hungry. The **Kids Café** provides nutritious snacks and evening meals to low-income children. There are 30 sites in Indiana. Kids Café is a partnership between Second Harvest and a local Indiana site partner, such as the Boys and Girls Club of Muncie or St. John's United Church of Christ in Evansville. In SFY 07, these sites served 115,907 meals and 55,878 snacks to more than 1,268 Hoosier children. To sign up for services, contact your local food bank (see page 4).

Indiana Food Banks

There are currently 12 America's Second Harvest member food banks in the state of Indiana serving all 92 counties. These food banks primarily provide indirect services by securing and storing food and grocery surplus which is redistributed to charitable organizations that provide direct food assistance to food insecure populations. Member food banks include emergency and non-emergency food pantries, soup kitchens, emergency shelters, non-profit child care centers, and afterschool programs. In 2006, the 12 Indiana food banks provided charitable organizations with more than 67 million pounds of donated products. These donations were then distributed to network member organizations around the state to be given directly to individuals and families in need.

What food banks want you to know...

The hungry are just as hungry on June 1st as they are on Thanksgiving.

The issue of hunger is a year-round problem, not just during the holiday season. Most food banks experience donation droughts during the summer months, when many families face significant financial burdens due to children who are out of

¹⁴ Indiana Family Social Services Administration, Division of Family Resources.

¹⁵ U.S. Census. 2006 American Community Survey. Table C2202.

¹⁶ America's Second Harvest. (2007) The almanac of hunger and poverty in America 2007. Retrieved on October 11, 2007, from www.secondharvest.org/learn_about_hunger/hunger_almanac_2007.html

¹⁷ Indiana Department of Education, Division of School and Community Nutrition Programs. (n.d.) Data Analyzed by the Indiana Business Research Center.

school for the summer and no longer receiving free and reduced lunch and breakfast.

The hungry are not who you might expect.

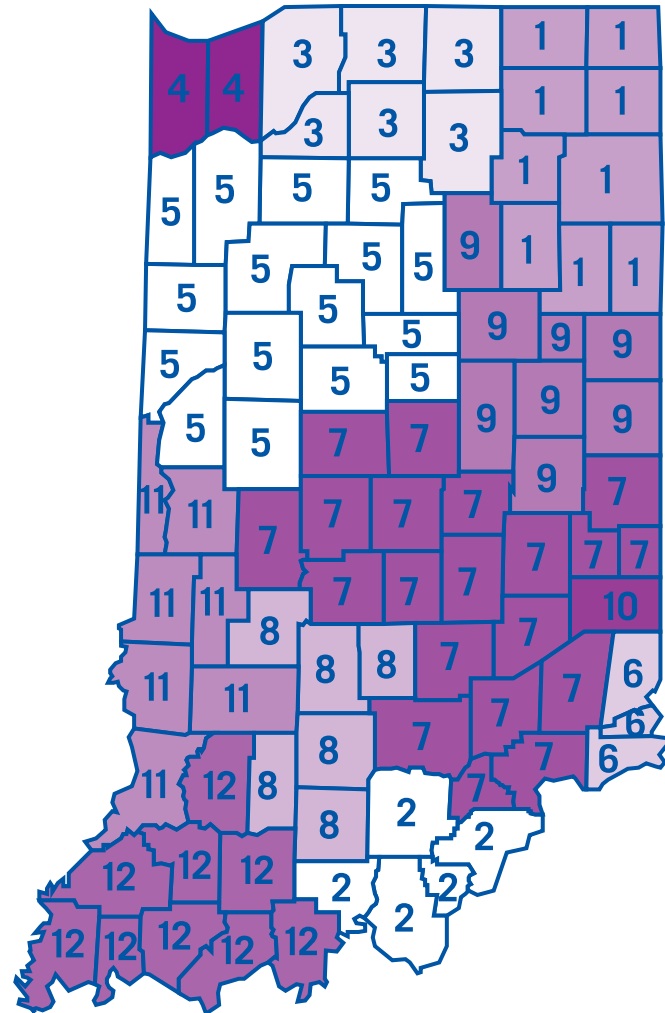
Hunger affects more than just the homeless and unemployed. The working poor are the new face of food pantry clients. Rising medical costs, heating bills, food, gasoline, and underemployment have pushed many struggling families into food insecurity. Of the more than 25 million Americans receiving food assistance from America's Second Harvest each year, 40 percent had at least one adult working in their households.¹⁸ Additionally, hunger relief charities service all types of communities including rural, suburban, and inner city areas. The need for food assistance is often underestimated due to transportation issues that prevent needy families from accessing pantries in their area. Lack of accessibility is an issue more often in suburban and rural areas, where fewer social services, soup kitchens, and government agencies are located.

Charitable organizations can develop partnerships to more effectively address the food assistance needs of their clients.

Asking for food donations individually can position food banks, pantries, and nonprofits in competition for often limited resources. Charitable organizations with 501(c)3 status that serve needy populations are welcome to apply for membership in their regional food bank network. Network member agencies must submit an application and complete a screening period. Member agencies have access to a food bank's entire food inventory and pay a small maintenance fee by the pound for all privately donated goods. They also have free access to all USDA commodity goods that the food bank receives. Food banks are designed as a supplement to other government and community services.

Find a food bank serving your county

Indiana Food Banks



- 1, Community Harvest Food Bank of Northeast Indiana, www.communityharvest.org
- 2, Dare to Care Food Bank, www.daretocare.org
- 3, Food Bank of Northern Indiana, www.feedindiana.org
- 4, Food Bank of Northwest Indiana, www.foodbanknwi.org
- 5, Food Finders Food Bank, www.dcw.com/~foodbank/index.htm
- 6, Freestore Food Bank, www.freestorefoodbank.org
- 7, Gleaners Food Bank, www.gleaners.org
- 8, Hoosier Hills Food Bank, www.hhfoodbank.org
- 9, Second Harvest Food Bank of East Central Indiana, www.curehunger.org
- 10, Shared Harvest Food Bank, www.sharedharvest.org
- 11, Terre Haute Catholic Charities, www.archindy.org/cc/terrehaute/programs-be
- 12, Tri-state Food Bank, www.tristatefoodbank.org

¹⁸ America's Second Harvest. (2007) The almanac of hunger and poverty in America 2007. Retrieved on October 11, 2007, from www.secondharvest.org/learn_about_hunger/hunger_almanac_2007.html

Government Resources

Food Stamp Program – In order to be eligible for the Food Stamp Program, households must earn at or below 130% of poverty as well as meet additional financial and nonfinancial eligibility requirements. To apply for the Food Stamp Program, contact a local office of the Division of Family Resources. www.in.gov/fssa/family/children/dfc/directory/index.html

National School Breakfast and National School Lunch Program – Indiana Department of Education, Division of School and Community Nutrition is responsible for the School Lunch, Breakfasts, After-School, Summer Lunch and Milk Programs. <http://doe.state.in.us/food/schoolnutrition/welcome.html>

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) – The program provides supplemental foods, nutrition education, and health care referrals to pregnant women and children under five, who are below 185% of the federal poverty guideline. For more information, call 1.800.522.0874 or visit www.in.gov/isdh/programs/wic/data/clinics_by_county.htm

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) – Indiana families with children under age 18 and incomes at or below 100% of the federal poverty threshold are eligible to apply for cash assistance and/or employment and training services. To apply for TANF, contact a local Division of Family Resources Office in the county of residence. www.in.gov/fssa/family/children/dfc/directory/index.html

Earned Income Tax Credit/Earned Income Credit (EITC/EIC) – The Federal EITC and Indiana’s corresponding state EIC provide tax reductions and wage supplements for low- and moderate-income working families. Free tax preparation assistance may also be available for those who qualify. To find a free Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site call 1.800.829.1040 or visit www.in.gov/fssa/admin/eitc

Hoosier Healthwise – This health insurance program is for Indiana children, pregnant women and low-income families. Hoosier Healthwise helps low-income families spend less on health care, leaving more money for food and other necessities. Call 1.800.889.9949 to get information about the Hoosier Healthwise program or visit www.in.gov/fssa/maternal/hoosier_healthwise/apply.html

Housing – Families with incomes below 80% of the area’s median income may be eligible for Section 8 assistance. HUD Approved Housing Counseling Agencies can be found at www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hcc/hcs.cfm?webListAction=search&searchstate=IN

Unemployment insurance – Hoosiers who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own and earned at least \$2,750 in the past year are eligible to claim unemployment benefits. Eligibility for benefits and more information can be found at a local WorkOne Center. www.in.gov/dwd/job_seekers/unemploy_info.html

**For additional county and school district data,
visit the Kids Count in Indiana
online database at
www.iyi.org/data**

Indiana Youth Institute Resources

IYI Weekly Update, a free, electronic newsletter featuring useful information such as training opportunities, free resources, new reports about youth, and a “Grant Tip of the Week.” Subscribe at http://www.iyi.org/weekly_updates/subscribe.asp

Kids Count in Indiana Data Book and online database, including state, county, and school district statistics on Indiana children and youth to support grant proposals and program initiatives. Access the database at www.iyi.org/data

Virginia Beall Ball Library, a free lending library of youth development and nonprofit management materials, which can be borrowed easily by youth workers throughout the state, either on-site, online or through our toll-free main number. Search the catalog or sign up for an account at <http://www.iyi.org/library>

Youth Service Help Line, 877-IYI-TIPS, providing free phone assistance to youth organizations seeking quick answers to questions about fundraising, youth development and legal matters.

Free custom research on Indiana youth, at www.iyi.org/datarequest.

IYI's Web site, www.iyi.org, an online source for new reports on children, data for grant proposals, information about IYI's programs and library materials, and links to other valuable sources of youth development information.

Regional trainings, taught by nationally regarded instructors, offered at convenient locations across the state, on topics such as fundraising and working with youth.

Professional Development Grants, mini-grants for qualified youth workers to attend their choice of seminars, workshops, and conferences.

Kids Count in Indiana Conference, an annual fall conference designed to give Indiana youth workers the inspiration, networking opportunities, information and tools they need to serve children effectively.

Statewide assistance, providing free local service in all 92 Indiana counties. Call 1-800-343-7060 for information about how to contact the IYI Regional Field Representative near you.



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