



BY THE NUMBERS



47.4 MILLION PEOPLE

Lived in households experiencing food insecurity last year — **an increase of 3.2 Million** compared to 2022.

Source: Household Food Security in 2023 report, U.S. Department of Agriculture



1 in 7 HOUSEHOLDS

(13.5 Percent) in America struggled with hunger in 2023.

Source: Household Food Security in 2023 report, U.S. Department of Agriculture

WHAT WE DO: SOLVING HUNGER THROUGH BOLD, EQUITABLE POLICY

For more than five decades, the Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) has been at the forefront of efforts to eradicate hunger nationwide. FRAC's research, advocacy, and partnerships have resulted in bold and equitable policy changes and practical solutions that have positively impacted **tens of millions of lives around the country**.

However, there is still work to be done to build a nation free from hunger. The 2024 U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Household Food Security report revealed that 47.4 million people lived in households experiencing food insecurity last year, an increase of 3.2 million compared to 2022, and 13.5 million compared to 2021. Low incomes, coupled with inflation, food deserts, and structural racism

and other discrimination — driving inequities — are just some of the challenges that many face. FRAC continues to be a trusted leader, proponent, and facilitator of policy and administrative solutions, and other work, to improve nutrition access for the people who most need it.

It is clear that federal nutrition programs are a key tool to combat poverty-related hunger. Without these programs, hunger would be far worse. In 2023, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) **lifted 3.4 million people out of poverty**; school meals **lifted 1.2 million people out of poverty**; and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) **lifted 203,000 people out of poverty**.

WHAT WE DO: OUR HISTORY



1970s

FRAC WAS FOUNDED IN 1970

Lawsuit victories led to the rapid growth of WIC and released \$35 million to support the Elderly Feeding Program.

Landmark Food Stamp Act of 1977 passed, which improved access to the program for millions.



1980s

FRAC's policy analysis, testimony, and leadership of the nationwide anti-hunger network played a key role in the expansion of nutrition programs.

The Hunger Relief Act secured.



1990s

Launch of the Campaign to End Childhood Hunger.

The Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project (CCHIP) finds that 1 in 8 children under 12 are hungry. USDA and the U.S. Census Bureau used this data in their own studies.

Spearheaded efforts to improve and expand afterschool meals, school meals, and other programs in the Child Nutrition Reauthorization.



2000s

The Hunger Relief Act secured legislation strengthening the Child and Adult Care Food Program's (CACFP) nutrition benefits in family child care and afterschool programs.

D.C. Hunger Solutions and Maryland Hunger Solutions were founded as FRAC state initiatives.

Congress enacts FRAC's initiative to reform the summer food program nationwide, cutting red tape.



2010s

Released "A Plan of Action to End Hunger in America." Led the anti-hunger and anti-poverty communities in fighting back against Farm Bill proposals to weaken SNAP.

Spearheaded the implementation of community eligibility in the first round of pilot states.



2020s

FRAC TURNS 50

Quickly engaged with Congressional leadership and a national network of advocates to provide policy recommendations for a swift, comprehensive response during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Launched a new strategic plan centered around equity.

Available nationwide and administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the federal nutrition programs include SNAP, WIC, school breakfast and lunch, and meals provided at afterschool, child care, and summer meal programs. Research has long attested to their efficacy in improving nutrition, health, and well-being of participants. FRAC strives to further strengthen and expand the reach of the proven federal nutrition programs through an equity lens. To achieve this, we provide program training and technical assistance, perform program research, and lead legislative advocacy and other actions in collaboration with thousands of national, state, and local anti-hunger advocacy partners to develop, defend, and advance best practices and policies that protect and improve these vital programs.

SNAP: The Nation's First Line of Defense Against Hunger



The **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** supports the nutrition of **40 million people in an average month** — including

children, parents earning low wages, older adults, people with disabilities, military veterans, members of the active-duty military, unemployed working-age adults, and others. In all 50 states, D.C., the Virgin Islands, and Guam, SNAP is the cornerstone of the nation's nutrition safety net. SNAP provides benefits for participants on an Electronic Benefit Transfer card to purchase food for their household according to the individual's and household's nutrition and health needs. **One-half of all children will receive SNAP benefits at some point during childhood, and half of all adults will use SNAP at some point by age 65.**

Every SNAP dollar generates between \$1.50 and \$1.80 in economic activity. During the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, SNAP substantially addressed food insecurity and kept families from falling further into poverty.



CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS: Fueling Futures



Child Nutrition Programs feed **millions of children** from households with low incomes every school day, afterschool, at child care, and during the summer months nationwide — providing eligible children with the nutritious food they need to fuel their health, well-being, and academic success.



School Breakfast Program:

Over **14.3 million children** participated in school breakfast in the 2022–2023 school year on an average school day, with 11.3 million receiving a free or reduced-price breakfast.



Afterschool Meals:

1.23 million children were served an afterschool supper and **1.25 million children** were served an afterschool snack on an average school day in October 2023.



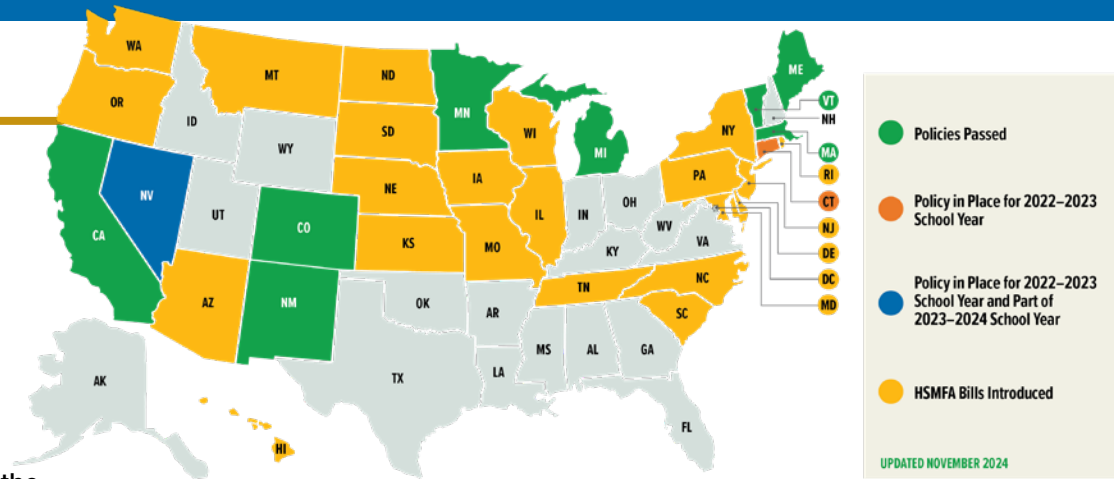
National School Lunch:

Over **28.1 million children** participated in school lunch in the 2022–2023 school year on an average school day, with 19.7 million receiving a free or reduced-price lunch.



Summer Nutrition Programs:

Over **2.8 million children** participated in the Summer Nutrition Programs on an average day in July 2023.



Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Program:

The new permanent Summer EBT Program, launched in 2024, provides families with **\$120 in grocery benefits** on an EBT card during the summer months for each school-age child eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. **37 states, the District of Columbia, all five U.S. territories, and two Tribes** implemented Summer EBT in 2024.



WIC: One of the nation’s largest federal nutrition programs, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides healthy foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding counseling and support, and health care and social service referrals, to **more than 6 million women and young children under the age of 5**, including **nearly 50 percent of all infants born in the U.S.** in households with low incomes. WIC participants use an EBT card to shop for WIC foods at authorized grocery stores and other WIC-approved vendors. The **WIC food package was revised in 2024**, improving the nutritional value, which will impact parent and child health outcomes and address health disparities.



Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP): CACFP reimburses meals served to children enrolled in child care centers, family care homes, and afterschool care programs, and residing in emergency shelters, and adults over the age of 60 or living with a disability and enrolled in day care facilities. USDA Food and Nutrition Service reported that, each day, **more than 4.2 million children** and 138,000 adults receive nutritious meals and snacks through CACFP.

HEALTHY SCHOOL MEALS FOR ALL



In September, FRAC’s research was featured on HBO’s “Last Week Tonight.” In a back-to-school segment about school meals, show host John Oliver cited data from FRAC’s 2022 Large School District Report to support the need for **Healthy School Meals for All**, so that all students can receive school meals at no charge regardless of their household’s income.



In 2024, FRAC was instrumental in mobilizing a nationwide effort that resulted in more than **1,400 national, state, and local organizations** signing on to a [letter](#) to Congress urging that the **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program** be protected and strengthened in the Farm Bill and any other legislative vehicle.



Healthy School Meals for All continues to gain momentum, with **eight states permanently offering all children, regardless of their household income, free school meals** — breakfast and lunch — every school day. The [Healthy School Meals for All movement](#), led by FRAC on the national level, seeks to create a permanent nationwide policy. Providing school meals to all students at no charge is a game-changer for combating hunger, eliminating stigma, and stretching family budgets.



FRAC and its network were instrumental in advocating for permanent **Summer EBT** — a lifeline for families during the summer months when school meals are not available. It was estimated that the Summer EBT Program would serve approximately **21.3 million children** and result in about **\$2.6 billion in benefits being distributed to struggling families in summer 2024**. The Summer EBT Program will reduce child food insecurity, helping children receive the food they need during the summer, and to return to school in the fall ready to learn.



FRAC's nationwide network of allies and national partners, and people with lived experience, provided input on the improved WIC fruits and vegetables package. **Advocacy by FRAC and partner organizations also led to Congress securing \$7 billion in critical funding in appropriations for WIC**. [WIC](#) may not have existed if it were not for FRAC. FRAC fought long and hard in the early 1970s to make sure that there was substantial funding, well beyond what was initially authorized, for this program.





D.C. Hunger Solutions

Ending hunger in the nation's capital

D.C. Hunger Solutions (DCHS) was founded in 2002 as an initiative of FRAC to end hunger in the District of Columbia. With an understanding of the unique social, economic, and political landscape in the nation's capital, DCHS works with its allies to develop and support self-sustaining strategies and solutions to overcome barriers to nutrition access and improve the economic security of District residents. The DCHS 2024 *Minding the Grocery Gap* report revealed that inequities continue to persist in the availability of grocery stores in D.C., with lower numbers of full-service grocery stores in lower-income communities: In 2024, the number of full-service grocery stores in Washington, D.C. — 74 stores — remained unchanged from 2023, and residents in Ward 8 east of the Anacostia River are still limited to **one grocery store**, which has been the only full-service grocery store servicing the approximate 5.5 square mile area for 16 years.



Maryland Hunger Solutions

Ending hunger and promoting well-being

Maryland Hunger Solutions (MDHS) was founded in 2007 as a FRAC initiative. MDHS works with state and community partners to increase awareness about hunger across the state and ways to solve it. Its *Maryland Hunger Profiles* released this year found that, **as of June 2023, there are 670,329 SNAP participants in Maryland.** MDHS' work has advanced public policies to end food insecurity and poverty; and ensured that more eligible residents are connected to federal and state nutrition programs, such as SNAP (known as the Food Supplement Program in Maryland) and school meals programs.



The **WIC Community Innovation and Outreach (CIAO) Project** is a partnership between the Food Research & Action Center, UnidosUS, Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative, and the Center for Nutrition & Health Impact. In 2023, FRAC, through a cooperative agreement with USDA's Food and Nutrition Service, awarded \$16 million in subgrants funding from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 to 36 projects around the country aimed at testing innovative outreach strategies to increase participation and equity in WIC. In 2025, approximately **\$14.8 million will be awarded in the second round of WIC CIAO funding to WIC state and local agencies**, including Indian Tribal Organizations, and nonprofit entities and organizations.



Led by FRAC, with **\$4.5 million in grant funding** from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the **New Jersey Food Security Initiative (NJFSI)** is a **three-year cross-sector, collaborative effort of community organizations, local, and state agencies**, to increase food security and good nutrition, and advance health equity, in New Jersey.

EQUITABLE ACCESS IN CHILD NUTRITION PROJECT

FRAC was awarded a **\$2 million cooperative agreement from USDA to conduct and support research on expanding equitable access to the federally-funded child nutrition programs.** This **Equitable Access in Child Nutrition Programs** project will run through December 2025.

Unity is FRAC's greatest strength. With our national network of advocacy organizations and partner organizations across the country, FRAC is a force to be reckoned with. FRAC provides leadership, coordination, training, technical assistance, and support on nutrition and anti-poverty issues to a nationwide network of advocates, service providers, food banks, program administrators and participants, and policymakers. Together, we amplify our voices and our impact to advance policy change — advocating, educating, and collaborating, so that our leaders in local, state, and federal government understand the critical need to address hunger in America, and the important role that anti-hunger interventions, such as the federal nutrition programs, and anti-poverty policies, play in combating hunger.



So far, this year, **2,821 advocates** signed up to FRAC's Action Network, sending **11,321 emails** to legislators in support of anti-hunger legislation.



In 2024, FRAC hosted **over 20 webinars (and counting) on food insecurity, poverty and its root causes, and anti-hunger advocacy topics** — such as the expanded Child Tax Credit; “Farm Bill: What’s at Stake for Gender and Racial Justice”; SNAP access for college students; and “Fighting Hunger with Housing: Actions and Updates for Advocates.”



Over 1,000 advocates, network partners, community members with lived expertise, and more, attended the 2024 National Anti-Hunger Policy Conference (AHPC) in June in Washington, D.C. The AHPC, sponsored by FRAC, and in cooperation with the National CACFP Forum, convenes anti-hunger advocates from around the country to attend content-rich sessions, learn legislative best practices, explore innovative advocacy methods, and form personal connections, to help better fight hunger in their communities.



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Without the generous donations and support from like-minded organizations and individuals, FRAC cannot do the work it does to end hunger and fight for the people who are struggling. FRAC is supported by a range of foundations, corporations, government agencies, unions, faith-based organizations, and individuals.

FRAC is energized by our policy and programs wins so far, all hard won with the support of our nationwide network of advocates and our generous funders who make our work possible.

HUNGRY PEOPLE CAN'T WAIT.