



Southwest Region Calls for Permanent Summer EBT Program

“This program is changing people’s lives and helping with nutrition that will in the long run help with health and wellness. And hopefully in the long run would help children have fewer health problems and better eating habits.”

— Tina B., Oklahoma

Pandemic EBT and Summer EBT

The Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) program has been a vital nutrition resource for families whose children lost access to free or reduced-price school meals due to the school closures during the pandemic. The program provides an EBT card with the value of school meals for the days that schools were closed or children were learning remotely. The American Rescue Plan extended P-EBT benefits to include the summer. Just as access to P-EBT in summer 2021 is critical, so is the continuation of summer EBT benefits in subsequent years. In normal times, the Summer Nutrition Programs usually combine nutritious meals with much-needed educational and enrichment programming to reduce hunger and counter summer learning loss, but their reach is limited. Many students who come from families that are low-income are unable to access summer meals often due to a lack of affordable summer programming or transportation barriers. This creates the need for a complementary program to provide EBT benefits during the summer.

METHODOLOGY

Household stories shared here rely on self-reported information collected from anonymous surveys distributed to EBT cardholders across the country. The surveys are administered by Propel, the makers of Fresh EBT, a free mobile app that helps over 4 million low-income families across the country manage their SNAP benefits. Propel has been administering monthly surveys to understand how the circumstances in the lives of SNAP participants are changing.

Propel For more information, e-mail jen@joinpropel.com or visit: joinpropel.com



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 **MORE THAN**
29 million children
are eligible for free or reduced-price meals

Action Needed to Ensure Summer EBT is Available Nationwide Every Summer

We urge Members of Congress to make the Summer EBT program permanent.

The Biden Administration’s American Families Plan and **S. 1831/H.R. 3519: The Stop Child Hunger Act of 2021** both propose expanding the program to all students eligible for free or reduced-price meals (over 29 million children) each summer. Evaluations of past pilots of Summer EBT programs have shown that access to this benefit allows for the reduction of very low food insecurity by one-third, and food insecurity by one-fifth,¹ and improves nutrition for children.

¹ Food Research & Action Center. (2019). The Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer Program. Available at: <https://frac.org/research/resource-library/the-summer-electronic-benefit-transfer-program-summer-ebt>. Accessed on June 4, 2021.

We call on Congress to make this critical investment to help end childhood hunger during the summer.

HUNGRY CHILDREN CAN’T WAIT.

THOUGHTS ON P-EBT ...

“They need to know that just as fast as our children are growing, so is the cost of living everywhere you look. We shouldn’t have to worry about eating noodles so I can pay my light bill or get gasoline for work.”

— Courtney P., Mississippi

“I haven’t had to worry if I could feed my family and pay bills. When the pandemic first started, I had almost no food and had to use my bill money to stock up to make sure we wouldn’t starve when everything was closing down.”

— Tabatha C., Arkansas

“P-EBT filled the gap in my food budget since I have been unemployed.”

— Jennifer D., North Carolina

“Parents struggle twice as hard in the summertime and need double the help.”

— Val M., Virginia

“Make it permanent.”

— Marbelly L., New Jersey

“I want them to know that even as a hard-working household, we do not make enough money to pay for groceries almost every month. We have to buy very lightly, we rarely eat meat, and we have to make meals last with four kids. The Pandemic EBT has been such a huge blessing.”

— Oralia E., California

“P-EBT helped me feed my kids. The emergency funds that help right now are bound to stop without notice. Low-income families need help. I fear those will stop suddenly and I will not be able to feed my children.”

— Laura C., New York

“I’m just happy that I get the extra assistance due to the fact that my work checks barely pay the bills, let alone food for my kids. So thank you.”

— Ebony B., Arizona

“Helped put food on our table and go to sleep with a full tummy.”

— Sandra O., Texas

“The program is a lifesaver.”

— Leanne F., Indiana

“It’s very helpful to know that I can feed my kids during the times they are at home. As a mother of three who works six days a week, this takes a weight off my shoulders.”

— Lindsay M., West Virginia

“Funds are very tight right now with no extra money for anything except what’s in my budget. All the extra EBT food money we have been receiving helps tremendously and is very appreciated. Thank you so much.”

— Terri M., Kansas

“This program has been vital in making sure my children are able to have nutritious food. We are able to use our cards at farmers’ markets for fresh vegetables and at stores for fresh foods. It’s imperative that this program continue.”

— Devon E., Washington

“It’s been the lifeline of starving or eating! My children and I are grateful for it.”

— Diana C., Kentucky

“This ‘extra’ EBT has been the only reason my kids don’t go hungry since the pandemic started. It’s not extra, it’s made it so we continue to barely scrape by.”

— Cassandra, Rhode Island

“Peace of mind for feeding the kids has been such a help.”

— Samantha S., New Hampshire

“We have not gone a day without food.”

— Mayra E., New York

“Summer means my child is home for all his meals and I have to stretch what I do receive even further. He’s a growing child and it’s sometimes hard to get all healthy foods because eating healthy costs a lot more than just eating what we can afford. I try my best to bring healthier options into our meals.”

— Amy A., Missouri

“Having a summer EBT program would help me feed my child while he’s out of school for the summer. The program is convenient and allows each family to decide what type of food to buy for their child(ren). Growing kids eat a lot and without the program we would have to figure out how to make up for the breakfast and lunch meals that they don’t get when school isn’t in session. Struggling to buy food is an awful thing. So many parents would be grateful for this program and I hope it is offered this summer.”

— Val, Michigan