

Hunger, Poverty, Health, and the Federal Nutrition Programs



### THE PROBLEM

# Far too many young children in North Carolina experience food insecurity and poverty.



**19.7%** of children under age 18 live in a food-insecure household compared to **17.4%** nationally.<sup>1</sup>



**27.3%** of children 0-3 years old live in poverty compared to **23.7%** nationally.<sup>2</sup>

### In addition, far too many young children do not have a healthy start in life.<sup>3</sup>

|                                 | High Weight<br>Among W<br>Ages 3–23 M | IC Infants        | Obesity Among<br>Children Ages 2–4<br>(2014) |               | Low Birthweight<br>Rate (2017) |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|--|---------------|--------------------------------|
| NORTH CAROLINA                  | 12                                    | 12%               |  |               | 9%                             |
| NATIONAL                        | 12%                                   |                   | 14%  |               | 8%                             |
| THE IMPACT <sup>4</sup>         |                                       |                   |  |               |                                |
|                                 | (Ö)<br>()                             |                   |  | 0             |                                |
| Poor health                     | ron deficiency<br>anemia              | Developm<br>delay |  | pitalizations | Less prepared<br>for school    |
| <b>THE SOLUTION<sup>5</sup></b> |                                       |                   |  | _             |                                |

The federal nutrition programs for young children — the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and the Child and Adult Care Food

Program (CACFP) — support health, nutrition, and well-being during early childhood and beyond.

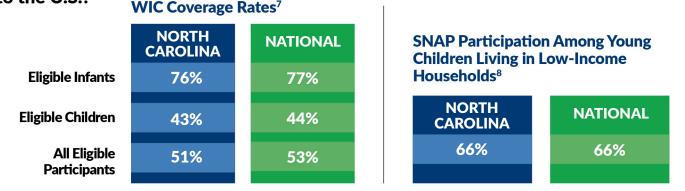


#### THE DATA

## In North Carolina, many young children and their families benefit from the federal nutrition programs:<sup>6</sup>

- 56,445 infants, 110,453 children, and 54,276 women received nutrition counseling and nutritious foods through WIC in the average month. (\$112.6 million in healthy WIC food benefits in FY2018.)
- 128,687 children received healthy meals and snacks on an average workday in child care participating in CACFP. (68.1 million CACFP meals and snacks were served in FY2018.)
- 149,000 children age 0-3 received SNAP food benefits to support good health and food security.

## How does your state's participation in the federal nutrition programs compare to the U.S.?



#### **Children Participating in CACFP: Five-Year Trends<sup>9</sup>**

|         |                                      | NATIONAL                                       |                                       |                                |
|---------|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
|         | Children<br>Participating<br>FY 2018 | Five-Year<br>Percent Change<br>FY 2013–FY 2018 | State Ranking<br>On Percent<br>Change | Five-Year<br>Percent<br>Change |
| Homes   | 10,016                               | 1%   | 11                                    | -9%                            |
| Centers | 118,670                              | 15%  | 35                                    | 36%                            |
| Total   | 128,687                              | 13%  | 27                                    | 26%                            |

**NOTE:** State ranking scale from (1) for the state with the highest rate of growth to (51) for the lowest rate of growth (or highest rate of decline) in the number of children participating on an average workday.

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>FRAC analysis of 2014–2016 Current Population Survey-Food Security Supplement (CPS-FSS) data. | <sup>2</sup>FRAC analysis of 5-year American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample (ACS-PUMS) data (2012–2016). | <sup>3</sup>Freedman et al., Pediatrics, 2017 (supplemental table published on CDC website); Pan et al., MMWR, 2016; Martin et al., National Vital Statistics Reports, 2018. | <sup>45</sup>FRAC's The Importance of the Federal Nutrition Programs for Infants and Toddlers. | <sup>6</sup>USDA FY2018 WIC and CACFP data; FRAC analysis of USDA FY 2017 SNAP Quality Control data. | <sup>7</sup>USDA 2015 WIC coverage rates: the percentage of eligible individuals receiving WIC benefits (published 2018). | <sup>8</sup>FRAC analysis of ACS-PUMS data (2012–2016): young children (0–3 years old) living in low-income SNAP households (below 130% of poverty). | <sup>9</sup>FRAC analysis of USDA CACFP average daily participation data. FRAC wishes to thank the Think Babies<sup>™</sup> campaign for their generous support of this fact sheet. ZERO TO THREE created the Think Babies<sup>™</sup> campaign to make the potential of every baby a national priority. Funding partners for Think Babies<sup>™</sup> include the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which supports the campaign's public education aspects, and the Perigee Fund, which supports the campaign's public education and advocacy aspects. Learn more at www.thinkbabies.org.