



Love INC
Love In the Name of Christ

HUNGER IN AMERICA

Love In the Name of Christ ■ www.loveinc.org

The hungry in America are a surprising cross-section of our population. They live in cities, suburbs, and rural areas; they represent every race, age group, and family situation. They are working parents whose income is eaten up by high housing costs and who skip meals so their children can eat. They are senior citizens on fixed incomes who must choose between buying needed medications or buying groceries. They are children in poverty whose only consistent source of food is through the free school lunch program, which ceases over the summer. For all people of every age, recurring and involuntary lack of food can lead to malnutrition, which in turn can lead to harmful effects on learning, development, productivity, physical and physiological health, and family life. Food is the most basic element necessary to living an active, healthy life, but every year, millions of Americans go without it.

Consider these facts:

- Food insecurity affected 17 million U.S. households in 2008—meaning families were unsure of their ability or unable to acquire enough food because of lack of resources.
- 6.7 million households in 2008 reported very low food security, indicating an inability to eat regular meals, and 96 percent of them said it was because they ran out of food and didn't have enough money to buy more.
- In 2009, one in 10 households in nearly every U.S. Congressional District in the country reported hardship securing food.
- Households with children have nearly twice the food insecurity of those without children—nearly 16 percent—and while parents usually absorb the effects of it, over a half-million children experienced interruptions in meals in 2008.
- As the recession spread, more middle class families asked for food assistance, sending requests up 26 percent from 2008 to 2009, the largest average increase since 1991.
- Poverty, unemployment, and high housing costs are the three leading causes of hunger.
- Over 31 million U.S. children living at least 30 percent below the poverty line receive free or reduced-price school lunches, but only one in nine of them receive food assistance during the summer months.
- February 2010 saw a record in food stamp distribution, almost 40 million, nearly half to children.
- Early hunger affects children for life, posing higher risks for impeded health and impaired cognitive functioning.
- Eight percent of elderly people were food insecure in 2008. Nutritional deficiencies can hurt seniors' health, including weaker immune systems, impaired physical abilities, premature institutionalization, and higher risks of heart disease.

Sources: [Food Research and Action Center](#), [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#), [National Center for Children in Poverty](#), [U.S. Conference of Mayors](#), [Share Our Strength](#), [Meals On Wheels Association of America](#)

About Love In the Name of Christ

For more than 30 years, Love INC has been mobilizing the Church to transform lives and communities In the Name of Christ. Love INC has over 155 affiliates in 30 states, representing a network of more than 9,000 churches, 7,000 community-based organizations, and 300,000 volunteers meeting more than one million needs each year.

To find out how you can make a difference in the lives of people in need, visit www.loveinc.org.
