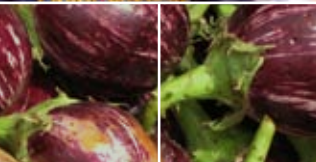




FOOD 
LIFELINE

HUNGER IN AMERICA 2010
WESTERN WASHINGTON FINDINGS



INTRODUCTION

FOOD LIFELINE'S MISSION IS TO END HUNGER IN WESTERN WASHINGTON BY ENGAGING COMMUNITIES AND MOBILIZING RESOURCES.

People in Western Washington are hungry. How hungry? The 2010 Hunger in America study provides compelling data from emergency food providers supported by Food Lifeline, and the individuals and families they serve. The national study, conducted for Feeding America by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., is the only study of its kind, and this handout summarizes some of the key findings.

Food Lifeline is a member of Feeding America, the nation's leading hunger relief organization, which works through a network of member organizations to feed hungry people. Food Lifeline conducts research locally for the report, which includes data from member agencies (referred to in the study as food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters). **Food Pantries (Food Banks)** distribute unprepared food and grocery items, **Soup Kitchens (Meal Programs)** provide prepared meals on-site to individuals, and **Shelters** provide shelter and serve one or more meals a day on a short-term basis for those in need.

The full *Hunger in America 2010* report and findings for Western Washington can be found at www.foodlifeline.org/2010study.

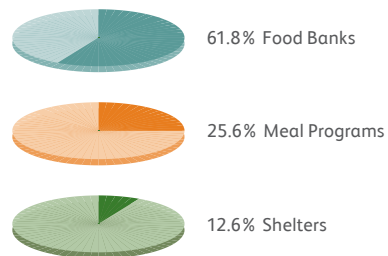
METHODS



HIGH STUDY PARTICIPATION RATES PRODUCED STATISTICALLY SOUND RESULTS.

In Western Washington, 204 out of 233 member agencies participated in the survey resulting in an outstanding **88%** response rate to help provide invaluable data. These agencies completed a survey online or by mail. Responding agencies break out into **61.8%** food banks, **25.6%** meal programs, and **12.6%** shelters (excluding non-emergency programs such as day care facilities and after school programs).

PROGRAMS THAT RESPONDED



On behalf of Food Lifeline, Gilmore Research conducted in-person interviews at 50 randomly selected member agencies throughout Western Washington. In the spring of 2009, they conducted 555 interviews, an **84%** increase from the previous study released in 2006.

DEMOGRAPHICS



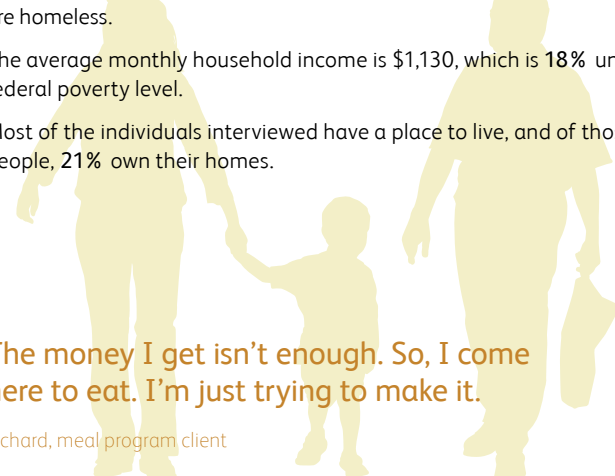
HUNGER CAN AFFECT ANYONE.

In this report, the term “households” is used frequently. For reference, the average household size for all clients is 2.5 people.

Hunger can affect anyone. More than 45% of the individuals using a food bank, meal program or shelter in Western Washington have some form of post-secondary education, and only 9% of the people Food Lifeline serves are homeless.

The average monthly household income is \$1,130, which is 18% under the federal poverty level.

Most of the individuals interviewed have a place to live, and of those people, 21% own their homes.

A silhouette of a family walking. It shows two adults and a child. The child is in the middle, holding the hand of the adult on the left. The adult on the right is carrying a bag. The silhouettes are light yellow.

The money I get isn't enough. So, I come here to eat. I'm just trying to make it.

Richard, meal program client

MEMBER AGENCIES



AGENCIES SERVING HUNGRY PEOPLE HAVE BEEN PILLARS IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES FOR MANY YEARS.

The average length of operation of food banks is 25 years, meal programs is 20 years, and shelters is 24 years. Food Lifeline has been in operation for 30 years.

The top items food banks want more of from Food Lifeline is dairy and proteins.

More than 92% of people visiting member agencies are very or somewhat satisfied with the variety of food they receive.

Nearly 94% are very or somewhat satisfied with the quality of food.

Volunteers are essential to the emergency food system.

37% of food banks and 36% of meal programs have no paid staff and rely on volunteers to operate.

On average, food banks have 2 paid staff members and use 30 volunteers in one week.

Organizations like Food Lifeline are crucial to agencies serving hungry people throughout our region.

More than 87% of food banks and shelters, and 72% of meal programs say it would be significant or devastating if the food supply from distribution centers like Food Lifeline was eliminated.

Everyone deserves respect.

84% of individuals using emergency food programs said they are always treated with respect by the staff.

PEOPLE WE SERVE



MAKING DIFFICULT CHOICES

47% of people served by Food Lifeline had to choose between paying for food and paying for utilities or heat.

42% had to choose between paying for food and paying their rent or mortgage.

29% had to choose between paying for food and paying for medicine and medical care.

UNEMPLOYMENT IS NOT THE ONLY REASON PEOPLE MIGHT VISIT ONE OF OUR MEMBER AGENCIES.

33% of households reported having at least one member of the house in poor health.

Out of the adults at member agencies who pick up food, 22% are uninsured, and 53% had unpaid medical or hospital bills.

In the past year, 53% of food bank and meal program visitors ate less than they felt they should because there wasn't enough money to buy food.

Due to a lack of money to buy food in the last year:

23% of adults did not eat for a whole day. In 1 in 10 households with children, the children missed meals.

54% of households are currently receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits (SNAP). These benefits usually only last 2.4 weeks.

38% of households have one or more adults working. Of those who have worked or are working, 19% have or have had managerial or professional jobs.

Only 7% of clients count government assistance programs as their main source of income. 71% count a job, retirement, disability or unemployment as their main source of income.

FOOD LIFELINE

Food Lifeline has been working to end hunger in local communities for 30 years. By using 95% of our revenue to feed hungry people, we are efficient, effective and make the most of your donations. In 2009, we distributed 19 million meals to help feed more than 675,000 hungry people through our network of nearly 300 local food banks, meal programs and shelters.

As a member of the Feeding America network, we are connected to 205 fellow members across the nation, and can learn valuable information from our peers. Feeding America builds food and financial resources for its members and sets the strict national standards for food-banking.

Food Lifeline is proud to uphold this level of stringency and is honored to be a member of this skilled network.

This research allows us to learn more about the state of hunger in Western Washington, and at Food Lifeline, we won't be satisfied until hunger is ended. We work with urgency and respond quickly, as hunger is always a crisis for people who are faced with it. For that reason, we set bold and innovative goals and then create the business plans to achieve them. Thank you for taking the time to learn more about Food Lifeline and about hunger. Please support our mission to end hunger by donating funds, food or time.

1702 NE 150th St., Shoreline, WA 98155-7226
206-545-6600 or 800-404-7543
info@fl.org www.foodlifeline.org

