A Dynamic Approach to Visualizing Food Insecurity

Understanding how food insecurity varies from one community to the next equips us with insights needed to tailor programs and policy that meet the unique needs of families and individuals across the country.

Data is a powerful way to understand how people experience food insecurity. For example, where are low-income families more likely to be income-eligible for protective benefits programs? How do children facing hunger experience differential health outcomes?

To explore the issue, Feeding America's Research Team is producing a series of interactive data tools leveraging the power of Tableau. The goal of these tools is to create dynamic ways to maneuver and explore data, going beyond traditional reporting in order to allow for a more tailored approach to addressing local needs.

Customize the visualizations with your community's data to leverage the findings in strategic planning, communications, policy, and public awareness efforts.

Explore how variables such as poverty, homeownership, or health insurance intersect with food insecurity across localities. To support adoption of this tool, we encourage you to play with the variables to identify and share new statistics or charts of value.

1 Enter your geography of interest: county, state, or local food bank service area.

2 Explore how the variables in the model shift based on your data selections.

3 Read the companion brief paired with each visualization to access additional instructions and insights.

4 Grab screenshots or notable statistics. When sharing insights from the visualizations, please cite:
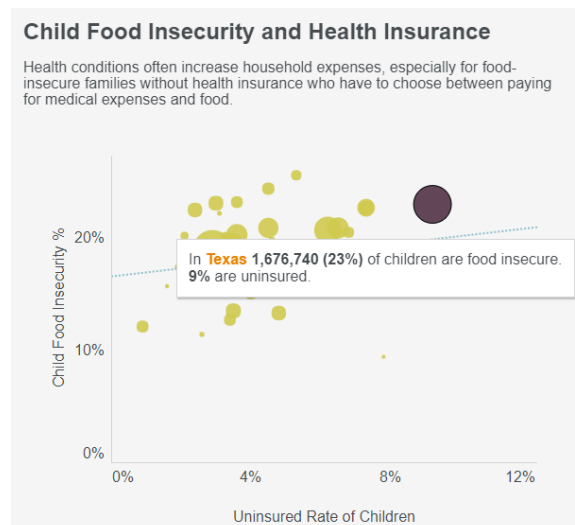
Gundersen, C., A. Dewey, A. Crumbaugh, M. Kato & E. Engelhard. *Map the Meal Gap 2018: A Report on County and Congressional District Food Insecurity and County Food Cost in the United States in 2016.* Feeding America, 2018.

Child Food Insecurity and Health Insurance

Health conditions often increase household expenses, especially for food-insecure families without health insurance who have to choose between paying for medical expenses and food.

In **Texas** 1,676,740 (23%) of children are food insecure. 9% are uninsured.

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These visualizations are produced with local food insecurity and meal cost data from Feeding America's *Map the Meal Gap* study. Since 2011, the study has provided unprecedented detail about how many people are food insecure in every county and service area reached by Feeding America food banks.

Below we describe each visualization in the series. To explore a visualization, visit our website or our Tableau Public Account.

Now Available: Child Food Insecurity

The number of children living in food insecure households varies across the United States. Use this visualization to explore how the implications of childhood hunger, from health outcomes to eligibility for federal nutrition programs, differ across geographic bounds.

Now Available: The Economic Drivers of Food Insecurity

Unemployment, poverty, and homeownership rates correlate with food insecurity at the national and local level. Use this visualization to discover how local shifts in these economic factors can influence the experience of food insecurity for residents in that area.
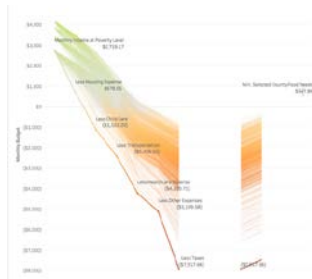
Coming Soon: SNAP Household Budget

How far do SNAP benefits go in supporting families earning limited wages? After budgeting for housing, childcare, and other necessities, explore how local food costs create tough financial decisions for families seeking to purchase food.

Coming Soon: Healthcare Costs

Healthcare costs significantly affect an individual's budget for food. At the same time, proper nutrition is critical for effective disease management. This visualization illustrates how healthcare costs are driven by food insecurity and the financial incentive to solve hunger.

Coming Soon: Community Profiles

People are food insecure in every U.S. county, but the experience differs based on location. This visualization profiles a county from each Census Division to highlight how socioeconomic factors influence how people are affected by food insecurity.

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