

ALASKA



FOOD COALITION

“We can influence our leaders to make hunger a priority”

Feeding America

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Advocating and Educating to End Hunger

‘The United States is the largest and most efficient food producer in the world, so the resources to end hunger exist. Public policy efforts should focus on working with Congress, as well as state and local officials, to strengthen and expand the programs and solutions available to our nation’s food insecure population.’

<http://feedingamerica.org/how-we-fight-hunger/advocacy-public-policy.aspx>

A 2008 study produced by several anti-hunger organizations found the fastest, most direct way to reduce hunger is to improve and expand federal nutrition programs so they can provide people at risk of hunger with the resources they need to buy food for an adequate diet. Food Stamps/SNAP provides families with an electronic benefits transfer (EBT) card to buy food. If we are to make real progress against hunger, Food Stamps/SNAP must be further improved and expanded. Child nutrition and congregate feeding programs for seniors, which are designed to help the most vulnerable people – children, seniors and the disabled – must also be enhanced. By working together, state and local governments, schools, nonprofit organizations and other community groups can ensure that these national nutrition programs and local anti-hunger efforts best complement and build on each other. As government programs are cut or eliminated in current budgets, it is imperative that those of us on the ground floor fighting hunger speak up in support of the programs that support anti hunger efforts.

<http://www.hungercenter.org/pdf/BlueprintToHunger.pdf>

2011 HHS Poverty Guidelines

Size of Family Unit Annual Income

1	\$13,600
2	\$18,280
3	\$23,160
4	\$27,940
5	\$32,720
6	\$37,500
7	\$42,280
8	\$47,060

For each additional person, add

\$ 4,780

Alaska Food Stamp Program Income

Limits (10/1/11 – 9/30/11) Per Month

\$1,466
\$1,973
\$2,480
\$2,987
\$3,494
\$4,001
\$4,508
\$5,015
\$ 507

[Federal Register, Vol. 76, No. 13, January 20, 2011, pp. 3637-3638.](#)

Become a Champion to end Childhood Hunger

Everyone agrees that no child should ever go hungry and yet childhood hunger exists in our country. In 2009, more than 4 million households with almost 9 million children in the United States were food insecure. Of those, almost 1 million children in those households simply did not get enough to eat. (Household Food Security in the United States, 2009) The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is striving to end childhood hunger in the United States. The Stakeholder Guide to End Childhood Hunger provides ideas about actions you can take in your community to help end childhood hunger.

http://www.fns.usda.gov/ECH/documents/ech_stakeholder_guide_entire.pdf

Childhood hunger is very real in Alaska. A January 2011 report by the Children's Defense Fund found:

- 23,119 (12.8%) of children in Alaska under the age of 18 lived in poverty (incomes at or below the poverty level)
- 9,629 (5.3%) of children living in Alaska live in extreme poverty (incomes below half the poverty level)
- 26,523 children in Alaska receive food stamps
- Only 70% of eligible persons receive food stamps
- 34,326 children participated in the Free and Reduced Price School Lunch Program
- 25,251 women and children participated in WIC (Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children)

Become an Anti-Hunger Advocate

- Call, e-mail or write your federal delegation, state Senators and state Representatives
- Invite your legislators to see your program, attend your events
- Write a letter to the editor in your local paper
- Call a local radio talk show

Talk to your legislators about hunger in your community; introduce yourself by name and town. Explain why you are contacting him or her, be specific. Tell your story, why it is important to you and what you need your legislator to do. Ask specific questions – they expect and want to hear from you. Ask them not to cut programs that feed the hungry – any program cuts will affect low-income Alaskans ability to buy food. Urge them to support increased funding for food stamps/SNAP and other federal food programs. And, most important thank them for their time.

Senator Lisa Murkowski	http://murkowski.senate.gov/public/	1-877-829-6030
Senator Mark Begich	http://begich.senate.gov/public/	1-877-501-6275
Congressman Don Young	http://donyoung.house.gov/	1-866-990-5979 (outside Anchorage) 271-5978 (Anchorage)

Alaska State Legislators by Community: <http://www.elections.alaska.gov/vieo/statecomm.php>

One of the best ways to get your point across is to write a letter to the editor. Letters should be short and to the point. Newspapers usually set a limit; the Anchorage Daily News limit is 175 words per letter. Your letter should tell what is going on in your community, and why it is important to you.

When calling a local talk show, engage the announcers in what's going on in your community. You raise attention to you issue by talking about it. For additional resources on hunger, visit the Alaska Food Coalition website: www.alaskafood.com

Resources for Communities of Faith

Bread for the World offers advocacy and educational resources for people of all ages that show how they work to end hunger. It is a collective Christian organization urging decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad. Bread for the World members write personal letters and emails and meet with members of Congress. Working through their network of churches, campuses, and other organizations, they engage more people in advocacy. http://www.bread.org/help/church/activities-curriculum/resources_guide.pdf

RESOURCES

Bread for the World

<http://www.bread.org/what-we-do/>

USDA ERS Briefing: Food Insecurity in the United States 2009

http://www.ers.usda.gov/briefing/foodsecurity/stats_graphs.htm#geographic

End Hunger Connecticut Advocate Tool Kit

<http://www.endhungerct.org/mc/page.do?sitePageId=98815&orgId=ehct>

Children's Defense Fund – Children in Alaska January 2011

<http://www.childrensdefense.org/child-research-data-publications/data/state-data-repository/cits/2011/children-in-the-states-2011-alaska.pdf>

The Alaska Food Coalition is here to help. Copies of Alaska Food Coalition White Papers are available online: <http://www.alaskafood.org/whitepapers.shtml> for additional information, contact Vanessa Salinas, Alaska Food Coalition Manager: afc@foodbankofalaska.org

NEXT MONTH: Charitable Food Donations to Tribes