

Food Security Council

2018 Annual Report



Children's Hospital Colorado
Here, it's different.™



A Letter from Heidi Baskfield

In Colorado, one in six households with children do not have reliable access to food. Food is medicine and children need access to healthy, nutritious foods so they can grow, learn, and thrive. In 2017, team members from the Child Health Advocacy Institute, Government Affairs, Human Resources, Clinical Nutrition, and General Pediatrics, came together to form the Children's Hospital Colorado Food Security Council (FSC). Its goal is by 2023, to increase access to timely, nutritious, and affordable food with the goal of improving food security and diet quality for 90% of Colorado's households with children. Through hospital-based programming, external partnerships, and advocacy, we are collaborating to make this vision a reality for families seeking care here at Children's and those in communities across the state. This work is critical as it is part of the Children's Hospital Colorado population health strategy that was launched in 2015.

We are excited to share with you the work and accomplishments of the FSC in the past year. 2018 was a fulfilling year that saw our organization partner with King Soopers, Aurora Public Schools, the Colorado chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics to improve access to nutritious food for Colorado families. We officially opened the Healthy Roots Community Garden, and successfully advocate for increased access to free and reduced school lunches for kids in need in our state. With your continued support and partnership, we will continue to address and put an end to hunger for children and families in our communities.



HEIDI BASKFIELD

VP, Population Health and Advocacy

Food Security Council: A Roadmap to End Child Hunger

Vision: By 2023, at least 90% of Colorado's vulnerable¹ children will have access to timely, quality and affordable food that meets their health needs.



Team members

Children's Hospital Colorado has the infrastructure in place to meet the healthy food needs of all Children's Colorado team members

Eligible Children's Colorado team members are enrolled in SNAP and WIC

All Children's Colorado team members possess the knowledge and skills needed to practice healthy eating behaviors

Family friendly practices exist around timely access to healthy and affordable food for Children's Colorado team members

Children's Colorado leadership understands the impacts of hunger on health outcomes and Children's Colorado's role in addressing hunger for team members, patients and community members



Infrastructure

Children's Colorado has the infrastructure in place to meet the healthy food needs of all low-income² patients

All relevant³ Children's Colorado clinics use the psycho-social screener to screen patients for food insecurity

Children's Colorado has a community garden and/or food pharmacy on campus for patients to conveniently access healthy foods

Community health liaisons connect all low-income patients to one or more resources enabling healthy food access

An ICD-10 code/diagnosis code for food insecurity screening incorporated in EPIC

Children's Colorado is a Summer Food Service Program site



Access for Patients and Families

All low-income patients are equipped⁴ to access adequate nutrition

All eligible Children's Colorado patients are enrolled in SNAP and WIC

All low-income Children's Colorado patients and families have information about their options for accessing healthy food

All low-income Children's Colorado patients' families have the skills and information they need to practice behaviors that support healthy nutrition



Community partnerships

Strong collaboration exists between Children's Colorado and community partners to effectively address hunger in Colorado

Children's Colorado and other provider groups have a shared agenda to ensure all Coloradans on Medicaid are enrolled in WIC

Children's Colorado actively participates in the Colorado Health Foundation's Blueprint to End Hunger Steering Committee and associated activities

Children's Colorado actively participates in the Denver SNAP Task Force and associated activities

Children's Colorado gains new and strengthened partnerships with relevant grassroots and grassroots organizations to address hunger



Policy

Policy change drives greater systemic access to food that meets the needs of vulnerable children and their families

Federal nutrition programs are adequately⁵ funded

Policy change supports maximizing enrollment in SNAP, WIC and child nutrition programs

Children's Colorado is positioned as a policy leader⁶ on child nutrition issues

Public and political will supports policies and initiatives to enhance funding for healthy food access

Payers understand and support healthcare provider efforts to boost food security

Alignment with the Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger

In 2017, the Colorado Health Foundation invested in the process of over 35 stakeholders, either working to end hunger or living with hunger, coming together over several months to create a blueprint to achieve the goal of a hunger-free Colorado. The blueprint is a call to action for a broad range of stakeholders to continue working on this solvable issue. Children's Hospital Colorado participated on the blueprint steering committee, and given the significant overlap between our strategic roadmap and the blueprint, we aim to work in alignment with all of the goals outlined in the Blueprint to End Hunger.

Vision: All Coloradans have access to affordable and healthy food in their communities

Goal 1

Increase public understanding and awareness that solving hunger is vital to the health and well-being of all individuals and families, the Colorado economy and every local community.

Goal 2

Increase the number of Coloradans who can access affordable, nutritious food in their communities.

Goal 3

Increase the number of Coloradans who can access food assistance and nutritious food through community-based organizations.

Goal 4

Maximize SNAP and WIC enrollment to propel Colorado to become a leading state for enrollment in these health and nutrition benefits.

Goal 5

Maximize participation in Federal Child Nutrition programs, moving Colorado to become a national leader in delivery of these vital programs.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, food security means having "access at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members."

Eating healthy foods helps kids develop physically, achieve academically and experience better behavioral health. Federal food assistance programs are critical in alleviating hunger. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)—or food stamp—and Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) participation early in life lowers childhood obesity and decreases future risk of developing diabetes and heart disease, two leading causes of mortality in Colorado.

While these programs are critical, Colorado lags in enrollment when compared to the rest of the U.S. Colorado ranks 44th lowest in SNAP enrollment, meaning more than 320,000 Coloradans need help but aren't getting it. The state ranks 48th lowest for enrollment in WIC.



ONE IN SIX

Colorado kids may not always know when or where they will get their next meal

74%

Of SNAP enrollees in Colorado are families with children



¹ The primary focus of the Food Security Council over the next five years will be vulnerable children who face systemic challenges that put healthy food out of reach. This includes children of low-income parents and guardians, immigrants and refugees, those who reside in rural communities of Colorado, children who are disabled and those representing communities of color.

² Low-income means Children's Colorado patients who qualify for public assistance including but not limited to Medicaid, CHIP, SNAP, TANF, free or reduced-price school lunch and breakfast and WIC. Low-income could also include patients who make slightly too much to qualify for federal poverty assistance programs, yet still experience great difficulty making ends meet.

³ Relevant means clinics in which it makes sense to perform a food security screening, based on factors like ability for provider follow-up and continuity of care.

⁴ Equipped includes having timely access to tools, information and resources in a language and literacy level that is easily understandable to patients and their families.

⁵ Adequate funding for discretionary programs, e.g., WIC, means that annual spending remains at a high enough level to maximize participation in the program. Adequate funding for mandatory programs e.g., SNAP, child nutrition programs, means that funding levels are protected and not lowered in the programs' authorizing legislation.

⁶ As a policy leader on child nutrition, Children's Colorado leads or co-leads federal, state and in some cases local policy initiatives that improve access to healthy food for Colorado youth.

What is Food Insecurity?

Food insecurity is defined as limited or uncertain access to food to maintain an active, healthy life. A household may be food insecure and unable to access nutritionally adequate and safe foods due to lack of money or other social resources. Food insecurity results in involuntarily cutting back on meals or food portions and is also known as "at risk of hunger." There is a range of severity of food insecurity.

HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access at all time to enough food for an active, healthy life • No problems or anxiety about accessing food 	Food Security
MARGINAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems at times, or anxiety about, accessing enough food • Quality, variety and quantity of food intake are not substantially reduced 	Food Security
LOW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced quality, variety and desirability of food intake • Quality and normal eating patterns are not substantially disrupted 	Food Insecurity
VERY LOW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of money and other resources for food • Disrupted eating patterns and reduced quality (skipping meals) 	Food Insecurity

How is Food Insecurity Identified?

Many hospitals and health systems throughout the country are now including food insecurity screening as part of their standard patient intake process. Screening for FI are currently being done in several Children's Colorado departments and include the following two questions:

- (A) Within the past 12 months, we worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more.
- (B) Within the past months, the food bought just didn't last and we didn't have money to get more.

Families who screen positive for food insecurity are then referred to our community partner, Hunger Free Colorado, for food assistance and navigation.

2018 Child Health Clinic food insecurity screening

	n	%
Patient Count	8,364	
Total Psychosocial Screens	13,832	
% Pos All	2,441	17.6%
% Pos Food A or B	677	4.9%
% Pos Food A	569	4.1%
% Pos Food B	399	2.9%

2018 Hunger Free Colorado referrals

613

Total referrals received Hunger Free Colorado from Children's Colorado

430

Total number of clients contacted by Hunger Free Colorado

Food Insecurity in our community

1 in 10

Coloradans (10.35%) lack access to nutrition food

1 in 6

Colorado kids (16%) may not always know when or where they will get their next meal

200K+

Individuals are food insecure in Adams, Arapahoe, and Denver counties

Federal food assistance programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) are the most effective way to reduce hunger and supplement the food budgets of low-income families. But Colorado has some of the lowest enrollment rates in the country.

WIC: 100,000 Coloradans eligible but not enrolled

SNAP: 322,600 Coloradans eligible but not enrolled

What is a food desert?

Geographic areas that lack reasonable access to fresh fruit, vegetables, and other healthful whole foods, usually found in impoverished areas. This is largely due to a lack of grocery stores, farmers' markets, and healthy food providers. A "low-access community" is at least 500 people and/or at least 33% of the census tract's population must reside more than 1 mile from a supermarket or large grocery store (for rural census tracts, the distance is more than 10 miles). (Source: USDA)

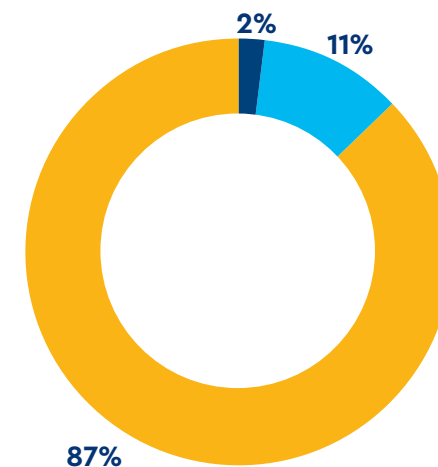
Northwest Aurora is a USDA designated food desert.

Team members

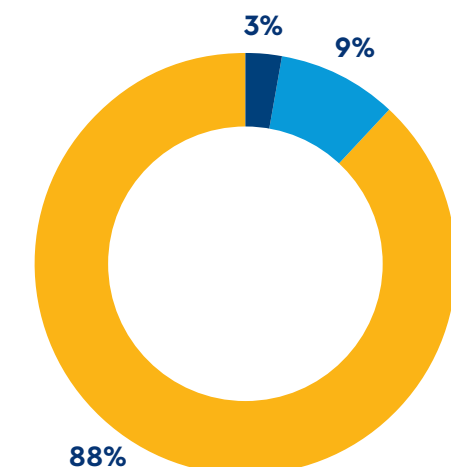
Survey results from the 2018 Annual employee wellness survey:

In the last 12 months: "We worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more."

In the last 12 months: "The food that we bought just didn't last, and we didn't have money to get more."



● Often true
● Sometimes true
● Never true



● Often true
● Sometimes true
● Never true

"I see families who are hungry or can't afford to buy food and it hurts my heart. I've been there in life and I can't sit and watch families go hungry. I'll buy food for anyone I can tell can't afford enough."

TEQUILA GURLEY

Senior Cook

2018 Programming and Initiatives

Many of Children's Hospital food security efforts have been generously supported by ongoing funding from King Soopers. As a proud partner of Children's Colorado for more than 40 years, King Soopers partnered with the hospital to support the work the Food Security Council was leading. CHCO's effort to eliminate hunger in the pediatric community aligned perfectly with King Soopers Zero Hunger Zero Waste program, aimed at improving the health of millions of Americans by making balanced meals more readily available.



A huge thank you to our partner King Soopers!

- Partnered with Copia to redistribute excess food from our cafeteria to local non-profits in need. In 2018 we donated over 4,100lb of food or approximately 3,400 meals.
- We provided over 100 King Soopers giftcards, valued at over \$7,000 to family's in critical need and around the holidays.
- Our Patient Family & Community Navigators were able to provide emergency food bags to 50 families throughout the Child Health Clinic.
- Children's Colorado was on the steering committee and various workgroups for development Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger.
- Began program planning on the Healthy Roots Food Clinic to be opened in Fall of 2019 in the Child Health Pavilion.
- Launched the new, 3,000 square foot Healthy Roots Community Garden.

Food security leads to:



Reduced obesity, diabetes and malnutrition



Lower risk for heart disease & high blood pressure



Lower levels of stress



Decreased depression



Significantly lower rates of suicide in adolescents



Decreased behavioral problems in youth

Food Recovery

In 2018, Children's Hospital Colorado partnered with Copia, food recovery experts whose technology allowed CHCO to safely donate their excess food, access enhanced tax deductions, and receive powerful data to inform food purchasing decisions. The donated food was then redistributed to local human service providers — such as the Aurora Day Resource Center — totaling over 3400 meals. Through these efforts, CHCO has been able to serve underserved and food-insecure populations in our community beyond patients and families. In 2019, local non-profit We Don't Waste will be our new partner in redistribution of excess food, tapping into their expertise on where meals can most efficiently be delivered to people in need.

Members of the Food Security Council represented Children's on a number of community and state initiatives including:

- CO Food Systems Advisory Council
- Denver Sustainable Food Policy Council
- Denver SNAP Task Force
- Colorado Food & Health Collaborative

Policy Milestones

In 2018, Children's Colorado fought for the passage of public policies that ensure healthy food is within reach of our youngest Coloradans and their families. Throughout the course of year, we advocated for a federal Farm Bill reauthorization that preserves access to vital food assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Over 200 of our Child Health Champions advocates and millions of individuals nationwide weighed in to protect children and families in the Farm Bill.

We spoke with members of Congress and their staff, including at a SNAP roundtable with Congresswoman DeGette and other health-focused partners. We pushed out alerts on the legislation to our network through social media, and discussed with Children's Colorado providers and other team members SNAP and the harmful changes proposed in early versions of the bill.

We met with the pediatric residency program at Children's Hospital Colorado to encourage our pediatricians-in-training to submit letters to the editor of their local papers on the Farm Bill. Additionally, we were able to secure an op-ed in the Sunday Denver Post, co-authored by two pediatricians, one of whom practices at Children's Hospital Colorado, to urge the Colorado congressional delegation to support a Farm Bill that preserves SNAP. Our hard work was part of a nationwide surge of advocacy that paid off in the midst of partisan divide, gridlock and seeming chaos with a partial federal government shutdown just in time for the holidays, when President Trump signed into law a Farm Bill that passed with strong bipartisan support in both the U.S. House and Senate.

During the 2018 state legislative session, we joined a coalition of anti-hunger organizations to support Senate Bill 13, which expands the state coverage for free lunches through the National School Lunch Program for middle school students. SB13 passed both houses of the legislature and was signed into law by then-Governor Hickenlooper. We also lobbied for additional SNAP program and quality assurance staff in the state human services department, to build upon efforts to provide timely and accurate program benefits to Coloradans.

Last spring, we collaborated with partners involved in the Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger initiative to pass a Colorado State Board of Human Services rule change. One of our pediatricians testified before the state human services board in support of the change to increase the SNAP income eligibility threshold for all Coloradans to 200% of the federal poverty level. This change protects children and low-income families from losing SNAP benefits by being slightly over the previous income eligibility threshold, with expanded access to these critical benefits for other families.



Children's Hospital Colorado