

**First-ever LOCAL NUMBERS for CHILD HUNGER
show 1 in 4 lives at risk of hunger in Tarrant,
12 other counties served by Tarrant Area Food Bank**

194,000 children, including 122,000 in Tarrant County, struggle with food insecurity

40 percent of these children are not eligible for assistance from national nutrition programs such as free or reduced-price school meals

**Local data from “Map the Meal Gap Child Food Insecurity 2011”
released by Feeding America and its member regional food banks**

FORT WORTH – Aug. 25, 2011 – Tarrant Area Food Bank and Feeding America, the nation’s largest hunger-relief organization, today released a new study revealing that in the Food Bank’s 13-COUNTY REGION, an average of 24.7 percent of children under the age of 18 struggle with hunger.

The same study reveals that 25.3 percent of TARRANT COUNTY children live in households facing food insecurity. Among the 12 other counties served by Tarrant Area Food Bank, the rate of children’s food insecurity ranges from 21.5 percent in Denton County through 26.6 percent in Hood County to 29.8 percent in Bosque County.

The study, *Map the Meal Gap: Child Food Insecurity 2011*, also reveals that some percentage of children struggle with hunger in every county in America. Nationally, while 1 in 6 Americans are food insecure, the rate for children is much higher: nearly 1 in 4 children are food insecure.

“Map the Meal Gap data on child food insecurity confirms that in our service region, as in the rest of the nation, the rate of hunger among children is much greater than among the entire population in each county,” said Bo Soderbergh, executive director of Tarrant Area Food Bank. “Also revealing is the high percentage of children whose family incomes make them ineligible for nutrition assistance programs such as SNAP [Food Stamps] and free and reduced-price school meals [National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs].”

Soderbergh added, “This specific data on child hunger at the county and congressional district level will help the Food Bank determine where hunger-relief programs for children are most needed.”

For Tarrant Area Food Bank’s 13-COUNTY SERVICE REGION, *Map the Meal Gap: Child Food Insecurity 2011* provides the following data:

- An average of 16.5 percent of all adults and children in the 13 counties is food insecure, while an average of 24.7 percent (194,140) of all children under the age of 18 struggles with hunger.

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(Page 2 of 2 – First-ever Local Numbers for Child Hunger)

- An average of 60 percent of children in the 13 counties is eligible for assistance from federal nutrition programs like Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), free or reduced-price school meals, and others.
- An average of 40 percent of children in Tarrant Area Food Bank’s service region is *NOT* eligible for assistance from federal nutrition programs like Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), free or reduced-price school meals, and others.

See data for 13 local counties in *Child Hunger by County in the Tarrant Area Food Bank Service Region* at <http://tafb.org/news-releases#mmgchildren>.

In TARRANT COUNTY, “Map the Meal Gap Child Food Insecurity 2011” reveals:

- 17.1 percent of all residents of TARRANT COUNTY are food insecure, while an average of **25.3 percent (121,890) of all children** under the age of 18 struggle with hunger.
- Almost two-thirds (64 percent) of TARRANT COUNTY CHILDREN are eligible for assistance from federal nutrition programs like Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), free or reduced-price school meals, and others.
- More than one-third (36 percent) of all TARRANT COUNTY CHILDREN are *NOT* eligible for assistance from federal nutrition programs like Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), free or reduced-price school meals, and others. They live in households with incomes above 185 percent of the poverty line.

An executive summary of the nationwide *Map the Meal Gap: Child Food Insecurity 2011* report can be found at: feedingamerica.org/mapthegap/childsummary.

This research is supported by ConAgra Foods Foundation. The Foundation funded this study in order to advance the collective understanding of child hunger in America so that resources at the local and national level can be better leveraged to help children and families in need.

The research is based on *Map the Meal Gap 2011: Food Insecurity Estimates at the County Level*, supported by the Howard G. Buffett Foundation and Nielsen.

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ABOUT

TARRANT AREA FOOD BANK, a private nonprofit, is the primary source of food for 300 hunger-relief charities in 13 counties surrounding Fort Worth. This past year, the Food Bank distributed nearly 26 million pounds of groceries to charities ranging from BackPacks for Kids programs and church pantries to senior centers and emergency shelters. More than one-third of the individuals served are children. Between 2008 and 2011, the amount of food Tarrant Area Food Bank distributes has increased 80 percent.