

Better Nutrition, Better Tomorrow

Facts on Hunger and Poverty in the United States

In 2017, U.S. poverty and food insecurity rates continued to decline, while median household income increased. However, far too many of our neighbors continue to struggle to buy nutritious food and secure steady jobs with livable wages.

- More than 40 million Americans, including 12 million children, lived in households that struggled to put food on the table in 2017.¹ African-Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans were approximately twice as likely as the overall population to live at risk of hunger.²
- More than 38 million Americans lived below the poverty line in 2017; 1 in 3 were children.³
- U.S. poverty rates fell or remained unchanged for every demographic group. However, African-American and Latino communities still have disproportionately higher rates of poverty than the general population.⁴
- For African-Americans, the poverty rate fell to 21.2 percent in 2017 from 22 percent in 2016, and for Latinos, the poverty rate fell to 18.3 percent in 2017 from 19.4 percent in 2016. The poverty rate among female-headed households fell from to 25.7 percent in 2017 from 26.6 percent in 2016.⁵
- 11.8 percent of U.S. households were food insecure in 2017, declining further from a peak of 14.9 percent in 2011.⁶
- SNAP moved an estimated 3.4 million people out of poverty in 2017.⁷
- About two-thirds of SNAP recipients are children, elderly, or disabled.⁸
- In 2017, more than 7.2 million low-income women and young children retrieved nutritious food and nutrition education through the WIC program.⁹
- The earned income tax credit and the refundable portion of the child tax credit moved 8.3 million people out of poverty in 2017, including 4.5 million children.¹⁰
- For the third consecutive year, households in the United States experienced an increase in real annual median income. Median household income was \$61,372 in 2017, a 1.8 percent increase from the 2016 median of \$60,309¹¹

ENDNOTES

¹ Household Food Security in the United States in 2017 <https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/90023/err-256.pdf?v=0>

² Ibid, page 14.

³ Income and Poverty in the United States 2017, U.S. Census Bureau. <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2018/demo/p60-263.pdf>

⁴ Ibid, page 12.

⁵ Ibid, page 13.

⁶ Household Food Security in the United States in 2017, page 14.

⁷ The Supplemental Poverty Measure: 2017. <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2018/demo/p60-265.pdf>

⁸ Household Food Security in the United States in 2017, page 31.

⁹ USDA, Women, Infant, and Children Program Participation and Costs. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/pd/wisummary.pdf>

¹⁰ The Supplemental Poverty Measure: 2017, page 11.

¹¹ Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance in the United States in 2017, page 4.



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