FOOD INSECURITY IN AMERICA

Background

- Food insecurity is defined as a lack of access to adequate and nutritious food, enough for an active, healthy life for all household members.
- The “meal gap” is the number of missing meals resulting from a household’s inability to purchase food. It is the difference between a household being food insecure and food secure, measured in meals.
- Food insecurity may be long term or temporary.

Statistics

- 13.9% of households with children were food insecure.
- 1 in 7 households with children were affected.

Factors Affecting Food Security

- Unemployment
- Race/ethnicity
- Disabilities

What are the effects of Food Insecurity?

- Health complications, especially related to choosing between food and medical care.
- Damage to children’s ability to learn and grow, as well as self-esteem.
- Association between delayed development and risk of chronic illnesses in children.

Current Programs

NYS/NYC:

- Breakfast in the Classroom
- City meals on wheels
- Eat well, play hard program
- Farmer’s markets
- Food Retail Expansion to Support Health program (FRESH)
- Food Assistance Collaborative

Federal:

- Emergency food assistance programs
- SNAP
- WIC
- National School Lunch Program
- School breakfast program

Program costs

USDA expenditures for food assistance, fiscal 1980-2018

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