



Kayla shops with her children at a Connecticut Foodshare mobile food pantry.

## More Children are Going Hungry in Connecticut

Our communities are in crisis. Child food insecurity in Connecticut is up 10% since last year, and 1 out of 6 children are not getting enough nutritious food, according to Feeding America's most recent Map the Meal Gap report. It is estimated that a family of four in our state needs to earn almost \$125,000 just to cover the basics.\*

For families like Kayla's, a blended family of six, it's even more difficult to get by. She is struggling to manage the family finances on her husband's one income as a truck driver, but Connecticut Foodshare's mobile food pantries are making things a little smoother. "We are so thankful to get any help to put yummy food on our table. It helps with the financial burden. We are a large family and with the cost of groceries, it can add up fast."

Kayla was initially surprised and relieved by how much her family has benefited from the mobile pantries in the last 18 months, "I'm super



"More blueberries!" Kayla's son, Daniel, shows off one of his favorite foods from the mobile food pantry.

impressed, the stuff we get is amazing. It's a good way for the kids to try new things. When they help with dinner, if they make it or choose it, they are more likely to eat it."

On a recent shopping trip with triplets Daniel,

Susan and Leonor, and Lucia, three, the kids were excited to choose vegetables, fruits, and of course some treats. The berries were the most popular choice of the day, however, and even after they got dropped while packing up the car, the kids still looked forward to eating them. “Most people buy for the week, but ours is [gone] in one sitting! I take out the berries and they are gone in seconds.”

Before they were a one-income family, Kayla was an elementary special education teacher. After the birth of the triplets during Covid, she returned to work until her youngest daughter arrived. After just two weeks at home with their newborn, Kayla and her husband were told by the daycare the children could not return because they had lost too many teachers. This ironically turned into Kayla leaving her teaching job as well, staying home to care for the kids full-time.

At home, the kids are learning about where their food comes from – they have a garden where they are growing cucumbers, tomatoes, melon and strawberries, and they also raise chickens. Financial burdens aside, Kayla, her husband, and the kids are healthy, thriving, and optimistic. Connecticut Foodshare is honored to be able to support parents like Kayla who do whatever it takes to care for their family. And for this family, that means seeking the food assistance they need.

\*United Way 2023 Alice report (Assets Limited Income Constrained, Employed)



President and CEO, Jason Jakubowski, alerts the media and public to Connecticut’s devastating rise in hunger.



L to R: Maya Matthews- Enfield Loaves and Fishes, Michael Savenelli- WHEAT Inc., Commissioner Bryan Hurlburt- CT Department of Agriculture

1 in 3

Hispanic  
persons in Connecticut  
are food insecure

1 in 4

Black  
persons in Connecticut  
are food insecure

1 in 6

Children  
in Connecticut are  
food insecure

1 in 7

Connecticut  
residents are food  
insecure

Reflections From Jason



Jason Jakubowski  
President and CEO

Parents like Kayla should not have to worry about having enough food for their growing family. The number of people who are facing hunger in Connecticut has jumped drastically in the last year, and that includes **1 in 6 children**. For a large family like Kayla’s, that means statistically that one of her children could go hungry.

The new Map the Meal Gap report from Feeding America confirms what we and our agency partners are seeing and feeling – food insecurity is harder to address, and our neighbors are in a worse position now than they were at the peak of the pandemic. Food insecurity has increased by a staggering 40% since Covid, and more than half a million people don’t know where their next meal is coming from. These are not just numbers, these are moms like Kayla, and kids like Daniel, Leonor, Susan, and Lucia.

This is the sobering paradox that is Connecticut: we are the richest state in the country; but astronomical increases in the cost of food, housing, and healthcare means more children, senior citizens, and families are relying on food assistance to make ends meet.

Another deafening alarm bell is sounding for food banks – there is less food to distribute. Federal budget cuts hit this summer, and we lost about 2.7 million pounds of federal food scheduled for delivery. Carolyn Russell, our Senior Director of Food Strategy & Procurement, spoke plainly about the impact on our neighbors, “Of the food we lost, about 50% of it was protein. These were trailer loads of food that we were expecting to get between now and the end of December. TEFAP was one of our biggest sources of protein...we don’t expect that to come back. Our job is to stretch the money our neighbors have by giving them as much free food as we could possibly give them. It absolutely is going to have a huge impact, and we can’t make that food up.”

Unfortunately, we are also expecting more cuts to safety net programs that directly and indirectly affect food insecurity. This is not the time to scale back essential programs that help families stay afloat. Our neighbors work hard every day to build better lives – but they need a solid foundation to succeed.

Please continue to follow us on our social channels for updates and to find opportunities to help. Every hour of time and every dollar you give makes a tremendous difference in the lives of our neighbors. We are all so grateful for your support as we navigate these extremely challenging times together.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT: Meet Carolyn Russell



“It’s not just a job for people at Connecticut Foodshare...no matter how hard of a day you have, somebody fed their kid because you came to work, and that’s a really good feeling.”



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Staff Spotlight  
article.



# I WANT TO HELP NOW!



KIDS AND FAMILIES  
NEED YOUR GIFT



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## Upcoming Events



### Empty Bowls

Saturday, October 18, 2025 | 11 AM - 2PM  
CT State College at Manchester,  
One Great Path Way, Manchester

For more details visit  
[ctfoodshare.org/events](https://ctfoodshare.org/events)

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