

**Census Pulse Household Survey – New York
Families Food Security
March 2021**



**Council on Children
and Families**

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This fact sheet shares data about hunger during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in New York households with children. Hunger refers both to having an insufficient quantity and quality of food. All families should have access to healthy, high-quality foods, which are key to children’s development and well-being. During the pandemic, however, access became more limited. Barriers included unemployment, loss of income and fear of leaving the home and catching the virus.

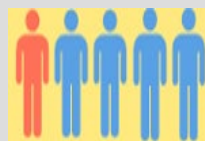
- The most commonly reported reasons that families did not have enough food to eat were that stores didn’t have the food they wanted, they couldn’t afford to buy more food, and they were afraid to go out to buy food.
- Free meals through schools and other programs aimed at children were the most common way families in need were able to access food.
- From May 27, 2020, to November 22, 2020, more than one in four calls to 211 in New York were requests for food. Food pantries were their number one referral.¹
- New York State estimated the number of children receiving P-EBT benefits was \$2.4 million, and the total estimated issuance amount was \$1 billion.²



More than 1 in 10 families “sometimes” or “often” did not have enough food to eat. (Week 1, Phase 1)



About 1 in 5 families “sometimes” or “often” did not have enough food to eat. (Week 21, Phase 3)



Nearly 1 in 5 families were “not at all” confident that they would be able to afford the kinds of food they needed for the next four weeks. (Week 21, Phase 3)



Nearly 1 in 3 families indicated that it was “sometimes true” or “often true” that children in their household were not eating enough because they could not afford enough food. (Week 15, Phase 2)

¹ 2-1-1 Counts (ny.211counts.org) by Health Communication Impact, LLC, accessed November 22, 2021.

² NYS OTDA. Annual Report 2020 (<https://otda.ny.gov/news/attachments/OTDA-Annual-Report-2020.pdf>), accessed March 30, 2021

Overview of the Census Pulse Household Survey

The **Census Pulse Household Survey** was designed to gather data quickly and efficiently on the impact of the coronavirus on people's lives and livelihoods. For the first time, the U.S. Census Bureau partnered with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Center for Health Statistics, Housing and Urban Development, National Center for Education Statistics, Office of Management and Budget and U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Services to administer a weekly survey.



This survey is a new tool that policy makers, advocates and program managers can use to guide their efforts in the coming months.

Phase 1 (April 23-July 21, 2020): The survey explored five main content areas: employment, food security, health, housing and education.

Phase 2 (August 19-October 26, 2020): The same set of initial questions from Phase 1 were asked with 15 additional questions related to the application and receipt of benefits, spending patterns and availability of financial resources, post-secondary education disruptions, capacity to telework and travel practices.

Phase 3 (October 28-March 29, 2021): The same larger set of questions from Phase 2 were asked.

Coronavirus Pandemic Impact 2020-2021



A school meal pickup site in Albany, New York, during April 2020.