

ADDRESSING HUNGER AND NUTRITION

A Tool Kit for Positive Results

National
Conference
of
State
Legislatures

Executive Summary

The challenges of hunger and nutrition are faced in every state and community. Recent federal data indicate that more than 36 million Americans, including more than 13 million children, experience hunger and difficulty in gaining access to adequate food. Furthermore, there is growing awareness of the relationships between hunger, obesity and poor nutrition: the lack of financial resources makes it difficult to obtain nutritious food on a consistent basis, leading to unhealthy eating patterns and poor dietary habits.

State policymakers—in their varied roles as legislators, community leaders and convenors—are in a unique position to address these challenges of hunger and nutrition. However, current federal, state and private sector programs and initiatives aimed at these problems are fragmented across funding streams and administrative authority. Federal programs are administered through a variety of state agencies, including human services, education, health and agriculture. Thus legislative oversight is also fragmented among different committee jurisdictions.

In addition, nonprofit and private sector organizations such as food banks and meal sites have established public-private partnerships to address the challenges of hunger and nutrition. This publication, *Addressing Hunger and Nutrition: A Tool Kit for Positive Results*, is designed to be a resource for state policymakers as they navigate the many federal and state government, private sector and nonprofit initiatives that address hunger and nutrition. The Tool Kit is comprised of 12, two-page issue briefs, a glossary of hunger and nutrition terms, and a chart of federal nutrition programs. The issue brief topics are:

- Food Stamps
- National School Lunch Program
- School Breakfast Program
- Summer Food Service Program
- Child and Adult Care Food Program
- WIC
- Elderly Nutrition
- Farmers' Market Programs
- Farm to Cafeteria
- The Emergency Food Assistance Program
- Commodity Supplemental Food Program
- Nutrition Education

Each issue brief provides a brief introduction to the federal program; eligible populations and funding levels; examples of current issues and challenges; and promising practices in the states as well as ways to leverage private, nonprofit and other government resources.

The Tool Kit was researched and published by NCSL's Hunger and Nutrition Partnership. Information regarding program challenges and promising models was gathered through interviews with the partnership's board of advisors; program administrators at the federal, state and local levels; and representatives from state and local nonprofit agencies.

This Tool Kit is the first major publication of NCSL's Hunger and Nutrition Partnership. During the coming year, the partnership will collect additional models and promising practices to be compiled in a *Hunger and Nutrition: Promising Practices Guide* that will be published during the summer of 2006. NCSL welcomes your ideas and examples of promising practices: please share them with program staff.

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