

# SEEDS OF HOPE

Fall 2022

[kansasfoodbank.org](https://kansasfoodbank.org)



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# HUNGER UPDATES IN KANSAS THIS FALL

Dear Friend,

Your support comes at a critical time as the cost-of-living rises, making healthy food unaffordable for so many of our neighbors. Healthy food shouldn't be a luxury. Ever.

This past summer we provided countless children, families and seniors across our 85-county service area with healthy, nutritious food.

I hope you'll enjoy reading through our latest issue of *Seeds of Hope* containing stories from just a few neighbors you've helped with your kindness. Families like Amy, Howard and Tim's want to thank you for everything you do.

With school beginning, our *Food 4 Kids* program is in full swing. Volunteers started assembling packets the first part of August and deliveries to schools have begun. This program provides one of the most essential school supplies there is for chronically hungry children: food.

Please also look closely on pages 6 and 7 at our most recent study on food assistance, created in partnership with the University of Missouri's Interdisciplinary Center for Food Security. In it, we provide statistical evidence to show who hunger is affecting and its adverse influence on our neighbors.

Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to the well-being of our Kansas neighbors. Your help is critical for the people we proudly serve.

Gratefully,

  
**Brian Walker**  
PRESIDENT & CEO

## YOUR GENEROSITY MEANS SO MUCH TO AMY'S FAMILY

Amy, a personal assistant and home healthcare worker, has lived in Salina for nearly 11 years. She and her husband, Michael, have three children. Michael also just recently started his own lawn care business this summer.

One of Amy's most beloved hobbies is working in the yard, so she adores being able to do what she likes most while also helping her husband's business grow. Hopefully, the company will help the family get ahead of the economic hardship they've faced over the past few years.

Due to the rising cost of groceries, Amy visited the Salina Emergency Aid Food Bank, a Kansas Food Bank partner agency for help.

"It has been a struggle to get enough food for the family," Amy says honestly. "We don't have food without the Food Bank."

At the Salina Emergency Aid Food Bank, Amy picks up fresh food like fruit and veggies in addition to shelf-stable items like pasta and canned food to feed her family. She likes to cook and have fun with the ingredients she gets there.

"This saves my family," she says in thanks.

Your support makes help available for Amy's family and so many more neighbors in need of good, fresh food. Thank you for giving so generously to make a difference here in Kansas.







Louis volunteers to leave a lasting legacy and a positive impact.

## LOUIS YSUSI HELPS DELIVER *FOOD 4 KIDS* PACKETS

After retiring from a 37-year career at Evergy, Louis Ysusi wanted to volunteer to give back to his community. He's served for the past five years on the Independence City Commission, and volunteers faithfully with the Kansas Food Bank. He especially loves helping deliver food-filled *Food 4 Kids* packets. It makes Louis happy to know he is directly helping families and children who face hunger.

Each month Louis helps deliver *Food 4 Kids* packets to 22 surrounding schools in Southeast Kansas. That's roughly 2,000 weekend food packets every month during the school year.

*Food 4 Kids* provides kid friendly, easy to open and eat nutritious foods for children who are identified as chronically hungry, meaning they may not have access to regular meals when school is not in session.

When asked about the importance of the program, Louis shared, "This is critical. With the money not going as far as it once did, it has created more of a strain on . . . everyone."

The Kansas Food Bank relies on volunteers to help us with the *Food 4 Kids* program. Primarily, volunteers are needed to help assemble packets at the Wichita

warehouse. Once assembled, packets are boxed eight to a case as they get ready for their journey to the participating schools. At the schools, local coordinators distribute the packets weekly to the children identified for the program.

It's that last step of the program that brings the most joy: a food filled packet on a Friday afternoon for a child who might otherwise go without. Thank you, Louis, for helping deliver packets to schools in Southeast Kansas. Your impact is helping countless students have access to healthy food this fall.

If you'd like to volunteer at the Kansas Food Bank, contact us at [volunteer@kansasfoodbank.org](mailto:volunteer@kansasfoodbank.org).

## HOWARD AND MANY MORE NEIGHBORS ARE GRATEFUL FOR YOU

For over 45 years, Howard has worked hard to provide for the people he loves.

When he was just 18 years old, he went to work to help his family, honing his skills as a mechanic and body specialist. "I had to do something to help bring money into my parents' house," Howard says.

When Howard and his wife Sarah married 9 years ago, they collectively brought 7 children to their new family. "When you have to take care of so many people on barely the bare

minimum, you have to find ways to get help," he says. These days, with most of the children out of the house, it is just he, his wife, and their youngest who is now 13 years old.

Unfortunately, the cost of living is causing Howard and Sarah to struggle to get by.

A friend told Howard about New Beginnings, a Kansas Food Bank partner pantry, and he's been coming to distributions when the family needs help. At the pantry, Howard can get good, nutritious food that can last his family a

while. Dairy, protein, produce and more provide Howard's family with the healthy fuel they need to thrive.

"Communities keep us together," he says with gratitude. "Thank you."

Your gifts make Howard's task of feeding a growing 13-year-old boy a little easier. With your generosity, our neighbors who would otherwise go hungry have access to the healthy food they need. Thank you so much!



Howard shares words of thanks for Kansas Food Bank donors.



# FOOD ASSISTANCE & HUNGER IN THE HEARTLAND 2021



*This is an unprecedented study of the Kansas Food Bank and its pantry partners. It is a comprehensive look at our neighbors who face food insecurity and the pantries that serve them.*

Kansas Food Bank worked with the University of Missouri's Interdisciplinary Center for Food Security to examine the impacts of hunger and the difficult choices many people face to make ends meet. This study illustrates the critical role the Kansas

Food Bank and pantries play in supplying food to struggling families. (47% of households served get at least half of their monthly food from a food pantry). Kansas Food Bank pantries serve over **945,000 people annually**.

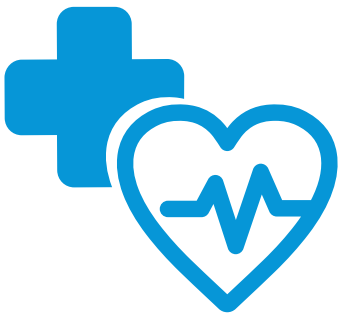
The working poor make up half of the people served by food pantries. Hunger is linked to a series of health problems, including diabetes, hypertension, and high cholesterol. There are significant gaps in nutrition safety net program participation.

## NEIGHBORS FACING HUNGER FACE TOUGH CHOICES TO MAKE ENDS MEET.



- 39%** of households had to choose between paying for food and medicine/medical care
- 48%** had to choose between food and utilities
- 33%** had to choose between paying for food and housing
- 25%** sold or pawned personal items to pay for food

## FOOD INSECURE NEIGHBORS CAN FACE HEALTH ISSUES.



- 60%** of households served purchased the least expensive food in the past 12 months, even if it wasn't the healthiest option
- 43%** have a member with diabetes or pre-diabetes
- 62%** have a member with high blood pressure
- 46%** have a member with no health insurance of any kind

## HUNGER IMPACTS A WIDE RANGE OF NEIGHBORS.

- 50%** of households have at least one working adult
- 63%** of clients surveyed are white
- 37%** of households have at least one adult over the age of 65
- 45%** have at least one child under the age of 18
- 79%** of clients surveyed have a high-school degree or higher level of education
- 14%** include a military veteran



## SAFETY NET PROGRAMS SERVICES ARE NOT REACHING ALL WHO ARE ELIGIBLE.

- 82%** of households served have incomes that make them eligible for SNAP, but only 41% participate
- 38%** of households with children 5 and under used WIC in the previous year.
- 67%** with children under 18 participate in free or reduced-price breakfast or lunch.



# YOUR HELP GOES A LONG WAY FOR TIM AND HIS SON

With a 10-year-old son whom he absolutely adores, Tim has made it his mission to teach his boy that one never stops trying in life. Tim lives every day by this rule in the hopes his son will do the same.

Recently, Tim was laid off from his career as an aircraft mechanic. He hasn't landed a new job yet, but he's optimistic and is using the opportunity to teach his son to never give up, that hard work pays off in the long run.

But with the high cost of food, utilities and housing, Tim is having trouble making ends meet each month.

Tim isn't alone. The cost of living has risen beyond many neighbors' means, leaving countless Kansans struggling to pay bills while also keeping enough food on the table.

Thankfully, because of you, Tim finds help at the Dear Neighbor pantry, a Kansas Food Bank partner agency. At Dear Neighbor, Tim gets healthy food for himself and his son, like fruits, vegetables, meat, dairy and more.

"Thank you," Tim says. "[Your help] isn't in vain."



Your support for our community members is a real lifeline. Thank you for giving so generously to ensure neighbors facing hunger have food to eat during these times of hardship.



1919 E. Douglas  
Wichita, KS 67211  
316.265.FOOD (3663)  
[www.kansasfoodbank.org](http://www.kansasfoodbank.org)

