



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, March 10, 2022

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****Maryland Food Bank Hunger Brief****

MFB Releases “A Research Guide to Child Food Insufficiency” in Maryland

Data finds that 45% of Maryland families may face food insufficiency, while highlighting the impact of Child Tax Credit payments on household spending

BALTIMORE — The Maryland Food Bank (MFB) today released “[A Research Guide to Child Food Insufficiency](#)” to bring attention to the COVID-19 pandemic’s ongoing impact on children while also highlighting the effectiveness of the expanded Child Tax Credit (CTC) Program — a federal investment that expired at the end of December 2021— for Maryland families.

Recent data analyzed by MFB’s Strategy Group revealed that **more than two in five Maryland families (45%) said that their children were often or sometimes not eating enough because food was not affordable.** Additionally, MFB’s research indicates that the expanded CTC Program made a substantial difference in helping mitigate household expenses, as **one in two Maryland households (50%) that received the payments used the extra cash for food.**

“No child should ever go to bed hungry, but our research clearly indicates that this is a sad reality for far too many Maryland children as we emerge from the pandemic,” said MFB CEO & President Carmen Del Guercio. “We are in constant collaboration with our statewide network of community organizations to ensure Maryland families have access to nutritious food while addressing the root causes of hunger. This data shows just how much work remains.”

According to MFB’s analysis of U.S. Census Household Pulse Survey data, Maryland families in the lowest income bracket (with annual incomes less than \$35,000) experienced the highest degree of adversity, with almost one in three families reporting challenges stemming from food insufficiency between June 2021 and January 2022. The Census introduced the concept of food insufficiency as a real-time measure of hardship — in this case, whether a household generally has enough to eat over the span of seven days. In contrast, food insecurity can only be measured more broadly and over longer periods of time.

While it is difficult to measure the specific impact of the CTC program on food insufficiency, data indicates that the program did make a difference in helping households pay for food. In addition to mitigating financial hardship, scholars have hypothesized that the CTC program may also lead to improved health outcomes, particularly among low-income families with young children.

“With inflation and rising costs causing so many families to spend more of their income on basic needs like housing and transportation, the food bank and our network of food assistance partners remain committed to providing the support that Marylanders depend on to feed their children,” Del Guercio added.

About the Maryland Food Bank

The Maryland Food Bank (MFB) is a nonprofit hunger-relief organization dedicated to feeding people, strengthening communities, and ending hunger for more Marylanders. Since March 2020, the food bank’s statewide food assistance network distributed the equivalent of 88 million meals in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. MFB will continue to meet the

immediate needs of vulnerable communities while collaborating with partners to provide resources beyond food and addressing root causes of hunger so that more Marylanders can become financially stable and thrive. To learn more about the Maryland Food Bank, visit www.mdfoodbank.org.

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