



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

PREVENTION &  
PROMOTION SYSTEMS  
GOVERNING COMMITTEE

**Report Back on Food Security for Children 0-5**

**April 16, 2025**

**Anna Potere, Project Director, Child and Family Well-Being**

# Background and Approach

---

## Background

On December 3, 2024, the Board of Supervisors unanimously passed the “Enhancing Linkages for DCFS Impacted Children” motion

Directed the PPSGC to:

- Examine collaborative efforts underway to ensure food security for families with children aged five and under (DCFS-impacted and otherwise)
- Develop recommendations for strengthening related efforts via the Community Pathway

## Approach

- Extensive review of available literature, research, data, and analysis
- Engaged family-serving County departments via survey and/or interviews with subject matter experts
- Interviewed leaders of core pillars of the food security safety net and natural touch points for families with young children



# Organizations Engaged

Los Angeles County Commission for Public Social Services	Los Angeles County Office of Immigrant Affairs	Health Care Coordination for Youth in Child Welfare Workgroup (including Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans)	No Kid Hungry
Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child Protection Hotline</li> <li>Regional Offices</li> <li>Community Based Support Division (Linkages)</li> </ul>	Antelope Valley Partners for Health	Home Visiting Collaborative Leadership Council	Providence Holy Cross Medical Center Welcome Baby Program
Los Angeles County Department of Health Services	Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles	Providence Holy Cross Medical Center Welcome Baby Program	Public Health Foundation Enterprise (PHFE) WIC
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nutrition and Physical Activity Program, Los Angeles County Food Rx Collaborative</li> <li>Office for the Advancement of Early Education</li> <li>Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Nutrition and Physical Activity Program</li> </ul>	Child Care Planning Committee	Los Angeles Best Babies Network	Rio Hondo College
Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services	Child Care Resource Center	Los Angeles Food Funders Network	The Children's Collective
Los Angeles County Office of Education	Children's Hospital Los Angeles	Los Angeles Food Policy Council	University of Southern California Food Systems Institute
Los Angeles County Office of Food Equity	First 5 LA	Los Angeles Regional Food Bank	



# Food Security Pillars and Touchpoints for Families with Young Children

---

## Pillars

- Special Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- CalFresh (i.e., the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - SNAP)
- Head Start/Early Head Start
- Food Banks, Pantries, Farms, and Recovery Programs

## Touchpoints

- Early Care and Education Providers
- Healthcare Providers
- Home Visitors
- Family-Serving County Departments



# Data on Food Security for Families with Young Children

---

**Food security is a significant issue for families with children aged five and under, *AND* utilization of existing resources remains low**

- **26.4%** of households with children aged 5 and under experienced food insecurity  
*(LA County Health Survey, 2023)*
- **56%** of households with children aged 6 and under experienced food insecurity  
*(RAPID Survey, 2024)*

**Children enrolled in public resources such as CalWORKs, Medi-Cal, and CalFresh are also likely eligible to enroll in WIC; however, in 2021, only 2/3 (66.9%) of children enrolled in Medi-Cal were enrolled in WIC** *(Children's Data Network, 2024)*

**Food insecurity also remains prevalent among families who are receiving resources**

- **24%** of households receiving WIC experience food insecurity *(USC Dornsife, 2024)*
- **39%** of households receiving CalFresh experience food insecurity *(USC Dornsife, 2024)*



# Emerging Findings and Strategies

---

## **Finding:** *Available food resources are underutilized*

### **Strategies:**

- Advance data sharing and integration between Medi-Cal and WIC to address barriers to targeted outreach and enrollment
- Leverage natural touchpoints in communities to increase knowledge and awareness of resources and to connect families directly with food, e.g., mobile food distribution models
- Address transportation-related barriers through, vouchers or food delivery programs

## **Finding:** *The federal landscape is having a chilling effect on families*

### **Strategy:**

- Partner with trusted institutions in marginalized communities to directly provide food, disseminate clear information about resources, and build safe access pathways



# Emerging Findings and Strategies

---

**Finding:** *Home-Based Child Care Providers, Family, Friends, and Neighbor Providers in particular, are struggling*

**Strategies:**

- Develop dedicated resource hubs and access pathways
- Make available food resource access grants and direct cash transfers
- Advocacy for equity in rates

**Finding:** *No single coordinating entity exists for addressing food security among families with young children*

**Strategy:**

- Establish a body to facilitate strategic coordination and collaboration, shared learning, and collective impact for this population



# Emerging Findings and Strategies

---

**Finding:** *Threats to the federally funded food security safety net are clear and present dangers*

**Strategy:**

- Develop actionable plans to mitigate negative impacts to this vulnerable population, should these threats be actualized





## Next Steps

---

- Partner with the Child Care Alliance to bring together key stakeholders for a conversation on food security, the need for a coordinating body, and explore possibilities for a path forward
- Convene a Community Pathway 2.0 workgroup on Concrete Supports and Economic Well-Being, with food security as the first area of focus
- Ongoing collaboration with County Departments, First 5 LA, Office of Food Equity, and other key stakeholders

