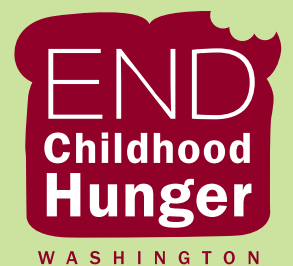




# End Childhood Hunger in Washington

STRATEGIC PLAN



**“The issues facing hungry children can be quite complex, but solving the problem of their hunger is simple: Feed children three nutritious meals each and every day.”**

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# Executive Summary

Even in a state as prosperous as Washington, childhood hunger is a problem. It does not look like hunger portrayed in the media or engrained in the minds of the vast majority of state residents. However, it is real and in need of focused attention across the state.

Almost 300,000 children in Washington live in households that struggle to put food on the table everyday due to lack of resources.<sup>1</sup>

- African-American and Latino households are two to three times more likely than the general population to experience “food insecurity,” meaning they can’t be sure there is enough money for food.
- Families in rural areas, especially in south central Washington, are twice as likely to experience food insecurity.
- 38 percent of all students live in low-income families, qualifying them for free or reduced-price school meals.
- Food banks had more than 6 million visits by hungry households in 2005–2006.
- 15.4 percent of all Washington children (from birth to 17) are living at or below the poverty line. In some parts of the state, as many as 30 percent of all children are living in poverty.

<sup>1</sup>The technical term for this is “food insecurity.” USDA and Census food security and hunger data released in fall 2007.

## WHO WE ARE

End childhood hunger Washington is an initiative of the Children’s Alliance in partnership with Share Our Strength. Its mission is to advance a statewide campaign to end childhood hunger through policy change, collaborative programming, strategic funding and targeted awareness building. This is done in service to our vision that every child in every corner of the state gets three nutritious meals each and every day. This can be done by living our core values of putting kids first, ensuring food security for every child, collaborating regularly, modeling anti-racist practice and acting with integrity.

## WHAT WE KNOW

National discussions are happening in Congress and on the editorial pages about our broken food system. From supporting sustainable farming, to eliminating junk food in schools, to expanding access to school meals, Washington has proven itself a leader on issues that address part of the hunger problem. Yet on other issues that are tightly linked to ending hunger—like food stamp participation or summer meals for kids—Washington ranks far below other states.

Washington State currently implements many of the federal programs, tools and resources available to end childhood hunger. Beginning with the National School Lunch Program in 1946, the United States developed an array of effective anti-hunger tools to help children grow into healthy adults. Federally funded programs such as food stamps, WIC, school meals, summer meals and commodities in

food banks help families, caregivers, schools and community organizations feed children.

Participation in federal nutrition programs makes it possible to reduce hunger with relatively low expenditures of local public and private funds. The leveraging of federal funds helps Washington get an impressive return on the investment of local dollars. On the other hand, by allowing childhood hunger to continue, the price is poorer childhood health, lower academic achievement and creeping insecurity. Simply put, not addressing childhood hunger is more expensive than addressing it.

## KEY FINDINGS

After surveying and interviewing key anti-hunger leaders in Washington, we reached the following conclusions about the feasibility and challenges of ending childhood hunger in our state.

### 1. **The vision of ending childhood hunger in Washington is achievable.**

Participants in the planning process overwhelmingly agree that ending childhood hunger in Washington is an achievable goal. They applaud the boldness of the statement and feel it can serve as a catalyst to garner engagement and support with new audiences.

### 2. **Maximizing participation in current programs is a key means to achieve the vision.**

Key child nutrition programs are underutilized. Many participants in the planning process agree that expanding the reach of these proven programs is a logical first step to ending hunger.

### 3. **Interagency collaboration is essential and cannot be left to chance.**

Many participants in the planning process

cited the lack of effective communications and coordination between and within government agencies as significant barriers to ending childhood hunger.

The absence of effective coordination between state agencies and service providers is also a significant barrier to achieving the goal. Washington's Legislature and/or Governor should establish a high-level interagency food council to promote coordinated and collaborative policy and programming changes.

### 4. **Leadership is essential.**

Interviews with key anti-hunger leaders affirmed that the Children's Alliance is regarded as an organization with both the political and grassroots influence needed to achieve results for kids in Washington

### 5. **Elected officials are the most influential decision-makers for eliminating childhood hunger.**

Participants cited the importance of engaging the Governor and legislative leaders in support of the plan to end childhood hunger in Washington. They articulated the belief that multi-year public policy campaigns, supported by coordinated coalitions of supporters, produce results.

### 6. **Anti-racist practice is a core value and must translate into authentic engagement, collaboration and decision-making.**

The success of the plan to end childhood hunger depends upon engaging communities across Washington, including communities of color, disenfranchised groups and historically underrepresented communities.

### 7. **Childhood hunger and childhood obesity are two sides of the same coin.**

Media coverage of the childhood obesity

epidemic reinforces the misperception that too much food, not too little, is the real problem. In reality, both hunger and obesity are symptoms of our broken food system. They afflict our most vulnerable populations.

#### **8. Skepticism still exists about the prevalence of childhood hunger.**

The reality of childhood hunger in Washington contradicts what most people, including the general public and media, believe it looks like. In Washington state, the prevalence of childhood hunger also contradicts its image as one of the healthiest states in the United States.

### **OUR PLAN**

Federal programs and local initiatives work. They simply aren't reaching every child in need. To put an end to childhood hunger in Washington, we need to improve the systems in place, develop and implement effective policies and programs, and extend the reach of these programs to every child in every corner of the state. End Childhood Hunger Washington has five strategic approaches and ten goals at the core of the initiative.

All five strategic approaches to ending childhood hunger will contribute to successfully meeting the plan's goals. The strategic approaches are interconnected and interdependent.

### **Strategic Approaches**

#### **1. POLICY CHANGE**

End Childhood Hunger Washington is focused on legislative and administrative policy changes at both the state and federal levels that will result in greater participation in and improvement

of underutilized public and private anti-hunger programs for low-income families, communities of color and other communities at high risk of hunger.

#### **2. COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMMING**

Collaborative programming is a means of identifying gaps, sharing information and expertise appropriately, and expanding the reach of successful programs.

#### **3. STRATEGIC FUNDING AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

Strategic resource development will produce plans that present a strong case to funders and leverage public funds.

#### **4. TARGETED AWARENESS CAMPAIGN**

These targeted awareness strategies would support the 10 goals outlined in this plan by identifying communications needs for specific audiences who are critical to effectively implementing the plan.

### **MEASURES OF PROGRESS**

It is important to measure growth progressively in addition to final outcomes. The measures of progress include both qualitative and quantitative points.

### **Ten Goals**

1. Families with low incomes efficiently receive Basic Food (food stamps) support that is sufficient to meet their needs.
2. All children eat a healthy, appealing breakfast and lunch at school.
3. Children and youth eat healthy meals in their communities throughout the summer.
4. Low-income children and families have reliable access to affordable food, especially fresh fruits and vegetables,

in their communities.

5. All pregnant women, infants and young children have a healthy, balanced diet.
6. Young children have healthy food available in early learning and childcare programs.
7. Families with low incomes can achieve greater economic security and build assets.
8. Food banks and meal programs are readily available and provide nutritious food to those who need to supplement their families' food options.
9. Children and youth eat healthy snacks and meals in afterschool programs.
10. Children and families have the knowledge and skills to make healthy food choices through effective nutrition education.

## Our Partners

End Childhood Hunger Washington is a partnership of the Children's Alliance and Share Our Strength and supported by many national and local organizations. Children's Alliance is a statewide children's advocacy organization that ensures laws, policies and programs work for kids. The Children's Alliance advocates for kids by mobilizing communities to hold leaders accountable until Washington has the resources all children need to be healthy and safe. Share Our Strength is a national organization working to make sure no kid in America grows up hungry. Share Our Strength raises funds through culinary events, awards grants to anti-hunger nonprofits and facilitates partnerships, like End Childhood Hunger Washington, to support states' capacity to end childhood hunger. These partnerships are modeled on its Partnership to End Childhood Hunger in the Nation's Capital.

End Childhood Hunger Washington is supported by other national allies: the Food Research and Action Center, which documents hunger and its solutions across the country and Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, which lends its expertise in anti-hunger research and analysis. Locally, Washington Budget and Policy Center also provides data and policy analysis and research. Finally, the UPS Foundation provides financial support for this effort as well as efforts in Florida. Financial support from local organizations include Boeing Corporation, The Seattle Foundation, The Discuren Foundation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Medina Foundation, Washington Dairy Farmers and others.

The Children's Alliance is taking the lead to bring together longtime allies as well as new partners in this ambitious initiative to end childhood hunger. As an organization with a 25-year record of working with others to improve policies for kids, Children's Alliance is uniquely positioned to advocate for positive changes in public policy as well as to build coalitions and collaboration across the state. However, successfully ending childhood hunger in our state requires coordinated efforts from a much broader group of concerned Washingtonians. Parents, businesses, tribes, health care providers, chefs, schools, service providers and media outlets are needed to share their concerns, expertise and strengths on the issue. Together, we can end childhood hunger in Washington.

# Section One: Introduction

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

In Washington State, nearly 300,000 children live in households that struggle to put three nutritious meals on the table each day. Of these children, 35% -105,000 kids - live in households that experience hunger on a regular basis. Childhood hunger in Washington is real despite the lack of public awareness and urgency around the issue. End Childhood Hunger Washington is committed to bringing the issue to the forefront and making sure every child in every corner of the state gets three nutritious meals each and every day.

End Childhood Hunger Washington is a collaborative effort of the Children's Alliance, a statewide children's advocacy organization and the host organization for End Childhood Hunger Washington, and Share Our Strength, a national anti-hunger organization based in Washington DC. Together, the organizations are aligning efforts around ten goals and tailoring implementation strategies that will directly combat childhood hunger. This initiative has the support of national funders, including The UPS Foundation and Share Our Strength, as well as local foundations and donors. At the local level, the Children's Alliance collaborates with partners across the state with the expertise to customize national planning elements for local implementation. Partners include representatives and constituents from various fields and efforts that directly inform, influence and impact the desired outcomes of the strategic plan for End Childhood Hunger Washington. (See

acknowledgements for complete list of partners, and contributors to this plan.

To end childhood hunger in Washington, systems, policies and programs will need to align and strategically engage with one another. In addition, the issue of childhood hunger needs to gain public awareness while positioning itself as a solvable problem. Once the public and policymakers recognize the issue as urgent, the solutions become accessible and straightforward - surround children with nutritious food where they live, learn and play. This will ensure every child in every corner of the state gets three nutritious meals each and every day.

## END CHILDHOOD HUNGER WASHINGTON'S MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

The Children's Alliance and Share Our Strength launched this project by bringing together a wide range of interested Washingtonians, including representatives from the food industry, agriculture, state agencies, schools, food banks and other community groups. More than 80 people participated in a summit in October 2007 to start drafting a blueprint to end childhood hunger in Washington.



Summit participants developed the following vision, mission and values for End Childhood Hunger Washington:

## **Vision**

Every child in every corner of the state gets three nutritious meals each and every day.

## **Mission**

Organize and collaborate across the state to develop a community-wide campaign to end childhood hunger.

## **Values**

### **Put kids first**

- We believe in responding to childhood hunger in ways that meet children and their families where they live, learn and play.
- We ensure policies, programs and opportunities to address the real, on-the-ground needs of kids and their families.

### **Food security for every child**

- We believe programs and policies must be tailored to meet the needs of children of all ages from different regions and cultural backgrounds.

### **Collaboration**

- We recognize that ending childhood hunger requires collaboration. We will succeed by bringing together a broad group of community partners joined by a single mission: to end childhood hunger in Washington.
- We believe there are multiple components to ending childhood hunger. All elements of the plan must work together to reach every child.

### **Anti-racist practice**

- We believe economic injustice lies at the root of hunger in our society. Our efforts must acknowledge and address the impact of racism on our systems and institutions.
- We strive for culturally competent and responsive solutions to childhood hunger that are based on reaching out to and embracing the diverse communities affected by childhood hunger.

### **Integrity**

- We believe that as adults, we are individually and collectively responsible for the well-being of children. We will hold ourselves accountable for ending childhood hunger through sound, competent and effective practices, policies and programs.

# Section Two: Situational Analysis and Strategic Approaches

Beginning in 1995 and for eight years following, Washington ranked among the top five states in the United States for hunger. By 2006, Washington ranked 32nd in the nation for hunger. Washington's improved ranking is due, in part, to policy changes and state investments. However, the change is largely due to poorer performances by other states. Rather than measuring Washington's status by other states' performance, End Childhood Hunger Washington aims to focus on eliminating childhood hunger in Washington on our merits, not relative to other states. Improved rankings are laudable, but ultimately no child should grow up hungry.

## SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

The current state of childhood hunger in Washington serves as a guide for strategically approaching the issue. End Childhood Hunger Washington conducted a situational analysis using a statewide lens. The statewide data evaluated alongside national norms and trends reveal the following:

### Hunger affects more than one-quarter of a million households in Washington.<sup>2</sup>

- One in 10 households is food insecure. "Food insecure" means a family is not certain all household members will be able to eat.
- Households that are food insecure include nearly 300,000 children.
- In 3.6 percent of all Washington households, someone is going hungry.

- African-American and Latino households are two to three times more likely than the general population to experience food insecurity. Households headed by single women are more than three times more likely to be food insecure.

### Washington has not taken full advantage of federal programs already in place to combat childhood hunger.

- 38 percent of all students in Washington qualify for free or reduced-price school meals. Of those who qualify, on an average day in 2005–2006, 71 percent participated in school lunch, and only 29 percent participated in school breakfast.
- Only 14 percent of students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals during the 2006–2007 school year were served by the summer meal program.
- Over the past 10 years in Washington, participation by family home childcare providers in the federal childcare food program has declined 9 percent.
- In Washington, only 68 percent of people eligible for food stamp benefits receive them.

### Hunger and access to anti-hunger programs vary widely in communities across Washington.

- The statewide food insecurity rate is 10.3 percent. Yet in the region that covers Yakima, Kittitas and Klickitat counties, the rate was almost 21 percent.

<sup>2</sup>"Household Food Security in the United States 2006", USDA Economic Research Service 2007.

- In Columbia and Asotin counties, 20 percent of kids who receive free or reduced-price meals at school received meals in the summer of 2007. Yet that same year in four other counties, there was not a single summer meal program offered.
- In Washington, 49 percent of all infants are served by the WIC Program, designed to help low-income mothers and young children. Yet in rural counties, 66 percent of all infants are served by the WIC Program.
- Snohomish County has the largest number of childcare sites—1,154—participating in the federal childcare food program. Four counties have only one participating site.

**People don't believe childhood hunger is a major problem in Washington, but they do believe it is a problem that can be solved.**

- A majority of people in a national survey <sup>3</sup> identified hunger primarily as an international problem affecting developing economies, not a problem in the United States.
- Unlike other health issues, most people don't have firsthand experience with hunger.
- Yet more than 60 percent of people surveyed said the government spends too little to reduce hunger in the United States, and 76 percent of people surveyed believe hunger can be reduced drastically if it is made a priority.

## STRATEGIC APPROACHES

End Childhood Hunger Washington identified five strategic approaches as an overarching framework for the multiple activities identified in the plan. These approaches group activities according to the type of work involved:

- Policy change
- Collaborative programming
- Strategic funding
- Targeted awareness campaigns
- Measures of progress

All five strategic approaches to ending childhood hunger will contribute to successfully meeting the plan's goals; these strategic approaches are interconnected and interdependent. Participants in the planning process noted that different organizations and individuals will be most suited to activities that fall within some—not all—of the approaches identified.

### Policy Change

End Childhood Hunger Washington is focused on legislative and administrative policy changes at all levels that will result in greater participation in and improvement of underutilized public and private anti-hunger programs.

Federal policy determines a large part of the public sector resources and programs articulated in the plan's 10 goals (on pages 4 and 5). End Childhood Hunger Washington collaborates with other states to positively influence federal legislation and budget priorities. This plan also focuses on strategic state investments that leverage federal resources available through federal policy. At the state level, End Childhood Hunger Washington advocates for policy changes that

<sup>3</sup>Survey by: Alliance to End Hunger, March 2006.

improve access for low-income families, rural families and families of color to anti-hunger programs in local communities.

Additionally, a significant component of policy change is administrative: monitoring how policy is translated into practice to ensure that programs and policies meet families' needs effectively, respectfully and appropriately.

### **Collaborative Programming**

Nutrition programs based in communities across Washington provide food assistance to children through schools, parks, after-school programs, clinics, food banks and more. End Childhood Hunger Washington's analysis demonstrates that these resources are unevenly distributed, resulting in gaps in services for children at risk of hunger. Comprehensive nutrition supports are available in only a few places in the state.

Collaborative programming is a means of identifying gaps, sharing information and expertise appropriately and expanding the reach of successful programs across systems. In addition, it includes coordinating the work of individual organizations within the framework of End Childhood Hunger Washington.

Elements of the plan focus on state-level program support and coordination as well as bolstering efforts to meet locally identified needs. End Childhood Hunger Washington will facilitate coordination and communications among state agencies, statewide and community-based organizations, and new programs with the goal of creating a network of comprehensive nutrition services that reaches every corner of the state.

### **Strategic Funding and Resource Development**

Participants in the planning process outlined concerns about the long-term investments necessary to achieve the goal of ending childhood hunger in Washington. There are opportunities for investment and outreach in local communities; however, local funding for anti-hunger initiatives currently exists in only a few communities. Strategic resource development will produce plans that present a strong case to funders and leverage public funds. Creative thinking by state agencies and local nonprofits about leveraging federal and state resources will result in more efficiency and a stronger case for investment. By bringing together the groups' ideas and targeting solicitation of funds, End Childhood Hunger Washington hopes to surface public and private funding sources, share ideas with individual organizations, and send proposals to potential funders that are backed by a collaborative approach to solving the problem.

### **Targeted Awareness**

Many participants in the planning process identified the need for a coordinated public awareness campaign to create greater concern about the problem of childhood hunger in Washington and build a stronger expectation that the problem can be solved. Marketing and communications research does not support the concept of mounting a broad general awareness campaign; however, End Childhood Hunger Washington identified the need for more targeted awareness campaigns. These targeted awareness strategies would support the 10 goals outlined in this plan by identifying communications needs for specific audiences who are critical to effectively implementing the plan.

Each goal in the plan identifies specific awareness initiatives and identifies a target

audience for each. Taken together, these targeted campaigns will have a broader impact on ending childhood hunger than a more generalized awareness campaign.

### **Measures of Progress**

Participants in the planning process emphasized the importance of measuring growth progressively in addition to measuring final outcomes. They also noted the importance of recognizing both qualitative and quantitative progress as significant and valuable. Each goal has a variety of objectives that fall within a strategic approach. However, one measure may serve multiple objectives since combined efforts often work together to influence both qualitative and quantitative change. End Childhood Hunger will collect, analyze and report data that measures progress in each goal.

# Section Three: Key Findings

End Childhood Hunger Washington used a combination of methods to gather information and feedback regarding the goal of ending childhood hunger in Washington. The methods included research, data analysis, meetings, telephone interviews, an online survey and an interactive, daylong Summit to End Childhood Hunger in October 2007. The strategic plan is a response to the key findings that follow.

## **The vision is achievable.**

Participants in the planning process overwhelmingly agree that ending childhood hunger in Washington is an achievable goal. They applaud the boldness of the statement and feel it can serve as a catalyst to garner engagement and support with new audiences. However, making that vision a reality requires strong leadership, a commitment to increased collaboration and communication, and strategies that include policy, programming, resource development and awareness. This plan addresses these areas and the overarching needs for leadership and collaboration by establishing measurable objectives in the 10 goals that will focus partners' collaborative work and leadership.

## **Maximizing participation in current programs is a key means to achieve the vision.**

Key child nutrition programs are underutilized. Many participants in the planning process agree that expanding the reach of these proven programs is a logical first step to ending hunger. Planning focused particularly on expanding the reach of school breakfast, summer meal programs and food

stamps. This plan acknowledges the need to increase resources and develop the capacity in local communities to bring these programs to children at risk of going hungry. The plan includes measurable objectives designed to increase participation and to increase equity across the state.

## **Interagency collaboration is essential and cannot be left to chance.**

Many participants in the planning process cited the lack of effective communications and high-level coordination within and among government agencies as significant barriers to ending childhood hunger. The absence of effective coordination between state agencies and service providers is also limiting. Various coordinating groups have existed over the years, including an interagency food issues coordinating council (IFIC) and a group convened in response to USDA requirements called SNAP (Statewide Nutrition Action Plan) as well as multiple coalitions or working groups. Yet none of these configurations has lasted or has the clear mission, structural support and leadership composition to respond to the full range of issues and opportunities addressed in this planning process.

This plan recommends that the Legislature and/or Governor establish a high-level interagency food council modeled on those in other states. This interagency council would bring together state agencies, advocates and service providers to support strategic, coordinated policy change, collaborative services and effective communication across programs and systems in order to end childhood hunger in Washington.

**Leadership is essential.**

Interviews with key anti-hunger leaders affirmed that the Children's Alliance is regarded as an organization with both the political and grassroots influence needed to achieve results for kids. Most often participants affirmed that the Children's Alliance is best positioned to change public systems and bring advocates and public leaders together to create a common vision and campaign for change. This plan thus assigns the Children's Alliance the role of providing leadership in effecting policy change. Additionally, in this plan the Children's Alliance is assigned roles in promoting collaborative programming and developing the resources needed to effectively implement the plan.

**Elected officials are the most influential decision-makers for eliminating childhood hunger.**

Participants cited the importance of engaging the Governor and legislative leaders in support of the plan to end childhood hunger in Washington. They articulated the belief that multi-year public policy campaigns supported by coordinated coalitions of supporters produce results. This plan reflects that belief and draws on lessons learned from the successful recent efforts to eliminate the co-pay for some reduced-price school meals.

**Anti-racist practice is a core value and must translate into authentic engagement, collaboration and decision-making.**

The success of the plan to end childhood hunger depends upon engaging communities across Washington, including communities of color, disenfranchised groups and historically underrepresented communities. This plan includes strategies for engaging these communities and strategies for examining and responding to the impact of racism on vulnerable populations.

**Childhood hunger and childhood obesity are symptoms of the same issue: our broken food system.**

Media coverage of the childhood obesity epidemic reinforces the misperception that too much food, not too little, is the real problem. In reality, both hunger and obesity stem from our broken food system. Lack of nutritious, healthy food disproportionately affects our most vulnerable children and families. Low-income neighborhoods often lack affordable, healthy foods and limited safe opportunities for physical activity. This plan makes the connection between food policy, the built environment, poverty and racism, and other factors in order to make a real impact on both childhood hunger and childhood obesity.

**Skepticism still exists about the prevalence of childhood hunger.**

The reality of childhood hunger in Washington contradicts what most people, including the general public and media, believe it looks like. In Washington, the prevalence of childhood hunger also contradicts its image as one of the healthiest states in the United States. Many participants in the planning process see the need for a major public awareness campaign to change public opinion. This plan focuses on what is called targeted awareness, which defines specific campaigns designed for target audiences who are essential to achieving the goal.

# Section Four: 10 Goals to End Childhood Hunger in Washington

1. Families with low incomes efficiently receive Basic Food (food stamps) support that is sufficient to meet their needs.
2. All children eat a healthy, appealing breakfast and lunch at school
3. Children and youth eat healthy meals in their communities throughout the summer.
4. Low-income children and families have access to affordable food, especially fresh fruits and vegetables, in their communities.
5. All pregnant women, infants and young children have a healthy, balanced diet.
6. Young children have healthy food available in early learning and childcare programs.
7. Families with low incomes can achieve greater economic security and build assets.
8. Food banks and meal programs are readily available and provide nutritious food to those who need to supplement their families' food options.
9. Children and youth eat healthy snacks and meals in after-school programs.
10. Children and families have the knowledge and skills to make healthy food choices through effective nutrition education.



## GOAL 1

### **FAMILIES WITH LOW INCOMES EFFICIENTLY RECEIVE BASIC FOOD (FOOD STAMPS) SUPPORT THAT IS SUFFICIENT TO MEET THEIR NEEDS.**

The Food Stamp Program is America's number one defense against hunger. The Food Stamp Program (known as Basic Food in Washington) provides cash assistance for families to buy food using an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card. This program provides benefits to a wider group of Americans than any other nutrition program; in 2006 alone, the federal government spent almost \$595 million in food stamp benefits in Washington.<sup>4</sup> In July 2007, more than 535,000 people statewide received food stamp benefits. Basic Food is also a key disaster response resource: 30,000 residents in southwest Washington received assistance in 2007 following winter flooding and power outages. Yet overall, almost one-third of the people in Washington who are eligible for Basic Food are missing out on the most effective anti-hunger tool we have.

Washington can increase its program participation rate with a focused effort to simplify application and administrative procedures, provide effective outreach to eligible populations, normalize and destigmatize the use of benefits, and change program rules and funding at the state and federal levels. Use of similar strategies by DSHS increased participation from 54 percent in 2001 to 68 percent in 2006. By making additional improvements, the goal of 90 percent participation by eligible families will be possible, ensuring families will have benefits that help their households' bottom lines and enable them to purchase more healthy foods for their children.

### **Policy Objectives**

1. Washington's congressional delegation understands the importance of the Food Stamp Program and advocates in the House and Senate for policies that promote program access and benefits that meet the needs of hungry families.
2. The State Legislature understands the importance of Basic Food and provides policy leadership to ensure Washington takes best advantage of state options to strengthen the program, strategic funding for program improvements, and adequate administrative funding and direction to ensure the prompt delivery of benefits and courteous, efficient customer service. Key among these policy changes is: implementing the approved gross income change (from 130% to 200% of federal poverty level) to apply for Basic Food, continuing to pursue positive state options, and promptly implementing federal program changes that improve program access.
3. DSHS works with other state agencies and community partners to increase access to Basic Food through expanded EBT technology in a diverse range of food markets, including farmers markets, corner stores and other types of food retailers.

<sup>4</sup>Food Research and Action Center, "State of the States 2007: A Profile of Food and Nutrition Programs Across the Nation" (<http://www.frac.org>).

## Collaborative Programming Objectives

1. State agencies that provide other nutrition services (e.g., Department of Health—WIC, OSPI, CTED, etc.) continue to improve interagency collaborative efforts to increase effective Basic Food outreach.
2. Washington’s Basic Food Outreach and Education Program (BFOE) facilitates a broad understanding of Basic Food eligibility and benefits, provides assistance in applying for benefits and informs state administrators of program barriers thier contacts experience.
3. The Basic Food Program, local service providers and advocated create a broad understanding in local communities of the purpose of the Basic Food Program, how to access benefits and how to reach program administrators with customer service questions.
4. Community-based organizations communicate to communities and potential food assistance recipients all important changes DSHS has made, or will be making, to increase program access and participation.
5. State administrators understand the role and benefit of retaining eligible people in the Basic Food Program and adopt proven strategies to increase retention.
6. Washington joins with other members of the Western Region Anti-Hunger Consortium in designing a matrix of program barriers and strategies that address these barriers, to prioritize effective strategies at work in the western states, and to advocate for responsive federal policy that supports outreach funding and activities.
7. DSHS works with USDA and other

state and community-based agencies and organizations to continue to ensure that Disaster Food Stamps are issued promptly when disasters are declared by the Governor and federal assistance is requested.

## Strategic Funding Objectives

1. Federal funding for the Food Stamp Program provides benefits that are sufficient to purchase healthy food for participating families (e.g., change the basis for program benefits from the Thrifty Food Plan to a more reasonable standard that is updated to meet current dietary guidelines).
2. Strategic state funding investments to ensure that:
  - All legal residents of Washington have access to either the federal Food Stamp Program or a state-funded program with similar rules.
  - Outreach contractors in local communities receive the support they need to get matching funds from USDA for outreach activities.
  - Outreach is provided primarily to assist populations that currently have difficulty accessing services.
3. Collaboration with interested foundations and corporate funding sources results in increased private sector resources for activities to include:
  - Creative and nontraditional outreach strategies, especially to communities of color, with the focus on introducing strategies that can be later implemented in the Basic Food Outreach and Education program with federal matching funds.

- Engaging with DSHS in meaningful dialogue regarding potential program options and service delivery design elements, based on best practices and models from other states.
- Expanded local and regional coalitions that share information about best practices, funding, resources and cross-training result in an increased local and statewide food stamp participation.

### **Targeted Awareness Campaign Objectives**

#### **4. Target audience: Families with low incomes**

Increase information through normally available media about the benefits of the program, how to access the program and use of the EBT card.

#### **5. Target audience: Families with low incomes**

Ensure that community agencies providing other services to families with low incomes have good, clear information on Basic Food, can easily access online screeners (such as [www.parenthelp123.org](http://www.parenthelp123.org)), “Do I Qualify?” electronic screening tool ([www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/TEC](http://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/TEC)) and the Online Application ([www.onlineapp.dshs.wa.gov](http://www.onlineapp.dshs.wa.gov)), and know how to contact local Community Services Offices.

#### **6. Target audience: Grocers and grocery sales staff**

Develop a resource for grocers that outlines program benefits for families and communities and addresses common myths as well as negative behavior by grocery staff. Inform this resource by hosting one informal focus group of grocery staff and one informal group of program recipients to identify issues,

misinformation and strategies for change.

### **Measures of Progress**

- Federal and state legislation and administrative policies include positive changes for families eligible for Basic Food, including outreach and education activities.
- Increase participation by eligible families in Basic Food.
- Increase participation by citizen children of immigrants in Basic Food.
- Outreach activities and other information sources about Basic Food are easily accessible and relevant to families with low incomes, especially in communities of color.
- Increase the percentage of Basic Food households that retain eligibility for their entire certification period without interruption.
- Increase the percentage of Basic Food households that retain eligibility at the end of certification period.
- 98% of eligible household applying for expedited Basic Food assistance (due to immediate need) will receive this assistance within 5 days.
- Increase number of food retailers, including farmers markets, which accept EBT payment.

## Summary of Goal

The Food Stamp Program (called Basic Food in Washington) is the single most effective anti-hunger program in the country. Washington now ranks 18th among states in food stamp participation. Yet thousands of hungry families still are struggling harder than they should have to put food on their tables because they aren't getting the help of Basic Food. There are many reasons why participation in this program is low, including complex eligibility and enrollment processes, limited outreach strategies, and low average benefit levels. Effective solutions to this problem will require commitment to a combination of policy, program, resource and targeted awareness strategies in order to meet the goal of 90 percent of eligible Washington families receiving Basic Food.

## GOAL 2

### **ALL CHILDREN EAT A HEALTHY, APPEALING, BREAKFAST AND LUNCH AT SCHOOL.**

For five days a week, almost 10 months a year, kids that go to school have the opportunity to eat two nutritious meals every day. Many of the students who eat lunch at school could benefit from eating breakfast at school as well. When kids eat federally reimbursed school meals, they are combating hunger with nutritionally balanced and healthy meals. School meals are essential tools in the campaign to end childhood hunger and fight childhood obesity. Yet there is work to be done to make sure that more students take advantage of the meals provided by schools.

Not all the food available in schools is healthy or appealing to kids. Only a fraction of students who eat lunch at school also eat breakfast at school. Of the 1,989 schools in Washington, only 307 offer the full array of possible school-based nutrition programs available for kids: breakfast, lunch and snack. Food and beverages sold outside the school meal program compete with school meal programs, affecting participation and providing no guarantee of a balanced diet for students. End Childhood Hunger Washington builds on current momentum and past successes in communities to ensure students can eat two nutritious meals and a snack each and every school day.

## Policy Objectives

1. OSPI and community partners work with the State Legislature to eliminate the co-pay for reduced price lunches for all low-income students in all grades, from pre-kindergarten through high school.
2. OSPI, in collaboration with school districts and community partners, implements necessary policies and procedures, when applicable, to align practices with current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
3. OSPI, Department of Agriculture, the State Legislature and community partners work collaboratively to implement procurement policy changes to allow and support schools and other public institutions to purchase Washington-grown food.
4. School staff and administrators work together to coordinate transportation, class schedules, facilities and staffing to make breakfast part of the school day, so all students have timely, accessible, socially acceptable ways to eat meals at school.
5. School districts have appropriate resources to develop, implement and evaluate school wellness policies that include nutrition guidelines for all food served in the school environment in order to meet expectations for a nutritious, balanced diet.
6. School wellness policies include nutrition guidelines and promote participation in federal nutrition programs for all after-school or summer programs in school buildings.

## Collaborative Programming Objectives

1. School districts, OSPI and community partners work together to ensure every school in Washington offers lunch and breakfast through the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program to all students in a manner that encourages participation and minimizes stigma for students qualifying for subsidized meals.
2. Schools, OSPI and community partners join together to develop and market proven strategies for local school districts to increase participation in the school breakfast program to the national target participation level of 60 percent (i.e., 60 out of every 100 students who participate in the school lunch program will also participate in the school breakfast program).
3. OSPI, local health districts and other community organizations work with school districts to ensure that foods sold outside the school meal program do not negatively impact participation in the federal meal programs.
4. OSPI, Department of Agriculture, Department of Health and community partners work collaboratively to implement and expand the Washington-Grown Fresh Fruit and Vegetables program.
5. School districts implement school wellness policies that include a mechanism to engage students, teachers and parents in providing input on healthy school meals that appeal to students, including attention to the cultural diversity of students.
6. After-school programs in schools work

together with school administrators and nutrition directors to ensure programs serve nutritious snacks or meals.

### **Strategic Funding Objectives**

1. Advocates work with OSPI and the State Legislature to fully and permanently fund the elimination of the co-pay for reduced price meals for all low-income students in pre-kindergarten through high school.
2. Washington's congressional delegation supports increasing per-meal reimbursement for school meals to fully implement current USDA and the Institute of Medicine dietary guidelines in local communities.
3. The U.S. Congress and/or the State Legislature provides funds for the capital improvements needed for school nutrition programs to ensure kids have timely, accessible, socially acceptable ways to eat meals at school.
4. Schools have the resources to make the transportation, facilities, scheduling and serving decisions necessary to make breakfast part of the school day.
5. Schools have the necessary funding to work with students, teachers, parents and community partners to develop and implement comprehensive and culturally competent school wellness policies.

### **Targeted Awareness Campaign Objectives**

#### **1. Target audience: School district administrators**

School districts utilize proven strategies to make school breakfast part of the school day and increase participation in the

School Breakfast Program.

School districts implement school wellness policies that promote school meals programs to all students.

School districts eliminate competitive food and beverage sales near meal times to make school nutrition programs the main source of foods and beverages.

#### **2. Target audience: Students**

Schools and community partners promote the importance of starting the day with a healthy breakfast and eating a nutritious lunch every day, especially focusing on communication tactics that will appeal to specific age groups.

#### **3. Target audience: Parents**

Parents encourage school boards and administrators to implement school nutrition programs that provide:

- a) adequate time to eat each meal,
- b) appealing, student-acceptable, nutritious meals, and
- c) nutrition education for all students, teachers and administrators.

### **Measures of Progress**

- Increase the percentage of schools that offer school lunch and breakfast programs from 95 percent to 100 percent.
- Increase participation by low-income students in the federally reimbursed school breakfast and lunch programs.
- Improve the nutritional quality of school meals by aligning them with current Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Increase the federal and state reimbursement for nutritious school meals.
- Increase the percentage of school districts that have developed and implemented a comprehensive and culturally competent

school wellness policy.

- Schools serve more locally raised food, especially produce.
- Increase the number of eligible schools with after-school programs that participate in the federal Afterschool Snack Program.
- Eliminate competitive foods and beverages to increase consumption of nutritious school meals.
- School nutrition programs generate the revenue they need to become fiscally sound.

### Summary of Goal

Schools can provide a federally reimbursed breakfast, lunch and after-school snack to children every school day, making schools essential allies in ending childhood hunger. Parents and educators know that hungry, growing students must have a variety of nutritious, appealing foods in the cafeteria and throughout the school building to thrive. Policy-makers at every level of government, as well as educators and advocates, will build on successes in Washington and continue to work together to provide sufficient policy and funding supports to ensure that school meals (especially breakfast) are more accessible, nutritious and appealing for all students.

## GOAL 3

### CHILDREN AND YOUTH EAT HEALTHY MEALS IN THEIR COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE SUMMER.

Low-income children rely on meals served at school to ensure they get at least two solid meals a day. In a state with some school districts where more than 95 percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price school meals, access to these meals is critical for ensuring kids don't go hungry and are prepared to succeed in school. During summertime when school is out, kids and their families no longer have easy access to this vital service. Of all the schoolchildren in Washington who benefit from federally funded school lunch programs, only 14 percent participate<sup>5</sup> in federal Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). SFSP ensures children can eat nutritious meals all through the year, not just during the school year.

Hosting a meal site is the critical first step in feeding hungry children in the summertime. In Washington, schools are the most common host for summer meal programs. They are accustomed to feeding kids and understand the important connection between hunger and the ability to do well in school. Other organizations (such as parks and recreation programs, tribes, vacation bible schools and Boys & Girls Clubs) host summer meals because they understand that an essential part of caring for kids during the summer is ensuring they eat healthy meals. Finally, there are a smaller number of summer meal sites (at parks, apartment complexes, community centers, etc.) that are stand-alone sites whose sole purpose is to feed children in the summertime. These types of community resources provide innumerable opportunities to feed children in the summer, but organizations that host a site need to be able to manage the program requirements in ways

<sup>5</sup>Food Research and Action Center, "State of the States 2007: Profile of Federal Food and Nutrition Programs" (<http://www.frac.org>).

that fit their organizational capacity.

A combination of outreach, training and collaboration in local communities has proven that organizations can effectively sponsor programs and host sites that provide great opportunities for kids to eat nutritious meals in the summertime.

### **Policy Objectives**

1. Washington's congressional delegation understands the importance of feeding children in the summertime, or whenever school is not in session, and advocates in the House and Senate for policies that promote program access and funding that support high-quality programs in every corner of the state.
2. The State Legislature understands the importance of feeding children in the summertime, or whenever school is not in session, and provides the policy and strategic investment needed to ensure that nutrition programs are well-integrated in all summer enrichment, education and remedial programs funded by the Legislature.

### **Collaborative Programming Objectives**

1. Develop and implement a statewide plan to increase outreach and training for local service providers to ensure increased participation in summer meal programs in communities with high needs.
2. OSPI, with help from community partners, provides timely outreach, communication and streamlined training to previous sites to encourage them to enroll again and to identify possible new sites in time to enroll for the upcoming summer.

3. OSPI, with help from community partners, provides timely, effective training and technical assistance, based on models such as the Food Research and Action Center's Standards of Excellence, to enable more organizations to manage the responsibilities of being an effective summer meal program sponsor and/or site.
4. Encourage larger service providers to recruit local, smaller-scale programs (e.g., vacation bible schools, community centers, etc.) to host sites.
5. Recruit non-service provider partners (e.g., housing complexes, park neighbors, trailer parks, camp sites, etc.) to host sites.

### **Strategic Funding Objectives**

1. Washington's congressional delegation understands the importance of feeding children in the summertime, or whenever school is not in session, and advocates in the House and Senate for funding that supports high-quality programs in every corner of the state.
2. Invest in the 'Feed Your Brain' partnership. This summer literacy and meals model supports ongoing technical assistance to rural sites and provides training on effective outreach practices, enrichment activities or curriculum, and improving the nutritional quality and appeal of meals in high-need rural sites.



3. Public and private funders prioritize applications for out-of-school-time programs (e.g., 21st Century Learning Centers, summer enrichment, etc.) that participate in SFSP.
4. Private sector funding prioritizes programs that serve summer meals for longer than four weeks.
5. Provide resources for site start-up costs, especially equipment (refrigeration, coolers, etc.) for sites that typically don't serve food.
6. Programs have resources to invest in improving the nutritional quality and appeal of food served at summer meal sites.

### Targeted Awareness Campaign Objectives

#### 1. Target audience: Families with low incomes

Provide multilingual information through schools, community organizations and other mediums about the benefits of summer meals and how to access local programs.

#### 2. Target audience: Legislators, community leaders and funders

Provide targeted, community-level information about child hunger rates and participation in the summer meals and connect it to the impact on health and learning.

#### 3. Target audience: Legislators and funders

Promote awareness of research that connects learning and hunger, and documents learning loss over the summer months in order to promote positive outcomes of supporting children and youth during summertime (e.g., Fight Crime,

Invest in Kids model).

#### 4. Target audience: Summer meal sponsors and sites

Create and implement a nutrition campaign and training to improve the nutritional quality and appeal of food served at summer meal sites.

#### 5. Target audience: Large-scale community service providers (e.g., parks and recreation programs, Boys & Girls Clubs, 21st Century Learning Centers, etc.)

Encourage organizations to utilize economies of scale and organizational capacity to become SFSP sponsors.

#### 6. Target audience: Non-program entities (e.g., low-income housing sites, neighborhood councils, parks, etc.)

Encourage organizations to utilize their community relationships and resources to become SFSP sponsors or sites.

### Measures of Progress

- Increase percent of free/reduced-price eligible students who participate in summer meals.
- Child Nutrition reauthorization includes positive program and funding changes for programs in the summer months and whenever school is not in session.
- Increase the number of sponsors and open sites participating in summer meals programs, particularly in rural and underserved communities.
- Increase the number of days that summer meals are served per site.
- OSPI minimizes the training requirements for returning sites.
- Increase the retention rates for sponsors or

organizations that previously participated in the summer meal program.

- Improve program quality and administration of summer meal sites.
- Improve nutritional quality and appeal of food served at summer meal sites.
- Increase state-funded and privately funded resources for site start-up costs for sites that typically don't serve food.

### Summary of Goal

At a federally funded open summer meal site, any child (babies to teenagers) can eat a meal for free. The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) ensures children do not go hungry during the summer months. However, in 2007, there were four counties in Washington<sup>6</sup> that did not have one single summer meal site. In addition, no county in the state served summer meals to more than 20 percent of kids who qualify for free or reduced-price school meals during the school year. It would be naïve to assume these children ate on their own when they take advantage of meal programs during the school year.

To be most effective, summer meal programs must be both available and accessible in meaningful ways for families. Families must know about and be able to count on options in their communities. Kids have to be able to get to the sites safely. Finally, sites must be open often enough and long enough during the summer that families can rely on them. Providing effective training, outreach and funding for high-quality summer meal programs is one of the most effective ways to end childhood hunger.

<sup>6</sup> Jefferson; Lincoln; San Juan and Wahkiakum Counties.

## GOAL 4

### CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WITH LOW INCOMES HAVE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE FOOD, ESPECIALLY FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES, IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.

Hunger and poor health, especially obesity and diabetes, are intricately connected problems for children. The high price of nutritious foods—especially fruits and vegetables—means that families with low incomes cannot afford the food they know is best for their children's health and diet. Similarly, fruits and vegetables are expensive for schools and other institutions that feed children.

Fresh produce also is hard to buy in many communities because there are few shopping choices. In both rural and urban communities, the only place to buy food may be the convenience store or the gas station. When there are supermarkets or farmers markets close by, prices for fresh food are often more competitive, and people can more easily afford to buy healthier foods. Additionally, expanding participation in federal nutrition programs, such as the Food Stamp program and the WIC Program, expands access to healthier foods for families with low incomes. Addressing the interconnected nature of the issues of childhood hunger and obesity requires expanding affordable food shopping choices for families as well as providing children with more nutritious choices, including fruits and vegetables, everywhere and every time they eat.

### Policy Objectives

1. OSPI, Department of Health and Department of Agriculture work collaboratively with community partners and the Legislature to implement procurement policy changes

that enable schools and other public institutions to expand Farm to School programs and purchase fresh, local produce at affordable prices.

2. Implement an effective Washington-Grown Fresh Fruit and Vegetables program that provides free produce and nutrition education resources to schools with a significant portion of low-income students.
3. Certify new farmers markets in rural communities and in low-income urban neighborhoods to accept Basic Food (EBT cards), WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) checks and other non-cash payment.
4. Ensure farmers markets are permissible vendors for fruits and vegetables in the new authorized WIC foods.
5. United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Washington's congressional delegation and the State Legislature understand the importance of providing healthy fruits and vegetables for mothers and young children, and provide adequate funds and program support to the federal WIC Program and WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP).
6. The State Legislature, state agencies, private funders and community partners work together to initiate programs in Washington modeled after the Supermarket and Corner Store Campaigns developed by the Food Trust and\* others, which encourages public and private investment in increasing access to food markets in underserved communities.

### **Collaborative Programming Objectives**

1. Department of Health, in partnership with local WIC agencies and the Washington State Farmers Market Association, works to develop and implement strategies that improve WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program redemption rates.
2. Local coalitions examine availability of fresh produce in urban and rural communities, local plans outline steps needed at the state and local level to increase availability.
3. Implement an effective, coordinated farm-to-food-bank program that enables food banks to purchase fruits and vegetables directly from local farms.
4. Local gardening programs, WSU Extension programs and local growers partner with schools and other community organizations to create and sustain community and school gardens and to promote gardening education.

### **Strategic Funding Objectives**

1. DSHS works with other state agencies and community partners to support funds for installing and operating EBT/debit/credit technology at farmers markets and other food markets.
2. Department of Health and community partners work with Washington's congressional delegation and State Legislature to fund WIC FMNP so all eligible households receive their maximum benefit.
3. Public and private investment in capital improvements and equipment for rural communities' businesses (e.g., small

\*[www.thefoodtrust.org/php/programs/index/php](http://www.thefoodtrust.org/php/programs/index/php).

groceries, convenience stores, corner markets, etc) enable small shops to properly handle and store fresh food, especially produce.

## **Targeted Awareness Campaign Objectives**

### **1. Target audience: WIC clients**

Develop marketing materials, nutrition education and other necessary information to promote the new WIC authorized foods, a program that provides WIC clients more purchasing power for fruits and vegetables.

### **2. Target audience: Farmers markets**

Develop and implement comprehensive EBT communications plan and materials for farmers markets.

### **3. Target audience: WIC clients**

Widely distribute and publicize paper and web-based multilingual materials that clearly identify WIC offices and farmers markets (with market days and times).

### **4. Target audience: Grocers and other food markets**

Develop information, marketing materials and other useful information to promote the purchasing power of people with low incomes (through food stamps, WIC—especially its new authorized foods, WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program, etc.) and the benefits to individual businesses and local economies of marketing to their needs.

## **Measures of Progress**

- Increase number of schools participating in Farm to School programs.
- Increase the amount of locally raised food served in schools and other institutions that feed low-income children.

- Increase use of non-cash payment (EBT, WIC, debit and credit technology) at farmers markets and other food markets.
- Increase dollars spent/redemption of the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) checks at farmers markets.
- Increase the number of supermarkets, grocery stores and green grocers offering affordable, fresh produce in low-income communities.
- Increase number of community gardens and gardening education in low-income neighborhoods and schools.

## **Summary of Goal**

Surrounding children with fresh food where they live, learn and play will help combat childhood hunger with healthy, nutritious food. Hungry children are also more likely to be overweight children because one of the tragic outcomes of poverty in the United States is that affordable food is often high in calories but low in nutrients. While many current efforts focus on the individual behavior changes necessary to improve diets, End Childhood Hunger Washington examines the structural as well as affordability barriers to making healthy choices. Supporting institutions and community programs (schools, WIC clinics, food banks, community gardens, etc.) in their efforts to offer more fresh foods will enable children to get the fruits, vegetables and healthy foods that fill their stomachs and help them grow into healthy adulthood.

## GOAL 5

### **ALL PREGNANT WOMEN, INFANTS AND YOUNG CHILDREN HAVE A HEALTHY, BALANCED DIET.**

New research continues to show that what happens even before we are born affects how we grow, learn and develop into healthy adulthood. Research shows that diet and nutrition during pregnancy can affect children's nutrition and health later in life, especially as it relates to diabetes and obesity. Therefore, ensuring good health for pregnant women, mothers and their young children includes providing them access to high-quality nutrition. The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (commonly known as WIC) is designed to help the most vulnerable mothers and young children with those most basic elements of a healthy start in life. In addition to providing supplemental nutritious food, health and growth assessments, and referrals to medical and community services, WIC supports a healthy diet for mothers, babies and young children. The WIC Program provides support services and nutrition assistance to promote nutritious foods during pregnancy, exclusive breast-feeding for at least six months, and a balanced diet of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, healthy proteins and fats throughout early childhood.

WIC serves almost half of all babies born in Washington, an impressive participation rate in a successful program. Yet the WIC Program is still not reaching everyone it could, and many families stop using WIC services while they are still eligible. End Childhood Hunger Washington's goal is to ensure that all eligible women and children get the care and nutrition they need with the help of WIC in their communities.

### **Policy Objectives**

1. Federal and state policy-makers understand the benefits of the WIC Program and provide sufficient administrative support to enable Department of Health to expand WIC services into underserved communities while maintaining a high level of quality care in existing WIC agencies.
2. WIC agencies, clients, advocates and community partners work together to develop timely, appropriate plans for policy implementation, especially related to new authorized WIC foods.
3. Vendor rules for WIC ensure that new authorized foods are of good quality and available at affordable prices in every corner of the state.
4. WIC works with other state programs, including Basic Food, Basic Health and others, to allow expedited certification for clients.
5. Federal and state policy-makers develop and implement a plan for the technology and support to destigmatizing electronic benefit transfer cards (EBT) for WIC in Washington.
6. Legislators, working with community partners and WIC, enact policies that protect and promote breast-feeding, including policies related to maternity leave, breast-feeding in public spaces and other relevant issues.

### **Collaborative Programming Objectives**

1. Home visiting programs and other programs that work with young families collaborate with the WIC Program to ensure families have enrollment and benefit information about WIC.

2. The WIC Program works with early learning programs, such as Head Start and ECEAP, to encourage enrollment and retention in WIC among children over age 2.
3. Low-income housing programs with supportive services work with the WIC Program to ensure residents have effective enrollment and benefit information about WIC.
4. The WIC Program promotes nutrition and breast-feeding programs based on peer support group models (i.e., learning from other mothers).
5. The WIC Program works with food banks and other community-based food programs to promote the health benefits and cost-effectiveness of breast-feeding.

#### **Strategic Funding Objectives**

1. Federal and state policy-makers understand the benefits of the WIC Program and provide sufficient funding support to enable Department of Health to expand WIC services into underserved communities while maintaining a high level of quality care in existing WIC agencies.
2. WIC has adequate (additional) funds to provide staff training, information and marketing materials that will ensure smooth implementation of the revised food packages for WIC clients.
3. The congressional delegation and the State Legislature work with Department of Health to fund the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) at a level that allows WIC participants to receive the maximum benefit for which they are eligible.

#### **Targeted Awareness Campaign Objectives**

##### **1. Target audience: Healthcare providers not associated with WIC**

Promote understanding of the array of nutrition and healthy development services provided to low-income women and children through WIC.

##### **2. Target audience: WIC staff and clients**

Provide staff training and develop effective, culturally appropriate communications materials for implementing the revised food package for WIC clients.

##### **3. Target audience: Low-income women, especially pregnant women**

Promote cost-effectiveness and long-term health benefits of breast-feeding.

##### **4. Target audience: Employers**

Promote workplace practices and policies that support breast-feeding. Emphasize its health benefits and cost savings, especially in employee satisfaction and retention, and reduced use of sick leave.

##### **5. Target audience: Grocers and other food markets**

Develop information, marketing materials and other useful information to promote the purchasing power of WIC clients (through new food packages and WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program) and the benefits to individual businesses and local economies of marketing to their needs.

## Measures of Progress

- Increase the percentage of eligible women who participate in WIC.
- Increase the percentage of eligible infants and young children that participate in WIC.
- Increase the duration of child participation in WIC for as long as they are eligible.
- Families enrolled in WIC have reliable access to the food and services they are eligible to receive.
- Families enrolled in WIC can use electronic benefit transfer cards (EBT) for WIC.
- Increase the percentage of women enrolled in WIC who breast-feed their babies for more than six months.
- Increase the number of eligible WIC clients who receive Farmers Market Nutrition Program vouchers.
- Increase the number of WIC households that receive the maximum FMNP benefit allowed.

## Summary of Goal

The WIC Program provides healthy food, nutrition education and breast-feeding promotion to young families because WIC knows that moms, babies and young children need nutritious diets for healthy development. The WIC Program provides checks to shop for healthy foods at grocery stores and at farmers markets as well as support for pregnant and breast-feeding moms and children. To make sure mothers and children get what they need, End Childhood Hunger Washington will ensure that the WIC Program has what it needs to provide high-quality, accessible and culturally competent services to the families

## GOAL 6

### YOUNG CHILDREN HAVE HEALTHY FOOD AVAILABLE IN EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE PROGRAMS.

Healthy children begin life with good nutrition and healthy meals served by the people who care for them. The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) provides federally funded reimbursement to providers for the meals they serve to low-income children in their care. Childcare centers work directly with OSPI, the state agency that administers the federal program, to receive funds; family childcare home programs work through sponsoring organizations that reduce paperwork demands on individual providers. In addition to funding, the Child and Adult Care Program provides nutrition education, menu planning, training and other popular, successful services to improve the nutritional quality of meals served in childcare settings.

Although CACFP provides essential support for families and caregivers, relatively few childcare providers—home-based or center-based, licensed or license-exempt—take advantage of this resource for the children in their care. With a focus on targeted, culturally specific outreach to licensed and license-exempt home- and center-based childcare and improvements in the enrollment and reimbursement systems, Washington can increase the number of children served by this highly effective program that helps feed children in the essential early years of life.

## **Policy Objectives**

1. The Department of Early Learning adopts CACFP participation as a standard of quality for child care and early learning programs.
2. Recruiting and retaining program sponsors remains a priority for OSPI and its partners.
3. Establish an interagency working group—including OSPI and Department of Early Learning staff as well as local provider coalitions and representatives—to streamline, improve and expand CACFP and lead a nutrition campaign that mirror efforts of Florida CACFP and the national WIC Program to use less fruit juice and more low-fat milk, fruits, vegetables, whole grains and other nutritious foods.
4. Federal Child Nutrition Program reauthorization includes guidelines and funding that: follow best practice in nutrition; include more diverse, culturally appropriate food choices, especially more vegetarian and non-dairy options; include appropriate serving sizes that accommodate children’s needs as they grow; and include support for evaluation of CACFP by the Institute of Medicine.
5. Federal Child Nutrition Program reauthorization eliminates the two-tiered reimbursement for family-based childcare providers, resulting in one rate for all.
6. OSPI explores ways to offer timely training opportunities that are expanded, flexible (e.g., online) and support staff to ensure greater consistency in program implementation.
7. Program monitors receive administrative

and financial support to provide regular nutrition education training for childcare providers.

8. Monitoring prioritizes effective programming and good nutrition practices rather than paperwork and administrative tasks.

## **Collaborative Programming Objectives**

1. Local and statewide early learning coalitions value, promote and facilitate participation in the childcare food program by home- and center-based providers in their communities.
2. Local and statewide early learning coalitions partner with OSPI to identify and support additional CACFP sponsors.
3. CACFP-enrolled childcare programs collaborate with the WIC Program and Basic Food, and conduct outreach to ensure eligible families have enrollment and benefit information about WIC nutrition resources.
4. Childcare and early learning programs that participate in CACFP conduct outreach to families regarding the benefits of the WIC Program to encourage enrollment and retention in WIC among children over age 2.

## **Strategic Funding Objectives**

1. The federal Child Nutrition Program reauthorization by Congress reaffirms the role of CACFP in promoting healthy nutrition for young children, eliminates the two-tier reimbursement system, provides incentives and funds for additional simplification of administration and paperwork reduction, and provides adequate funding for nutritious meals



for children in home-based and center-based childcare.

2. Private-sector funders for early learning understand the critical role nutrition plays in high-quality childcare and support public policy initiatives that include good nutrition as a standard of quality for programs.

### **Targeted Awareness Campaign Objectives**

#### **1. Target audience: Childcare providers**

Establish an interagency working group—including OSPI and Department of Early Learning staff as well as local provider coalitions and representatives—to lead a nutrition campaign that mirror efforts of Florida CACFP and the national WIC Program to use less fruit juice and more low-fat milk, fruits, vegetables, whole grains and other nutritious foods.

#### **2. Target audience: License-exempt childcare providers**

Work with Department of Early Learning to develop and distribute bilingual and culturally-specific outreach materials tailored to license-exempt childcare providers in order to increase awareness of and participation in CACFP.

#### **3. Target audience: Home-based childcare providers**

Develop bilingual and culturally-specific outreach materials tailored to home-based childcare providers to increase awareness of and participation in CACFP.

#### **4. Target audience: Center-based childcare programs**

Develop outreach materials tailored to center-based childcare programs to promote awareness of and participation in the childcare food program.

#### **5. Target audience: Childcare providers and early learning programs**

Develop updated, culturally competent and multilingual menus and videos that reflect current knowledge of nutrition.

#### **6. Target audience: Childcare providers and early learning programs**

Develop a policy and procedures manual and/or hotline to provide more information and awareness about healthy nutrition and program guidelines.

### **Measures of Progress**

- Increase the percentage of low-income children receiving meals through CACFP.
- Increase the number of home-based childcare providers (licensed and license-exempt) participating in CACFP.
- Increase the number of childcare centers participating in CACFP.
- Streamline the process for providers to enroll in CACFP.
- Food served by childcare providers meets children’s cultural and diet needs.
- Improve nutritional quality of food served through CACFP by training childcare providers to increase use of whole grains, fruits, vegetables, low-fat milk and other healthy foods and decrease use of nutrient-poor, high-fat and high-sugar foods.

### Summary of Goal

Childcare providers are responsible for the well-being of the children in their care, and that includes feeding them healthy, nutritious meals throughout the day. Providers that participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) in Washington are overwhelmingly positive about the benefits of the program and feel that recent changes in policies and practices at the state level have further strengthened the strong partnership and support they have with the program. However, these same providers acknowledge the struggle to stretch reimbursement dollars and to complete extensive paperwork. By building on existing support and adding quality improvements, as well as advocating for positive policy changes, End Childhood Hunger Washington can highlight the benefits of existing programming to new partners. Targeted outreach efforts will explain that by joining federally funded programs committed to reducing food costs to childcare programs and families Washington ensures its youngest kids get three nutritious meals each and every day.

## GOAL 7

### LOW-INCOME FAMILIES CAN ACHIEVE GREATER ECONOMIC SECURITY AND BUILD ASSETS.

Childhood hunger is a symptom of poverty and family economic instability. When families are financially stable, they don't have to make trade-offs to provide basic necessities like food for their children. The simple truth is that many hard-working families don't earn enough money to pay for all of their basic needs even though they hold down full-time jobs. It is widely known that poor kids are often hungry kids. Family economic security and stability is the most effective permanent solution to childhood hunger.

Ending poverty is a big goal, but Washington State can make relatively simple policy changes that would go a long way toward decreasing poverty and ending childhood hunger. Poverty is the reality for thousands and thousands of Washington kids: More than 15 percent of all children in Washington live in poverty<sup>7</sup>—that's enough kids to fill Safeco Field five times over. Opportunities like the Earned Income Tax Credit and Individual Development Accounts, as well as bolstering access to benefits like Temporary Aid to Needy Families or food stamps, provide effective anti-poverty tools and economic stability for struggling families. By creating new opportunities and expanding effective policies and programs—through our tax system, financial services, and opportunities to create savings and build assets—families with low incomes will be able to give their children what they need to thrive.

<sup>7</sup>2006 American Community Survey: 231,000 children, birth to 17 years old.

## Policy Objectives

1. The State Legislature understands the importance of TANF and other public benefits and provides policy leadership to ensure Washington takes best advantage of opportunities for strategic funding for program improvements and state options to strengthen the program, including elimination of state limits on assets.
2. Create and implement a Washington Working Families Credit, modeled on effective tax credit policies in other states.
3. Create a statewide Asset Building Coalition to provide leadership on initiatives that foster economic stability, including Individual Development Account and free tax preparation programs.
4. Extend fair lending policies to all Washington families (e.g., cap annual percentage rates at a minimum of 36 percent, extend loan payment periods, prohibit check-holding, etc.).

## Collaborative Programming Objectives

1. Coalitions of community-based organizations, including United Ways, create or expand annual outreach-oriented, multilingual tax preparation programs for people with low incomes.
2. Coalitions and community-based organizations, including United Ways, create or expand financial literacy and Individual Development Account (IDA) programs.
3. Free tax preparation programs coordinate services and training with other financial literacy and IDA programs to promote savings and asset building with tax refund money.

4. Local programs collaborate with business coalitions and leaders to expand private and nonprofit financial services that effectively meet the needs of families with low incomes.

## Strategic Funding Objectives

1. TANF benefits keep pace with the cost of living in Washington.
2. Washington's congressional delegation and Legislature understand the key role the tax system can play in maximizing low-income families' economic security and build upon the success of the EITC at the state and federal levels.
3. Public and private funders invest in the partnerships, technology, training and outreach necessary to run targeted, successful free tax preparation programs.
4. Public and private funders invest in screening and application tools (such as [www.parenthelp123.org](http://www.parenthelp123.org) and online DSHS tools) that help families with low incomes—and service providers who work with them—to get accurate information about public benefits eligibility and to apply directly for programs.

## Targeted Awareness Campaign Objectives

### 1. Target audience: State agencies and community-based services for families with low incomes

Promote comprehensive benefit screening and application tools (especially online tools) that allow families to understand and apply for benefits for which they are eligible.

### 2. Target audience: Families with low incomes

Promote comprehensive benefit screening

and application tools (especially online tools) that allow families to understand and apply for benefits for which they are eligible.

**3. Target audience: Families with low incomes**

Develop local and multilingual outreach campaigns to increase number of eligible families who claim earned income tax credits and the federal child and dependent care tax credit.

**4. Target audience: Business leaders**

Promote annual volunteer outreach campaigns to recruit volunteers, especially bilingual volunteers, for free tax preparation sites.

**5. Target audience: Business leaders**

Develop materials that encourage private-sector employers to provide effective information about benefits enrollment to low wage employees.

**6. Target audience: Families with low incomes**

Market savings, smart borrowing and federal tax credit programs.

**Measures of Progress**

- Decrease the percentage of children living in poverty.
- Create new uses of the Earned Income Credit for Washington state.
- Increase the number of families with children making use of the Earned Income Tax Credit.
- Increase in TANF benefits over time that reflect increases in Washington’s cost of living.
- Increase eligible applications to benefit

programs for families with low incomes with children because information is more readily available and easy to use.

- Increase the number of free tax preparation sites for people with low incomes.
- Decrease the fees that people with low incomes pay consumer loans and services (“payday loans,” etc.).
- Increase the number of eligible residents participating in Individual Development Accounts.

**Summary of Goal**

In some parts of Washington,<sup>8</sup> as many as 30 percent of all children live in poverty. Washington is a state with some of the wealthiest communities in the United States, yet childhood poverty affects hundreds of thousands of families in communities across the state. Policies and programs that enable families with low incomes to budget, save and build assets to help families provide a stable future for children and to meet their immediate needs. With fairly simple policy changes and expanded support for public benefits and effective financial and economic programs, Washington will promote family economic stability as an essential means to ending childhood hunger.

<sup>8</sup>Grant County and Yakima County.

## GOAL 8

### **FOOD BANKS AND MEAL PROGRAMS ARE READILY AVAILABLE AND PROVIDE NUTRITIOUS FOOD TO THOSE WHO NEED TO SUPPLEMENT THEIR FAMILIES' FOOD OPTIONS.**

Families with low incomes everywhere in Washington struggle to put food on their tables month to month, and rely on food banks and meal programs to supplement their food options. In 2005-06, Washingtonians visited a food bank more than 6 million times through the year. An additional 9,500 people were served by the Tribal Food Voucher Program (a state-funded program that allows tribes to support a voucher program, a food bank, or both). Clearly, our emergency food system isn't just for emergencies; it's an integral part of how many Washingtonians make ends meet every month.

Though emergency food programs began years ago as volunteer-based local responses to the failures of our nation's food system to help hungry families, these programs are now part of an extremely complex network of national, state and local organizations raising millions of dollars and pounds of food. The challenges of managing the process of gathering (by purchase or donation), transporting and distributing healthy, nutritious food are significant, especially in rural and under-resourced communities. Over the years, state agencies have developed valuable advisory councils comprised of service providers and others to maximize consistency and availability of federal and state resources in every area of the state, especially to populations significantly at risk, including tribal populations, rural communities, and other populations with high needs and few resources.

In this complex web of resources, federal

support (Commodity Supplemental Food Program, The Emergency Food Assistance Program and Federal Distribution Program on Indian Reservations) has declined in today's dollars; food donations have declined dramatically over recent years; and, though Washington provides almost \$7 million per biennium in state funding (Emergency Food Assistance Program), this state investment cannot keep pace with declines in other emergency food resources. These investments do bring government accountability into the system, however, and with it a sense that emergency food programs across the state should provide an equitable, healthy safety net for Washington's hungry families.

A major challenge for the emergency food sector is to determine how to meet the promise and the challenge of public investment, and how to promote equity in access to healthy foods in a system that is so dependent on resources provided by local communities. These resources are not just food: they include leadership, credibility, community support and linkages to other resources for hungry families. A broad and necessary conversation about this challenge is essential for the future of the emergency food network, and for the success of End Childhood Hunger Washington.

#### **Policy Objectives**

1. Washington's Congressional delegation and State Legislature understand the role of the federal and state emergency food programs and advocate in the House and Senate for policies that promote emergency food program policies and funding that meet the need of hungry families.
2. State agencies, distribution centers, tribal programs, food banks and other interested organizations develop a forum for discussion of and decision-making about significant access, equity and nutrition issues with the goal of guiding system

change and innovation and engaging public and private sector support.

3. Opportunities are identified for developing or adapting policies specific to the current needs of tribal food programs (voucher and food bank programs), including improving the reimbursement process.

### **Collaborative Programming Objectives**

1. Current inter-agency working groups (such as State Nutrition Action Plan, or SNAP) are enhanced in order to develop strategic plans to assist emergency food providers' ability to increase customer participation in public food assistance programs.
2. A formal mechanism of communication and collaboration in which all emergency food distribution centers participate in order to improve efficiencies and program quality is stabilized and supported.
3. Creative partnerships, local agency transportation cooperatives, and funding mechanisms are formed that enable food banks and meal programs to maximize resources; access farm-fresh products from growers, shippers, packers and processors; improve food diversity; and, support efficient food distribution.
4. Schools, food banks and other community partners work together to provide short-term, supplemental food for hungry school-age children (e.g. backpacks of food for weekend meals, enhanced outreach for summer meals, etc.) when school meals are not available.

### **Strategic Funding Objectives**

1. Investments are made in statewide and local coalitions of emergency food programs (for both food banks and meal programs) that collaborate, i.e. share

resources, training, information and learning in order to maximize resources and provide excellent customer service across all programs.

2. Investments are made in the most strategic opportunities to improve infrastructure, transportation and other initiatives designed to increase equity and efficiencies in the emergency food system and expand access to healthy foods by low-income families.

### **Targeted Awareness Campaign Objective**

#### **1. Target audience: Emergency food recipients**

Increase knowledge of eligibility and enrollment information in order to increase participation in public nutrition programs.

#### **2. Target audience: Emergency food recipients**

Improve customers' nutrition education and skills in preparing affordable, nutritious meals using food available from emergency food programs.

#### **3. Target audience: Local and regional food industry**

Promote information to grocers, food wholesalers and other private donors regarding the need for healthy, nutritious foods in food banks and meal programs, using a "business to business" partnership model rather than a "charity" model.

#### **4. Target Audience: Business community, especially transportation/trucking industry**

Increase awareness of emergency food system needs and opportunities for transportation partnerships.

## Measures of Progress

- Federal and state legislation include positive changes in program funding for emergency food programs.
- Emergency food providers increase the percentage of children they serve who are enrolled in federal nutrition programs.
- Emergency food programs provide a reliable amount of highly nutritious, culturally appropriate food that supplement a household's resources.
- Food banks and meal programs have reliable hours of services designed to serve the needs of low-income families.
- Food bank customers gain skills to prepare nutritious meals with food received at food banks.

Some of the objectives in this section come from recommendations in the 2007 assessment of the state-funded emergency food system, *A Fork in the Road*. This report was based on input from 275 emergency food providers and 12 tribes, representing nearly 200 emergency food agencies. It is wise to build policy, collaborative programming, awareness campaigns and strategic funding decisions on the knowledge and investment in this most comprehensive analysis of the emergency food system to date. Additionally, it is advisable to identify, recognize and build on the many other emergency food issues, partners and programs not captured in this report because these are outside the EFAP system. It is essential that decisions ultimately serve the needs of hungry children and families first, and work towards eliminating the need for emergency food assistance.

## Summary of Goal

Hungry families rely on a variety of resources and tools to put food on their tables at home. Maximizing participation in public food assistance programs is the main strategy to end childhood hunger in Washington, but sometimes families face emergencies, or they aren't eligible for some kinds of assistance; many times, existing resources just don't stretch far enough. Emergency food programs like food banks, vouchers and meal programs rely on a complex mix of federal and local, public and private sources for support. Public investments in this system should help to ensure maximum equity and effectiveness in providing nutritious food to supplement families' resources. End Childhood Hunger Washington's goal is that hungry families can be assured that when they must rely on these programs for help, services in every corner of the state are efficiently, equitably and respectfully meeting their needs.

## GOAL 9

### CHILDREN AND YOUTH EAT HEALTHY SNACKS AND MEALS IN AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS.

Growing children need to eat nutritious food throughout the day so they can concentrate on learning. Because hungry kids can't always count on their next meal, the federal snack program provides that extra boost for kids in their after-school programs. Through the Afterschool Snack Program, service providers are reimbursed for the cost of providing snacks for low-income children in their program. In 2007, 307 public schools (from a total of 1,989 statewide) offered breakfast, lunch and snack. Similarly, there are untold numbers of community-based programs for school-age kids, and relatively few take advantage of this federally funded program.

Low participation by schools and community-based service providers is largely due to a lack of awareness of the program, complex eligibility standards, cumbersome application processes and low reimbursement rates. With wide-ranging outreach and awareness efforts, policy advocacy and program support, End Childhood Hunger Washington can increase participation in the program as well as improve the nutritional quality of the food kids eat after school.

#### Policy Objectives

1. Federal Child Nutrition Program reauthorization includes food guidelines for the Afterschool Snack Program that follow best practices in nutrition as well as guidelines and funding for serving sizes that accommodate children's nutrition needs as they grow.
2. Federal Child Nutrition Program reauthorization reduces paperwork barriers in the Afterschool Snack

Program and prioritizes ensuring that students participating in after-school programs receive nutritious food.

3. Federal Child Nutrition Program reauthorization adds Washington as a pilot state for the federal Supper Program.
4. OSPI and other organizations adopt participation in the Afterschool Snack Program as a standard of quality for afterschool programs.
5. OSPI, in collaboration with community providers, develops streamlined enrollment information and program policies for families and providers in order to encourage greater participation in federal after-school snack and meal programs.

#### Collaborative Programming Objectives

1. Afterschool providers with multiple sites ensure every site and program partner participates in the Afterschool Snack Program.
2. Afterschool programs and nutrition educators collaborate to incorporate nutrition education into curricula for kids and provide additional nutrition education for service providers.
3. School-based programs develop partnerships with local providers and community leaders to be able to provide food assistance during school holidays, snow days and other school closures. After-school providers work with local food assistance programs to identify additional food resources for hungry children and their families, including food stamps, school meals, WIC, "backpack" programs, etc.



## Strategic Funding Objectives

1. Federal Child Nutrition Services reauthorization includes higher reimbursement rates for providers who participate in the Afterschool School Snack program.
2. Investments in creating or improving kitchen and food preparation facilities in after-school programs allows programs to provide more nutritious food.

## Targeted Awareness Campaign Objectives

### 1. Target audience: Non-school-based after-school programs

OSPI, in collaboration with community providers, conducts targeted outreach to inform non-school-based after-school programs about the link between learning and hunger in order to encourage greater participation in the federal after-school snack and meal programs.

### 2. Target audience: School-based after-school programs

OSPI, in collaboration with school districts and schools, conducts targeted outreach to inform school-based after-school programs about the link between learning and hunger to encourage greater participation in the federal after-school snack and meal programs.

### 3. Target audience: Rural communities

Promote awareness of the link between out-of-school learning, nutrition and academic achievement to encourage rural communities to invest more in the outreach for and availability and accessibility of after-school programs that have a food/nutrition component.

## Measures of Progress

- Increase the number of children receiving free snacks and meals in after-school programs.
- Increase participation by public schools in the federal after-school snack and meal programs.
- Increase participation by nonprofit service providers in the federal after-school snack and meal programs.
- Streamline the reimbursement process for the federal after-school snack and meal programs.
- Washington participates in the federal Supper Program.
- Improve the nutritional quality of the food served in the after-school snack and meal programs.

## Summary of Goal

Because hungry kids have to struggle to concentrate on learning and not on their empty bellies, giving them a healthy boost will help them succeed in school. End Childhood Hunger Washington's goal is to ensure that every nonprofit or school-based program knows that it's a good idea and that it helps kids learn and thrive and chooses to participate in the Afterschool Snack Program to help hungry kids during their long school days. With targeted outreach, collaboration with schools and community-based programs and specific policy changes to improve the federal program, especially in nutrition, providers will appreciate that providing nutritious meals and snacks is a marker of a high-quality, successful program and will participate in the Afterschool Snack Program, and meal programs, as applicable.

## GOAL 10

### **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES HAVE THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO MAKE HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES THROUGH EFFECTIVE NUTRITION EDUCATION.**

A variety of social and environmental factors impact the ability of children and families to access nutritious, healthy food. As a result, conditions such as childhood hunger and childhood obesity disproportionately afflict low-income communities and communities of color. Empty calories are affordable; they fill bellies and curb hunger, but they don't solve the persistent problems of poor nutrition and health.

A core element of eliminating childhood hunger in Washington is surrounding children and families where they live, work and play with healthy, nutritious food. This requires policy and environmental change that tackles systemic issues behind inequities in availability, affordability and access to healthy food in low-income communities, where health disparities are greatest. It is also about offering effective, culturally appropriate nutrition education that will inform families with the skills and knowledge to make healthy food choices.

This is especially important in communities where the most affordable and available foods are typically the most lacking in nutrition. Parents want what is best for their children and want them to eat well, yet often it takes more time and money than they have. It's hard to know what the best choices are and healthy choices are more expensive. Effective nutrition education programs that help kids and parents understand good nutrition, identify healthy food and prepare healthier meals can work when embedded in environments that support these skills and choices.

Solving the sweeping problems of childhood obesity and childhood hunger will require more than individual behavior change. The goal of End Childhood Hunger Washington is to provide the understanding and skills necessary for kids and families to make healthy choices and to advance policy and environmental changes that make those healthy choices the accessible, easy choices for everyone.

#### **Policy Objectives**

1. Federal policy-makers allow Food Stamp (Basic Food) Nutrition Education Program funds to develop policies and practices that support a comprehensive, social-ecological approach to improving nutrition, focusing not just on individual behavior but broader environmental factors that contribute to poor nutrition and health.
2. Expand reach of WSU Extension Food Sense and Basic Food Nutrition Education Program (BFNEP) which promote good nutrition and physical activity, food safety and skillful utilization of food resources for people eligible for food stamps.
3. Evaluation of publicly funded nutrition education services are consistent across sites and focus on outcomes, not process measures.
4. School districts implement school wellness policies and a coordinated school health framework that integrate into everyday practice culturally appropriate, age-appropriate nutrition policies and education along with health and physical education.
5. School wellness policies regarding nutrition education extend to school-based after-school and summer programs.
6. Programs that participate in the federal

Afterschool Snack Program or Summer Food Service Program incorporate effective nutrition education into their program practices and services.

broader environmental factors that contribute to poor nutrition and health.

### **Collaborative Programming Objectives**

1. Basic Food Nutrition Education Program (BFNEP) develops a system for improved collaboration with both internal and external stakeholders to ensure improved services for the greatest number of Food Stamp Program participants and applicants.
2. Agencies in communities with low rates of food stamp enrollment by eligible families work together to ensure hungry families have access to effective nutrition education programs.
3. Nutrition education programs partner with leaders and providers in communities of color to provide effective, culturally specific and competent nutrition services that meet the needs of those communities.
4. Culturally appropriate and healthy foods, effective nutrition education, cooking demonstrations and recipes are offered at food banks.
5. Nutrition education programs, such as Operation Frontline and Apple Corps, work with schools and other child-serving agencies to promote healthy eating and physical activity early in life.

### **Strategic Funding Objectives**

1. Federal policy-makers allow Food Stamp/Basic Food Nutrition Education funds to develop policies and practices that support comprehensive, social-ecological solutions to improving nutrition, including

### **Targeted Awareness Campaign Objectives**

#### **1. Target audience: Culturally specific communities at high risk for obesity and chronic disease**

Create culturally specific and culturally competent outreach and nutrition education materials to improve diet and health outcomes, especially for Native Americans, African-Americans and Latinos.

#### **2. Target audience: Families with low incomes**

Use social marketing approaches to increase awareness of the benefits of daily consumption of fruits and vegetables in amounts consistent with the current recommended dietary guidelines. (Promote the More Matters nutrition campaign.)

#### **3. Target audience: Children and parents**

Nutrition education includes effective information and strategies for kids and parents to share what they have learned about nutrition education and how to change behaviors to benefit the whole family.

### **Measures of Progress**

- Basic Food Nutrition Education Program provides an array of nutrition information, education and outreach services that address broad environmental concerns as well as individual behavior.
- Increase the availability of publicly funded nutrition education services in a variety of settings.

- Increase the number of school districts that implement school wellness policies related to culturally appropriate and age-appropriate nutrition education.
- Increase the number of after-school and summer programs that provide effective nutrition education.
- Increase the number of low-income people who have attended effective, multi-session nutrition classes offered by community agencies or schools.
- Increase the number of schools, community-based organizations and businesses providing effective, culturally appropriate nutrition education to people with low incomes.
- Increase consumption of fruits, vegetables and other nutritious foods by people at risk for hunger and poor health.

### **Summary of Goal**

Children in Washington face a remarkable and sobering reality: 14 percent of children above seventh grade are at risk of being overweight, and an additional almost 10 percent of children that age already are overweight. Children of color—especially Native American, Latino and African-American children—are far more likely than Asian or white children to be overweight or obese. Effective, targeted and culturally competent nutrition education results in real change when embedded in environments that support these skills and choices. End Childhood Hunger Washington’s goal is that by focusing outreach efforts, expanding nutrition education options and adapting policies to fit new understanding of the twin problems of hunger and obesity prevention, Washington will make lasting, healthy changes for hungry kids and their communities.

# Timeline, Staffing and Evaluation

Time Period	Actions
<b>APRIL – JUNE 2008</b>	<p>Create comprehensive End Childhood Hunger Washington communications plan.</p> <p>Launch strategic plan for End Childhood Hunger Washington.</p> <p>Distribute “Plan to End Childhood Hunger in Washington” to a wide range of organizations, community leaders and others across the state to review, support and commit organizational leadership to the plan.</p> <p>Convene meetings across the state to create a detailed two-year action plan for 2009–2011, based on specific strategic approaches and goals in the “Plan to End Childhood Hunger in Washington” that address cultural and regional communities’ priorities.</p> <p>Conduct targeted outreach to partners to identify organizational partners to implement strategic plan.</p> <p>Monitor for available public sector funding opportunities.</p>
<b>JULY – SEPTEMBER 2008</b>	<p>Continue community meetings and outreach to develop priorities and identify partners for 2009–2011 action plan.</p> <p>Distribute action plan for review and feedback from community partners.</p> <p>Finalize two-year action plan.</p> <p>Based upon action plan, develop budgets, strategic resource development plan and public-private partnerships to leverage resources.</p> <p>Continue outreach and engagement of potential financial partners and funding opportunities.</p> <p>Draft 2009 legislative agenda, based on policy objectives in “Plan to End Childhood Hunger in Washington,” for initial conversations with partners and legislative champions.</p>

<b>OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2008</b>	<p>Present the plan and investment opportunities to potential funding partners.</p> <p>Finalize 2009 legislative agenda with input from partners and other interested groups and plan 2009 Hunger Action Day.</p> <p>Work with partners to apply for funding that meets goals of two-year action plan.</p>
<b>JANUARY – MARCH 2009</b>	<p>Begin implementation of 2009–2011 action plan.</p> <p>Promote End Childhood Hunger Washington policy agenda during legislative session through mobilization, Hunger Action Day and strategic communications.</p>
<b>APRIL – DECEMBER 2009</b>	<p>Continue implementation of action plan.</p> <p>Draft and finalize a 2010 legislative agenda with input from partners, legislative champions and other interested groups.</p>
<b>JANUARY – DECEMBER 2010</b>	<p>Continue implementation of action plan.</p> <p>Revise and update original action plan in order to prepare 2011–2013 action plan.</p> <p>Convene community meetings across the state to refine community priorities and develop specific work plans, based on specific strategic approaches and/or goals for 2011–2013 action plan.</p> <p>Draft and finalize a 2011 legislative agenda based on policy objectives in “Plan to End Childhood Hunger” with input from partners, legislative champions and other interested groups.</p>

## STAFFING AND BUDGET

While Washington's strategic plan was created by the Children's Alliance, implementation will not rest solely in one organization. Reaching the goal of ending childhood hunger in Washington will take the combined efforts of a broad-based coalition, one that includes the partners who have contributed to the plan plus scores of others from multiple sectors and communities across Washington.

As the planning and convening entity for this initiative, and as a statewide advocacy organization, the Children's Alliance has committed to:

- Lead public policy efforts as outlined in this strategic plan.
- Facilitate the development of key working groups on collaborative programming as outlined in this plan.
- Monitor progress toward the outcomes outlined in this plan.
- Provide support for strategic resource development outlined in the plan in coalition with partnering organizations.
- Serve as a clearinghouse for data on plan outcomes, collaborative programming models, potential resources and other opportunities.

As outlined above, the next step is the creation of a two-year action plan that prioritizes strategies and engages partnerships. This action plan is a continuation of planning activities that began in the spring of 2007. The Children's Alliance anticipates the need for additional support in community outreach and organizing, strategic communications and policy advocacy and lobbying in order to complete the initial two-year planning phase to create a strategic, effective campaign for End

Childhood Hunger Washington.

Appropriate budgeting and staffing plans for implementation of the "Plan to End Childhood Hunger in Washington" will be developed in tandem with the creation of the 2009-2011 action plan.

## EVALUATION

Evaluation of the two-year planning process and early implementation will be coordinated by End Childhood Hunger Washington's national partner, Share Our Strength. This evaluation will be completed by April 2009. Progress on the policy, programming, funding and awareness measures and the process by which this is achieved will be the primary subject of the evaluation. Evaluation of progress is ongoing for the original Washington, D.C. site and will be concurrent in Florida, Washington's partner pilot state. Information sharing, technical assistance and training will continue among these sites and others, as appropriate, in order to assist learning and inform the evaluation processes.

# Conclusions

The issues facing hungry children can be quite complex, but solving the problem of their hunger is simple: Feed children three nutritious meals each and every day. Many of the tools to solve the problem already exist through the array of federally funded nutrition programs. Unfortunately, without sufficient leadership and collaboration at the highest levels in Washington and in local communities, these programs are not yet reaching all of Washington's hungry children. End Childhood Hunger Washington aims to bring together partners across all sectors to organize and collaborate across the state to develop a community-wide campaign to end childhood hunger.

With coordinated leadership from Washington's elected officials, state agencies, local organizations, private funders, community leaders and families who have been affected by hunger, Washington can make strategic policy changes and investments in collaborative programming and targeted awareness campaigns that can end childhood hunger in Washington.



# Glossary of Terms

**BASIC FOOD PROGRAM**

Washington's name for the federal Food Stamp Program

**BFOEP**

Basic Food Outreach and Education Program

**CACFP**

Child and Adult Care Food Program

**CFSP**

Commodity Food Supplement Program  
(a federal emergency food program)

**CTED**

Washington Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development

**DOH**

Washington Department of Health

**DSHS**

Washington Department of Social and Health Services

**EFAP**

Emergency Food Assistance Program (a state emergency food program)

**EITC**

Earned Income Tax Credit

**FMNP**

Farmers Market Nutrition Program (a program for WIC participants and seniors)

**GA**

Washington Department of General Administration

**SFSP**

Summer Food Service Program

**TANF**

Temporary Aid to Needy Families

**TEFAP**

The Emergency Food Assistance Program  
(emergency food program)

**OSPI**

Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

**WIC PROGRAM**

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program  
for Women, Infants and Children

# Washington’s State Agencies and Anti-Hunger and Nutrition Programs

Washington’s State agencies are responsible for administering the array of federal and state anti-hunger and nutrition programs. The chart that follows pairs each program with its corresponding host agency. Please refer to the glossary of terms for an explanation of each acronym.

Agency	Program
OSPI	Child Nutrition Programs: School meals SFSP CACFP Afterschool Snack Program
	Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Programs
DSHS	Basic Food Program
	TANF
	Basic Food Outreach
DOH	WIC Program
	WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program
	Basic Food Nutrition Education Program*
CTED	Emergency Food Assistance Program
	Tribal Food Voucher Program
GA	TEFAP
	CSFP

\*WSU Cooperative Extension also administers the Basic Food Nutrition Education Program.

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**SHARE OUR STRENGTH**

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Share Our Strength

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*A Voice for Washington's Children, Youth & Families*

