



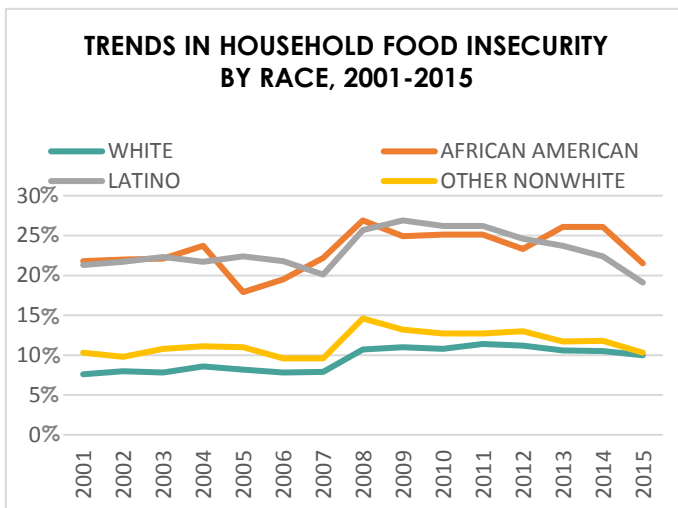
FACT SHEET

JULY 2017

Hunger is a Racial Equity Issue

Why Race Matters

In a food-rich nation like the United States, no one should go hungry, yet 13.4% of Americans experience food insecurity - the inability to obtain adequate nutritious food.¹ To end hunger in the United States, we must focus on the communities most impacted. While 10% of white households experience hunger, households of color experience hunger at rates of up to 21.5%.² We must consider the **inequities in every area of life** that increase vulnerability to hunger and poverty.³



Source: [Trends in US Food Security. United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service. 2016.](#)

School

Our schools aim to provide students with the resources to succeed today and throughout their lives. Without appropriate funding, schools are limited in their ability to provide small classes, rigorous curriculum and nutritious meals (so students can focus and learn).⁴

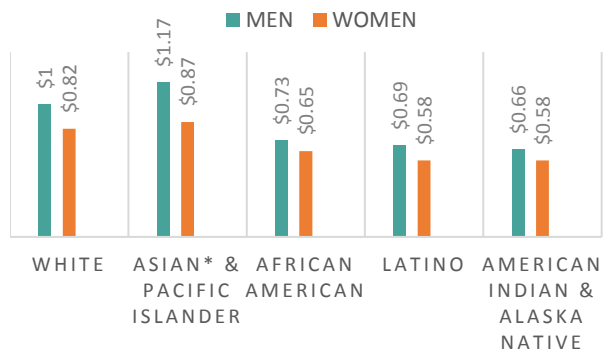
- Schools with 90% white students spend \$733 more per student than schools with 90% or more students of color.⁵
- Schools with majority African American and Latino students are less able to provide fresh fruit and low-fat milk options than majority white schools.⁶
- Schools with majority students of color are half as likely as majority white schools to adopt and enforce health standards on vendor foods.⁷

Work

For adults, jobs with livable wages and benefits are crucial to avoiding hunger and poverty. Unfortunately, people of color face a wage gap and disproportionately populate America's low-wage workforce⁸

- African Americans face unemployment rates almost double that of white people, regardless of education level.⁹
- Only 38% of Latino employees and 54% of African American and Asian American employees have access to an employer-sponsored retirement plan, compared to 62% of white employees.¹⁰
- Upon retirement, households of color have less than one-third the average retirement savings of their white counterparts.¹¹

IF WHITE MEN MAKE \$1... MEDIAN HOURLY EARNINGS AS A PERCENTAGE OF WHITE MEN'S EARNINGS



Source: [The Simple Truth About the Gender Pay Gap. AAWU. 2017.](#)

*Note: When statistics on Asian Americans are disaggregated, some groups, such as Southeast Asian Americans, also experience a negative wage gap.

Housing

Homeownership (a key wealth builder) and living in a neighborhood with jobs, healthy food and community resources all reduce vulnerability to hunger and poverty. Unfortunately, historic discriminatory housing practices have shaped today's housing market to limit housing opportunities for people of color.

Housing (continued)

- 71% of white adults are homeowners, as compared to 41-57% of people of color.¹²
- White people are more often able to receive financial support from their families when buying a home allowing them lower interest rates and therefore a lower total cost of home ownership.¹³
- No county in the United States has enough affordable housing to accommodate all extremely low-income renters.¹⁴

Food Access

Today, people of color are disproportionately surrounded by food deserts.¹⁵ The USDA defines food deserts as, “areas with limited access to affordable nutritious food”.¹⁶

- Only 8% of African Americans have a grocery store in their census tract.¹⁷
- 24% of African Americans, 17% of Latinos, and 13% of Asian Americans do not own cars, making grocery shopping more time-consuming.¹⁸
- Food stores in communities of color are often further away and have fewer healthy high quality options.¹⁹

Health

Lacking access to nutritious foods can cause disease and poor health outcomes that shorten life expectancy and cause burdensome debt.

- Low proximity to supermarkets correlates with high rates of obesity, diabetes, and diet-related diseases.²⁰
- Elderly people of color are twice as likely as their white counterparts to be hungry,²¹ making them more likely to have to choose between food and medical care.²²
- 44% of Latinos and 34% of African Americans did not see a doctor when ill for financial reasons.²³

What Can Anti-Hunger Organizations Do?

To end hunger and poverty we must reach our most vulnerable communities. This means we must go beyond race-neutral policies. Equity-centered solutions must be prioritized.

Educate: Learn and teach more about hunger and poverty in communities of color and systemic racism

- Read Bread for the World Institute’s [“Ending U.S. Hunger and Poverty by Focusing on Communities Where it’s Most Likely”](#)
- Read “Getting to Zero Hunger by 2030: Race, Poverty, and Hunger”
- Bring implicit bias and cultural competency trainings to your organization

Advocate: Include an equity lens in your advocacy work

- Think about how policies will impact each demographic differently
- Prioritize policies that close the racial wealth gap
 - Recommended tool: [GARE racial equity toolkit](#)

Be Accountable: Create mechanisms that build accountability to people of color who experience hunger and poverty

- Create an equity focus group and perform an equity audit within your organization
- Recruit people of color who experience hunger on to your boards, advisory committees and leadership
- Build relationships with other organizations doing equity work

This factsheet was authored by Margot Nitschke, an Emerson National Hunger Fellow at the Alliance to End Hunger. For more information visit www.AllianceToEndHunger.org

¹ Key Statistics and Graphs, United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, October 2016, <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/key-statistics-graphics.aspx>

² Food Security in the US, Key Statistics & Graphics. United States Department of Agriculture. October 2016. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/key-statistics-graphics.aspx>

³ This factsheet was adapted from the Alliance to End Hunger and Bread for the World Institute co-authored background paper “Getting to Zero Hunger by 2030: Race Poverty Hunger”

⁴ “Students of Color Still Receiving Unequal Education.” Center for American Progress. August 2012. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education/news/2012/08/22/32862/students-of-color-still-receiving-unequal-education/>

⁵ “Students of Color Still Receiving Unequal Education.” Center for American Progress. August 2012. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education/news/2012/08/22/32862/students-of-color-still-receiving-unequal-education/>

⁶ School Policies and Practices to Improve Health and Prevent Obesity: national Elementary School Survey Results. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. January 2012. <http://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/farm/reports/reports/2012/rwif2213>

⁷ Competitive Foods and Beverages Among Latino Students. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Research Network to Prevent Obesity Among Latino Children. May 2013. <http://salud-america.org/sites/saludamerica/files/Healthier%20School%20Snacks%20-%20Research%20Review.pdf>

⁸ “Underpaid & Overloaded: Women in Low-wage Jobs.” National Women’s Law Center. 2014. https://www.nwlc.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/final_nwlc_lowwagereport2014.pdf

⁹ Black Unemployment is Significantly Higher than White Unemployment Regardless of Educational Attainment. Economic Policy Institute. December 2015. <http://www.epi.org/publication/black-unemployment-educational-attainment/>

¹⁰ Race and Retirement Insecurity in the United States. The National Institute on Retirement Security. December 2013. https://www.giaging.org/documents/NIRS_Report_12-10-13.pdf

¹¹ Race and Retirement Insecurity in the United States. The National Institute on Retirement Security. December 2013. https://www.giaging.org/documents/NIRS_Report_12-10-13.pdf

¹² “Assets & Opportunity Scorecard.” CFED. 2016

http://assetsandopportunity.org/scorecard/newsroom/media_resources/infographics/

¹³ “The Business Case for Racial Equity.” Altarum Institute, October, 2013.

<http://altarum.org/sites/default/files/uploaded-publication-files/WKKF%20Business%20Case%20for%20Racial%20Equity.pdf>

¹⁴ The Housing Affordability Gap for Extremely Low-Income Renters in 2013. Urban Institute. June 2015. http://www.urban.org/research/publication/housing-affordability-gap-extremely-low-income-renters-2013/view/full_report

¹⁵ “The Grocery Gap, Who Has Access to Healthy Food and Why It Matters.” Policy Link. 2010. http://thefoodtrust.org/uploads/media_items/grocerygap.original.pdf

¹⁶ Access to Affordable and Nutritious Food: Report to Congress”, June 2009. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/pub-details/?pubid=42729>

¹⁷ “The Grocery Gap, Who Has Access to Healthy Food and Why It Matters.” Policy Link. 2010. http://thefoodtrust.org/uploads/media_items/grocerygap.original.pdf

¹⁸ “Building the Case for Racial Equity in the Food System.” Center for Social Inclusion. 2014. <http://www.centerforsocialinclusion.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Building-the-Case-for-Racial-Equity-in-the-Food-System.pdf>

¹⁹ “The Grocery Gap, Who Has Access to Healthy Food and Why It Matters.” Policy Link. 2010. http://thefoodtrust.org/uploads/media_items/grocerygap.original.pdf

²⁰ “The Grocery Gap, Who Has Access to Healthy Food and Why It Matters.” Policy Link. 2010. http://thefoodtrust.org/uploads/media_items/grocerygap.original.pdf

²¹ The State of Senior Hunger in America 2014” An Annual Report. National Foundation to End Senior Hunger. June 2016. <https://www.nfesh.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/State-of-Senior-Hunger-in-America-2014.pdf>

²² Hunger in America 2014. Feeding America. August 2914. <http://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/our-research/hunger-in-america/>

²³ The Color of Debt: Credit Card by Race and Ethnicity Demos Fact Sheet. Demos.

http://www.demos.org/sites/default/files/publications/FACTSHEET_TheColorofDebt_Demos.pdf