

Assuring Healthy Children: Food Security and Services for Families

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People are hearing daily that an economic recovery is occurring, that there are signs that the recession is over. Yet there is still an unemployment rate of 7 percent and in most communities, public and private health practitioners and organizations are working hard to assist families who are struggling to provide housing and basic necessities for their families.

Families who have been impacted by unemployment are challenged with meeting weekly requirements to secure unemployment benefits, navigating programs to assist the uninsured, such as COBRA, and applying for programs that they may not have any previous experience with. These challenges, coupled with meeting basic necessities, can critically impact a family's sense of well-being.

A critical concern for families is food security. The following are food security resources that may be beneficial for families:

Kansas Food Assistance and Nutrition Program



The Food Assistance and Nutrition Program, also provided by the USDA, provides food stamp benefits for income-eligible households. It also provides education on food preparation and nutrition to these families. This program is meant to provide income-eligible households with access to a healthy, nutritious diet and serves as the first line of defense against hunger. Contact the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS) hotline at 1-888-369-4777 for information or to learn more about the Kansas Food Stamp Program and the application process, or visit www.srskansas.org/ISD/ees/food_stamps.htm.

Kansas Nutrition & WIC Services



This USDA funded program provides nutrition education and supplemental foods to income-eligible Kansas women who are pregnant, postpartum or are breastfeeding. Services are also provided to infants and children. To learn more about WIC and state staff who can direct you to services in your county, visit www.kdheks.gov/nws-wic/index.html.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)



The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) food provides free food to low income households throughout Kansas. To learn where and when to pick up the food, you may contact the local food bank, helping agency, or the local SRS office. To find the Social and Rehabilitation Office nearest you, click on the Locations tab in the banner at the top of this page or call toll free at 1-888-369-4777. To learn more about the TEFAP program, go to www.srskansas.org/ISD/ees/TEFAP.htm.

Kansas School Nutrition Programs



Kansas school sponsors that participate in the lunch program receive reimbursement from USDA for each meal served to eligible students. In return, they must serve lunches that meet federal requirements, and offer reduced price and free lunches to eligible students. To assist families in applying for free and reduced lunches, contact your local school district nutrition program or the Kansas Department of Education at www.kn-eat.org/SNP/SNP_Menus/SNP_Home.htm.