CHILD HUNGER ALLEVIATION:
A Guide to High Impact Investments

Hunger is defined as the recurrent and involuntary lack of access to food.

Food security is the ability for everyone to consistently access nutritious and safe food so that they can have healthy lives. Food insecurity is particularly devastating to children because lack of proper nutrition prevents a child’s healthy development and has long-term health consequences.

HUNGRY CHILDREN ARE:
· Likely to be sick more often, recover more slowly, and be hospitalized more frequently.
· Less likely to learn as much and perform well in school.
· More likely to have behavioral and emotional problems, be suspended from school, and have difficulty relating to other kids.

Child Hunger in the Classroom:
· This year, for the first time ever, more than half of public school students in this country are from low-income families.
· 3 out of 4 public school teachers say that students regularly come to school hungry. 81% say it happens at least once a week.
· 50% of teachers report that the problem of children being in school hungry has increased.

For more information please on child hunger alleviation see reports from Household Food Security in the United States, Hunger in Our Schools, the Food Research and Action Center, the Summer Food Service Program, No Kid Hungry, Feeding America, and The Journal of Nutrition.
What is a Child Hunger Alleviation Program?

- PRIORITIZES low-income children and their families and stays cognizant of stigmatizing them among their peers
- WORKS WITH PLACES WHERE CHILDREN ARE LIKELY TO BE: schools, churches, and after-school and summer programs to provide nutritious meals and snacks; also with food banks and pantries that reach out to families with children
- COMMUNICATE with children and families to identify their specific needs.
- BUILDS sustainable food systems, like supporting schools in planting gardens to grow food the students and their families can eat, offering coupons to families for farmer’s markets, and supporting farm-to-school programs
- ADVOCATES for resources to feed children year round and to alleviate poverty by increasing resources for education and employment
- USES DATA to determine what difference the program is making and why, and what to improve

High Performing Programs Should Aim to Address the Following Areas:

- Serve breakfast to all students after the bell
- Serve healthy meals and snacks after school, during the summer, on weekends and holidays
- Champion local, state and federal policies
- Teach nutrition

- 73% see kids paying better attention in class
- 53% see improved attendance
- 48% see fewer disciplinary problems
- Policies should support sustainable local food systems
- Provide increased access to healthy food for everyone
- Lessons should be hands on, such as teaching gardening and meal preparation
- Kids should learn about food combinations and quality

While not all programs will successfully address each of these areas, high performing programs should aim to focus on as many as possible. When programs are successful, we should see child hunger alleviation.

For more information please visit:
The Sillerman Center for the Advancement of Philanthropy
415 South Street (MS 035) | Waltham, MA 02453 | 781.736.3772
sillermancenter.brandeis.edu

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