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**Nearly One in Five Households with Children in Connecticut Reports Inability to Afford Enough Food**

*Data Also Show Widespread Struggle in Every State and Metropolitan Area,  
Underscoring Need to Protect Nutrition Safety Net*

**East Haven, CT – September 18, 2013** – The recession has meant that high numbers of all types of households have been struggling to purchase adequate food, but households with children suffered extraordinarily high rates, according to a new national report released today. In surveys running for five years through 2012, nearly one in four households with children said they couldn't consistently afford food, even as the House Majority Leadership is proposing to cut the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps) by a staggering \$40 billion.

*Food Hardship 2008-2012: Geography and Household Structure*, released by the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), found that in surveys from 2008-2012, nearly 19 percent of households with children in Connecticut said there were times in the prior year when they did not have enough money to buy food that they needed for themselves or their family. In Connecticut households without children, nearly 13 percent said they faced the same struggle.

"Given the economic struggles that continue to persist in Connecticut, it is outrageous that Congress is even debating cuts to SNAP," said Nancy L. Carrington, Connecticut Food Bank's President & CEO. "Food hardship is far too high for all households in Connecticut, and the situation for households with children is far worse. Our Members of Congress need to act on what's going to help, not hurt, struggling families here, and the first step is to pass a Farm Bill that doesn't cut SNAP."

This report is consistent with data released by the federal government this month which show how many Americans continue to struggle. Food insecurity data, released by the Economic Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), show that 13.4 percent in Connecticut struggled with hunger during the 2010 to 2012 period. (Those data are not broken down by households with and without children.) And national poverty data released yesterday by the U.S. Census Bureau showed that the national poverty rate has remained at elevated rates since the recession began.

"What these data tell us is that there's a new reality for too many Americans. Hunger and poverty rates spiked at the beginning of the recession and have stayed high ever since," said Carrington. "And the food hardship data reveal the extraordinary frequency of that struggle for households with children who say they can't afford enough food. Cutting SNAP would worsen an already terrible situation."

The FRAC analysis examines food hardship rates – the inability to afford enough food – for households with and without children. Data are available for the nation, every state and region, and 100 of the country’s largest Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), including Bridgeport-Stamford Norwalk, Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford and New Haven-Milford. Findings for childhood food hardship for surveys from 2008-2012 in Connecticut include:

- 18.6 percent of households with children in Connecticut said they were unable to afford enough food. The food hardship rate for households without children was 12.6 percent.
- Regionally, the Northeast had a food hardship rate of 21.6 percent for households with children, and 14.2 percent for households without children.
- For the New Haven-Milford MSA, the food hardship rate was 19.9 percent for households with children, and 14 percent for households without children. The Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford MSA showed a 17.4 percent food hardship rate for households with children and 12.3 percent for households without children. And for the Bridgeport-Stamford-Norwalk MSA, the food hardship rate was 15.2 percent for households with children and 11.5 percent for households without children.

The full analysis is available on FRAC’s website ([www.frac.org](http://www.frac.org)).

#### **About the data**

*FRAC’s Food Hardship in America series analyzes data that were collected by Gallup and provided to FRAC. The data were gathered as part of the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index project, which has interviewed nearly 1.8 million households between 2008 and 2012. FRAC has analyzed responses to the question: “Have there been times in the past twelve months when you did not have enough money to buy food that you or your family needed?”*

**Connecticut Food Bank** serves more than 650 community-based feeding programs in six of Connecticut’s eight counties: Fairfield, Litchfield, Middlesex, New Haven, New London and Windham. Connecticut Food Bank distributes an average of 36 tons of food every business day.