

A mind needs food, not an empty stomach

By Olivia Neeley



“We have kids that come in every day ... if they miss breakfast, they will cry.” - Jenny Hayes, principal of Margaret Hearne Elementary School in Wilson, NC

Hunger in America

- Hunger is a reality for **1 in 6 people** in the United States.
- In 2009, the top five states with the highest rate of food insecure children under 18: District of Columbia, Oregon, Arizona, Arkansas and Texas.
- In 2010, **14.5 percent** of households (approximately **1 in 7**), were food insecure, the highest number ever recorded in the U.S.
- In 2010, households that had higher rates of food insecurity than the national average included households with children (**20.2 percent**), especially households with children headed by single women (**35.1 percent**) or single men (**25.4 percent**), Black non-Hispanic households (**25.1 percent**) and Hispanic households (**26.2 percent**).

What's Being Done

- The **National School Lunch Program** provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day.
- **Share Our Strength's "No Kid Hungry" Campaign** has established multiple partnerships in its fight to end childhood hunger in America by 2015.
- **Feeding America Backpack Program** helps nearly 230,000 children every year through bags of nutritious and easy-to-prepare food for the weekend.
- **Feeding America Kids Cafe** programs provide free meals and snacks to low-income children at community locations where children congregate after school.
- Local communities have created groups like the **Children's Hunger Outreach of Wilson** in Wilson, NC, to pack bags of food for children to take home on the weekends.

Sources: MCT, The Wilson Daily Times, NC; United States Department of Agriculture; feedingamerica.org; nokidhungry.org
Photo source: Mark Godfrey, The Nature Conservatory