



# Family & Childhood Nutrition: Nourishing Our Communities

Access to healthy, affordable food is a critical issue affecting children and families across our communities. Our Mission and Core Values call on us to nourish the health of our communities, not just because we believe everyone should have access to nutritious food, but also because food insecurity can lead to a lifetime of consequences. There is a clear connection between food insecurity and high levels of stress, poor nutrition and chronic diet-related diseases, like obesity and diabetes.

### The Need

- More than 215,000 of those we serve are food insecure, and one-quarter earn too much to qualify for assistance.
- Food insecurity among our children is equal to or higher than the national average.
- While many think food insecurity equates to starving, underweight children, in America, overweight and obese children are often more symptomatic of this problem. Both are caused by the same root problem: poor nutrition.

Food Insecurity Rate	Aid Eligibility
<b>14%</b> Columbia Network	<b>77%</b>
<b>13.4%</b> Northwest Network	<b>66%</b>
<b>15.4%</b> Oregon Network	<b>79%</b>
<b>13%</b> Nationally	<b>75%</b>

#### Food Insecurity

Being uncertain at times of the ability to acquire or of having enough food for all members of the household due to lack of money or other resources.

### Deeper Dive – Research\*

PeaceHealth commissioned research to provide a deeper understanding of the issues facing those in our communities most at risk. This population:

- Skews younger (18–44) and female (59%)
- Often lives in a household of 5 or more people (40%)
- Is very poor, earning less than \$20K annually (62.5%)
- Spends less than \$100 per week on groceries (48%)
- Reports eating an unhealthy diet at home (39%) and fast food 5 or more times in the previous month (51%)
- Is 30% more likely to be “very obese”

### Impact on Community Health

- There is a clear connection between food insecurity and diet-related disease.
- Children can suffer a lifetime of consequences including a higher risk of chronic diseases, learning difficulties and social and behavioral problems.

**DIABETES    HYPERTENSION    HEART DISEASE    OBESITY**

### TAKING ACTION – What PeaceHealth Is Doing

We are taking the important step of making nutrition and food insecurity a systemwide community health priority. Specifically, we will devote human and financial resources to:

**1 HIGHLIGHTING** existing successful partnerships in the area of food insecurity and nutrition, and looking at ways to broaden our participation;

**2 IDENTIFYING** program gaps where PeaceHealth sponsorship and/or participation can make a meaningful difference;

**3 ENHANCING** the ability of our caregivers to identify food and nutrition-related issues among those we serve, and to provide counsel and access to assistance;

**4 PARTNERING** with community organizations, educational institutions, health partners, businesses, the media and government to improve food security and nutrition awareness in our communities;

**5 ADVOCATING** for local, state and federal programs that provide food assistance and nutrition education;

**6 PROVIDING** community education; and

**7 TAKING CARE** of our own PeaceHealth family through access to emergency assistance and educational programs.



\* Conducted by CentraForce Health, the research looked at a statistically significant sample (13,117) of adult households (18–54) in the Columbia & Northwest Networks (excluding Alaska) with one or more children under 18 and a household income at the federal poverty level or less, and spending less than \$150 weekly on groceries.