



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

September 3, 2014

**Continuing high rates of food insecurity in Ohio brings together advocates, providers
New brief co-released by Voices for Ohio's Children and the Ohio Association of Foodbanks
examines continuing hunger crisis among Ohio children**

COLUMBUS – The [Tackling Child Hunger in Ohio: What's Working and How Can We Improve](#) brief co-released today by Voices for Ohio's Children and the Ohio Association of Foodbanks examines the continuing hunger crisis, its implications for Ohio's children, a summary of federal and state programs available and opportunities for action.

Also released today was an updated [Household Food Security](#) report by the USDA Economic Research Service, which indicates that from 2011-2013, an estimated 16 percent of Ohioans lived in food insecure households. From 2011-2013, Ohio's very low food security rate—those households that reduce food intake or skip meals because of a lack of money and other resources for food—was 7.2 percent, tying it for the 3rd worst very low food security rate in the nation.

“The consequences of hunger for Ohio's children and our state's economic future are severe,” said Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, executive director of the Ohio Association of Foodbanks. “We must act now to make sure programs are adequately funded and that innovative approaches are tested.”

Voices for Ohio's Children held a series of regional forums across Ohio last year, and in every community, childhood hunger was raised as a pressing issue.

“We heard from local communities and our members about how this affects their work at the local level,” said Sandy Oxley, CEO of Voices for Ohio's Children. “Even one experience with hunger can have a negative impact on a child's life for decades. We cannot ignore this issue and must continue to work with our local, state and federal partners to do everything we can to address it.”

The *Tackling Child Hunger* brief examines how hunger affects a child's educational achievement and performance and how the threat of hunger can also dramatically impact a child's current and future health. It also highlights successful pilot programs that have worked in Ohio to reach more children in need and recommendations for new programs, initiatives and changes to regulations.

“We are extremely proud of the steps the State of Ohio has taken to reach more hungry kids during the summer months,” said Hamler-Fugitt. “The upcoming state biennial budget and federal Child Nutrition Reauthorization are golden opportunities for making substantial gains in this fight.”

[Read the full Tackling Child Hunger in Ohio brief.](#) Visit the USDA ERS website to [view the full Household Food Security report.](#)

About Voices for Ohio's Children

Voices for Ohio's Children advocates for public policy that improves the well-being of Ohio's children and their families by building nonpartisan collaborations among the private, public and not-for-profit sectors.

About the Ohio Association of Foodbanks

The Ohio Association of Foodbanks is Ohio's largest charitable response to hunger, representing Ohio's 12 Feeding America foodbanks and 3,300 member charities including food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters. In SFY 2013, the association and its member foodbanks were able to acquire and distribute over 173 million pounds of food and grocery items. The association also serves as the home of The Ohio Benefit Bank and operates the state's largest navigator program for the Affordable Care Act. Follow the association on [Twitter](#), stay connected on [Facebook](#) and visit them on the web at www.ohiofoodbanks.org.

Contact: Brandi Scales, Voices for Ohio's Children, 614-940-4248 or brandi@raiseyourvoiceforkids.org

-- OR --

Joree Jacobs, Ohio Association of Foodbanks, 614-221-4336 ext. 265 or jjacobs@ohiofoodbanks.org

##