



Floridians Are Going Into Debt Over the Rising Cost of Food

Floridians' Incomes Are Not Keeping Pace with Rising Food Prices; People of Color—Especially Women—and Families Hit Hardest with Increased Debt

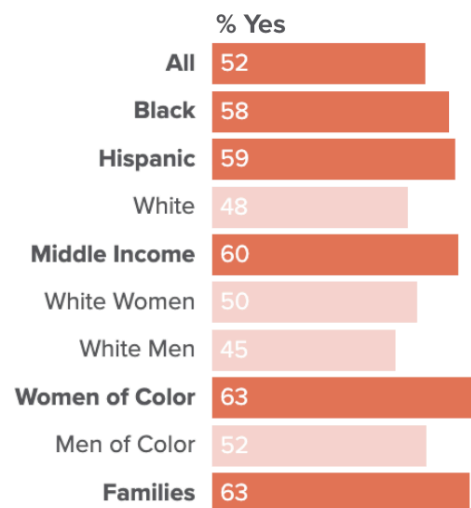
Food Costs Rising Faster Than Incomes, Damaging Finances and Forcing Trade-Offs

A recent poll¹ conducted by Change Research on behalf of No Kid Hungry Florida finds that rising food prices continue to outpace household incomes. An overwhelming 85% of respondents say food costs are increasing faster than their earnings—[up notably from 78% in March 2024](#).

Rising food costs are causing major damage to Floridians' financial well-being. Half (52%) say their debt has increased in the past 12 months due to the cost of food. Black and Hispanic communities, and especially women of color, are hardest hit. Nearly two-in-three (63%) women of color experienced increased debt over the past year. Families (respondents with children 18 and under in their household) and middle-income Floridians are struggling, too. A majority (63%) of families and 60% of respondents with annual household incomes between \$47,768 and \$97,532 accrued debt due to food costs over the past year.

Floridians are making difficult trade-offs between food and other essentials. Two-thirds (64%) of adults and 72% of families—respondents living with children—say they have to choose between buying enough nutritious food and affording other essentials, including gas or transportation, rent or mortgage payments, utilities, health care for themselves or a child, education expenses, and saving for retirement.

In the past 12 months, has your debt (including credit card debt) increased due to the cost of food?



What are the specific ways that the rising cost of food has impacted your household's health and finances?

Some days I [am] only able to provide 1 food a day after school and the kids feel weak and dizzy.

(Hispanic Mom, 35-49, Gadsden County)

I have noticed my kids gaining weight because we're eating less fruits and vegetables and more filler foods.

(Black Mom, 35-49, Okaloosa County)

More debt and less quality food. Hard to pay the bills and car maintenance. Buying gas turns into a life decision and nothing could be saved. Actually, I'm spending savings to make it through the month.

(White Mom, 35-49, Duval County)

We've had to pick either to pay rent or buy snacks for the kids. We had to choose between paying for gas to arrive to work or have [a] breakfast meal.

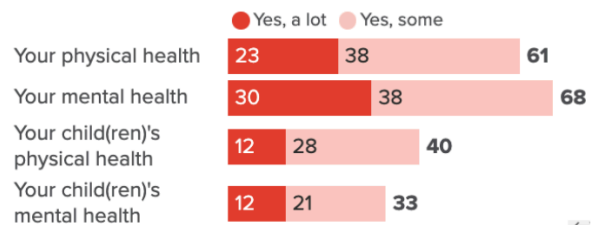
(Hispanic Dad, 18-34, Miami-Dade County)

¹ Using its Dynamic Online Sampling Engine to obtain a sample reflective of the adult population in Florida, Change Research polled 1,014 people statewide from May 13-19, 2025. The modeled margin of error is 3.3%. Post-stratification weighting was performed on age, race/ethnicity, sex, education, region, parent/guardian status, and partisan identification. Weighting parameters were based on U.S. Census and voter file data. See full methodology details [here](#).

Alarming Impacts on Families' Physical and Mental Health

A majority (60%) of respondents say that due to the cost of food, their household's diet is less nutritious than it was a year ago. This is especially true for families: 65% say their household diets are now less nutritious. As a consequence, an alarming number of parents and guardians are experiencing negative health effects: 61% say their physical health has suffered over the past year, and 68% say their mental health has suffered. Many report negative impacts on their children's physical and mental health, too.

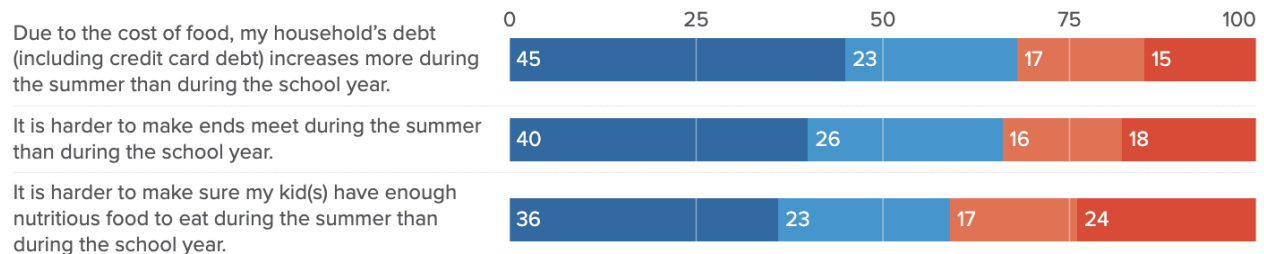
In the past 12 months, has the following suffered due to the cost of food? [Parents/Guardians]



Summertime is Especially Difficult For Families

Many Florida families struggle to afford enough food during the summer, more than during the school year when children receive school meals. The majority (59%) say they struggle to make sure their children have enough nutritious food when school is out, and two-thirds (66%) say it is more difficult to make ends meet. More than two-in-three (68%) take on more debt during the summer than during the school year.

● Strongly Agree ● Somewhat Agree ● Somewhat Disagree ● Strongly Disagree



Strong Support for Summer EBT, Demand for Bipartisan Action on Hunger

The federal Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (Summer EBT) addresses summer food hardship, allowing families to receive approximately \$120 per child in grocery benefits on an Electronic Benefit Transfer card to purchase food for each school-age child who is eligible for free or reduced-price school meals.

Most Floridians want Florida to say 'yes' to Summer EBT. 82%--the vast majority of Florida's adult population--would like to see the state participate in this federal program, with a majority (62%) saying Florida should definitely participate. Support for the program was found across the political spectrum, including 95% of self-identified Democrats, 84% of independents, and 70% of Republicans.

Across the partisan spectrum, Floridians want their elected officials to take action on hunger. Nearly all (96%) respondents agree that child hunger should not exist in Florida, and 91% believe that ending childhood hunger should be a bipartisan goal. Nine in ten (90%) would like to see elected officials in Florida do more to end childhood hunger.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (% Agree)

