



Floridians Agree: No Child Should Go Hungry This Summer

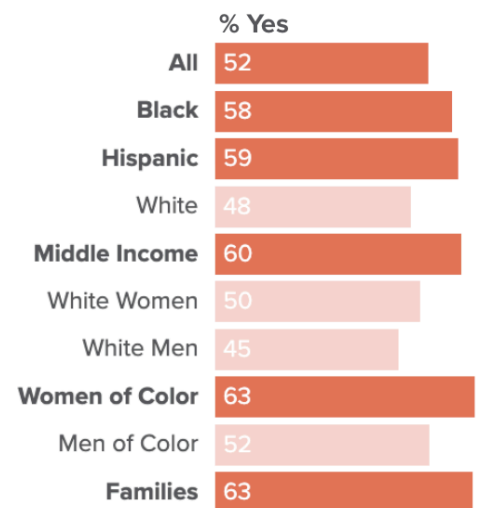
*Summer Brings Greater Hardships for Families Struggling to Feed their Kids Nutritious Meals:
Floridians Want Action!*

When Summer Comes, Hunger Spikes — and So Does Family Debt

A recent poll conducted by Change Research on behalf of No Kid Hungry Florida finds that families across the state face increased food insecurity and financial strain when school is out and fewer students have access to healthy school meals. During the summer, many families lose a key source of daily nutrition for their children and with food costs rising faster than household incomes, stretching a household's budget becomes especially difficult. Families are forced to make difficult decisions, go without nutritious food or increase debt.

Families face increased hardships during summer months. A majority (59%) of Florida parents say they struggle to make sure their children have enough nutritious food when school meals are harder to access. Two-thirds (66%) say it's more difficult to make ends meet during the summer, and 68% report taking on more debt because of increased food costs when it becomes more challenging to access meals. These challenges are not just financial — many parents report declining nutrition and added emotional stress during the summer. Black and Hispanic communities, especially women of color, are hit hardest — nearly two-thirds (63%) of women of color say their debt has increased over the past year due to food costs. These struggles aren't limited to low-income families. Even middle-income families — those earning \$75,000 or more a year — are feeling the strain, with over half (51%) saying it's harder to afford food during the summer. More than half of all families polled report having to make difficult choices between food and essential expenses like rent, transportation, or healthcare.

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 financial situation?

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)

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)

The rising cost of food has increased our monthly grocery expenses, leaving fewer funds for pet care, savings, home repairs, and increased our credit card debt.

(White Mom, 18-34, Escambia County)

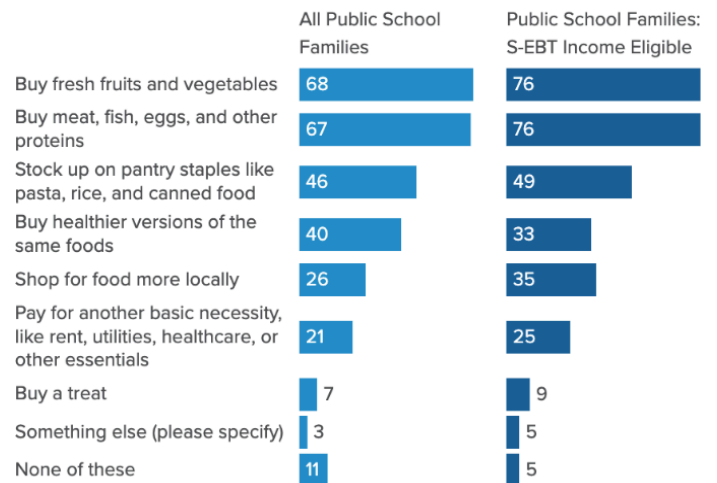
The rising costs of food has made it to where my family has to eat unhealthier options because they are cheaper. I also have to choose between food and filling up my gas tank sometimes. It's really terrible.

(Black Mom, 18-34, Orange County)

Floridians Across the Partisan Spectrum Want Florida To Say "Yes" to Summer EBT

An overwhelming **82% of Floridians** — across all political parties — support Florida joining the federal Summer EBT program, also known as **SUN Bucks**, which provides \$120 per eligible child in grocery benefits during the summer months when access to school meals is limited. Florida has yet to opt-in to the SUN Bucks program, despite a strong public demand: 62% say the state should *definitely* join. Support spans the political spectrum, including 70% of Republicans, 95% of Democrats, and 84% of independents. Among eligible families, 76% say they would use the additional grocery assistance to buy more fresh fruits and vegetables, quality proteins such as meat and beans, and other wholesome foods that support children's health and well-being — options they might otherwise have to forgo due to cost. For many families, this extra support makes the difference between choosing healthier options and having to stretch their dollars on less nutritious food — or skipping meals altogether. The SUN Bucks not only helps put food on the table — it gives parents peace of mind, knowing their children won't have to go hungry during the summer months.

Select all that apply. Imagine that you have an extra \$120 per child in your grocery budget during the summer months when school is not in session. Would you be more likely to:



Floridians are united in demanding action to end childhood hunger. Nearly all respondents (96%) agree that no child should go hungry in Florida, and 91% see ending child hunger as a bipartisan priority. With 90% urging elected officials to do more, the call for effective, collaborative leadership on this issue is clear. As food costs rise and fewer students receive school meals during the summer, families are counting on elected officials to ensure that no child is left behind during the summer months. Summer should be a time of joy and growth for children—not a season of hunger.

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

