

A photograph of three healthcare professionals sitting on a bench in a hospital setting, engaged in a discussion. The image is overlaid with a blue and green gradient. The text is centered over the image.

Harvesting Hope

Empowering Communities to Overcome Food Insecurity

Session Overview

Upon completion of this session, participants will

- Understand what food insecurity is and how it impacts our communities
- Be prepared to make a personal impact in helping those around them with food insecurity in simple/cost effective ways
- Be able to demonstrate examples of how centering one's own gratitude by helping a neighbor in need can lead to improved mental health



What is Food Insecurity?

Food insecurity is defined as the lack of access, at times, to enough food for an active, healthy life

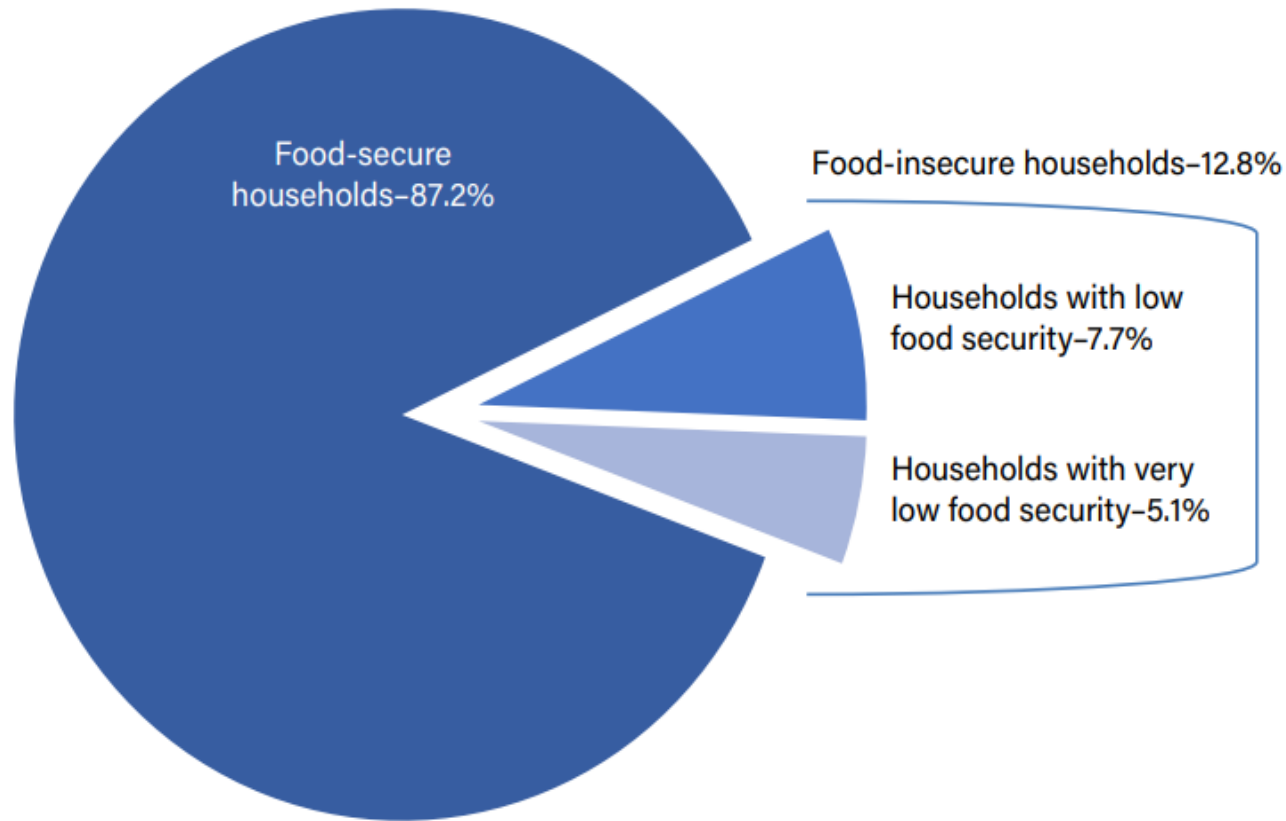


Low food security refers to having reduced quality, variety or desirability of diet with little or no reduced food intake



Very low food security refers to having multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns with reduced food intake

How Secure Are We?

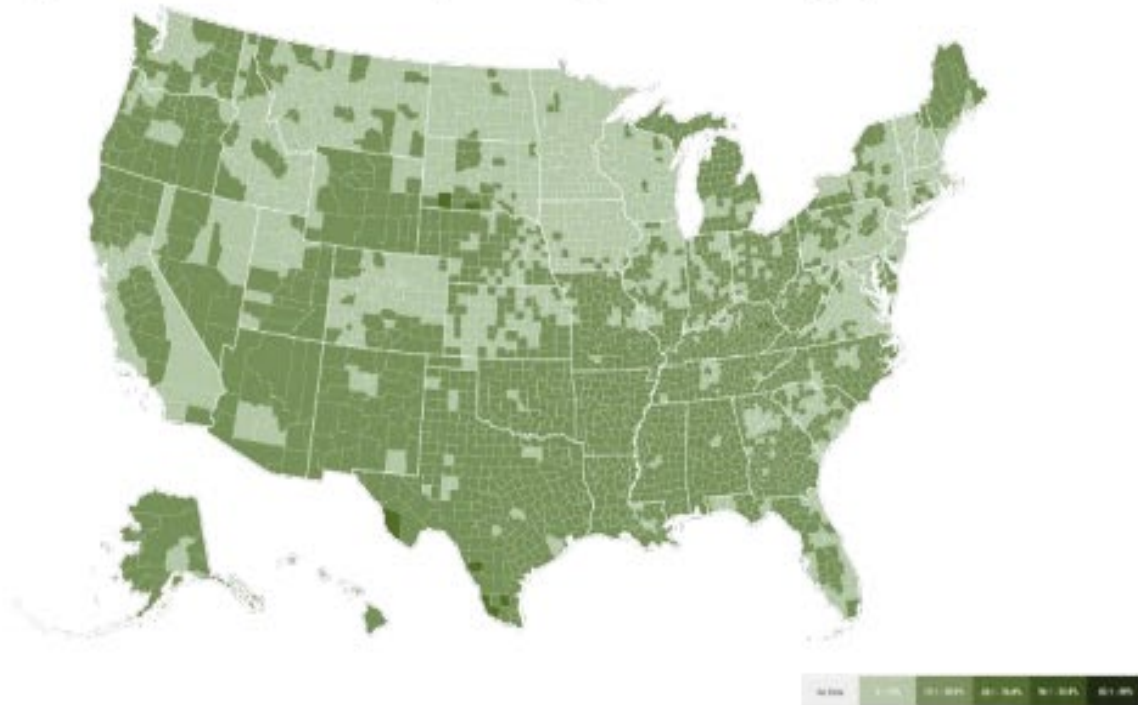


**The U.S. saw
a 25.5%
increase in
food
insecurity
from 2021 to
2022**

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2022 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

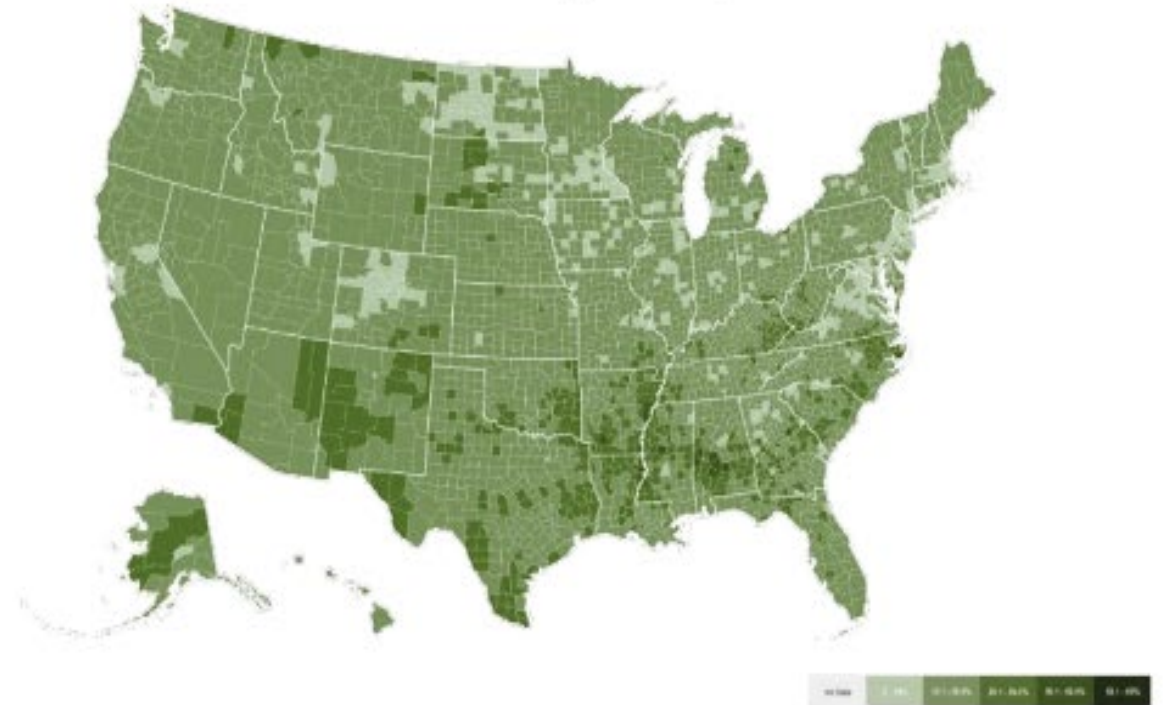
National Food Insecurity Rates

Figure 2. Food insecurity among the overall population in 2022




Source: Feeding America

Figure 3. Food insecurity among children in 2022



Kansas 2022 Food Insecurity Rates

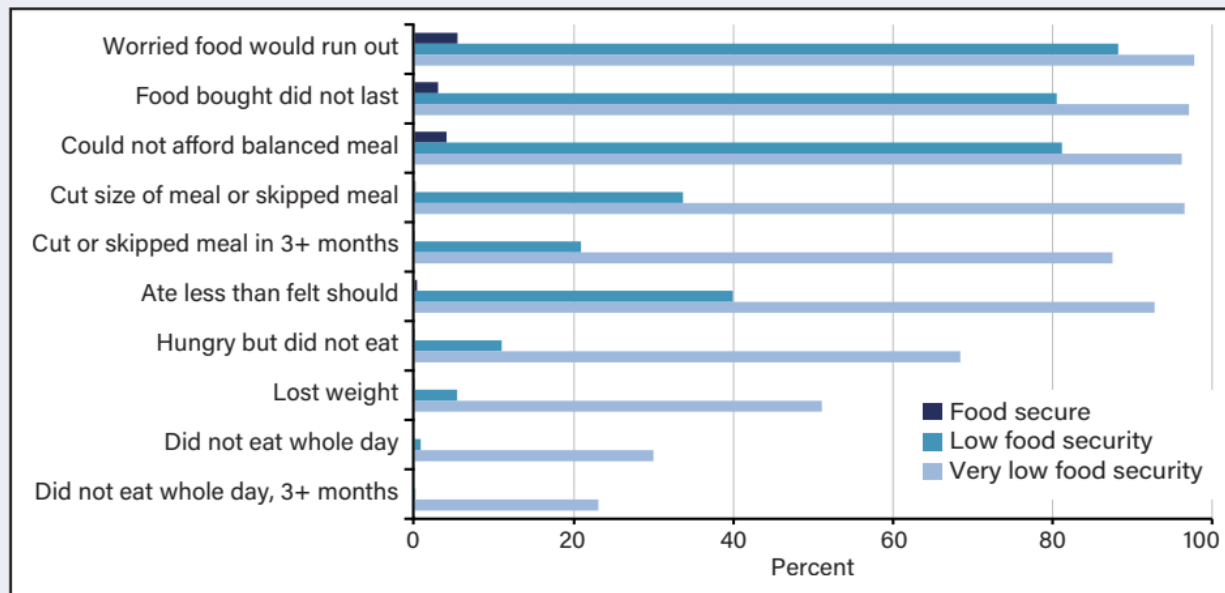


 Kansas counties with the highest rates of food insecurity:
Barber, Chautauqua, Crawford, Montgomery, Wilson

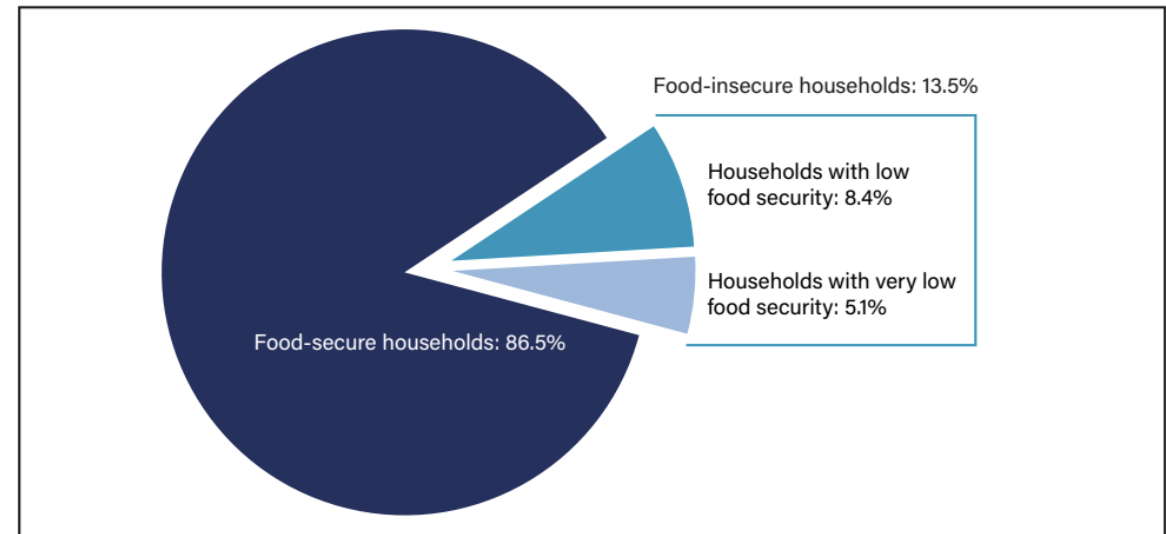


2023 Data- Released September 2024

Percentage of U.S. households reporting each indicator of food insecurity, by food security status, 2023



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2023 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement data.



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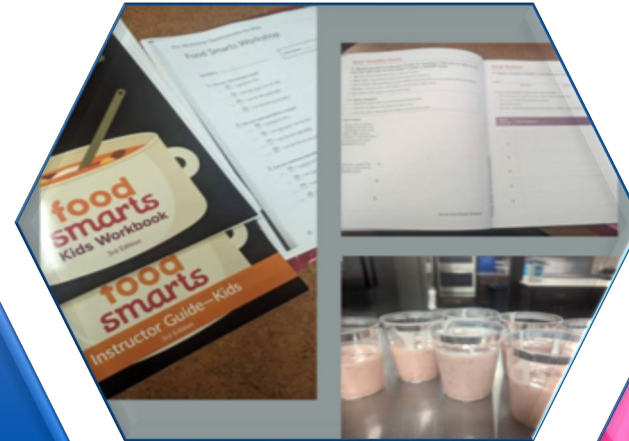
How Does Food Insecurity Impact Our Communities?

- **Health Problems:** Increased risk of chronic diseases, malnutrition, and developmental issues in children and overall cognitive functioning
- **Economic Strain:** Higher healthcare costs and reduced productivity
- **Social Consequences:** Increased stress, reduced educational outcomes, and weakened community cohesion



Community Approaches

Educational Programs



Innovative Solutions



Engagement and Empowerment



Brenda's Journey: Planting the Seed

December 13, 2023

A few things to ponder this morning...

I have always said...

There are messages and lessons in each day, you just have to be open to receiving them...

Last night,

-- I saw, in real time, the power of peer connection and "meeting them where they are". In last night's class, we had a Hope Center parent run the group. My goodness, she did so AMAZING. The kiddos connected with her on a different level; she talked about real life examples and situations the kids face while living at the Hope Center and then we discussed strategies. Those true life experiences are something that I can't provide but are vitally important... It was beautiful. Like truly beautiful...

And while she was running class, she said "I was 20 years old, on my own and had no idea how to cook..."

Ok peeps... only those who know what I've been up to are going to understand the importance of what she said. I AM on the right track, and we are going to make a difference.

And to think, I was so tired last night I almost didn't go 💖



KFMC's Community Service Project: MLK Day of Service

15 youth volunteers from the Boys and Girls Club of Topeka, along with 5 KFMC volunteers, worked with two professional chefs to prepare, cook, package a three-course meal for 120 Loving Hearts clients and ten of their staff.



KANSAS VOLUNTEER COMMISSION





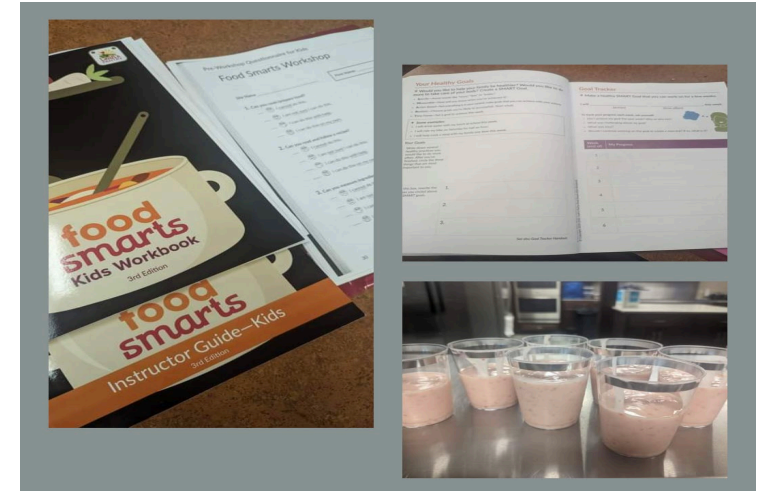
Leah's Pantry: Food Smarts Program

- Food Smarts is a flexible, learner-centered cooking and nutrition curriculum appropriate for K-12 youth and adults, including older adults
- Food Smarts is part of the USDA's national SNAP-Ed Connection and includes the core components needed to implement the program:
 - instructor guides, participant workbooks, and participant pre/post surveys
 - facilitation framework, activities and outcome evaluations
 - customizable lesson plans allowing implementing partners the discretion to choose which option meets the needs of their clients/agency

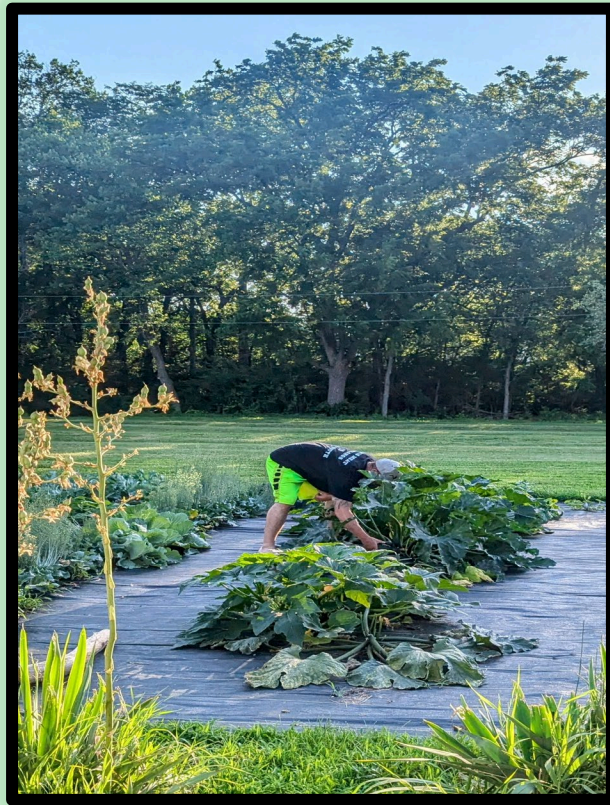


Food Smarts: Boys and Girls Club of Topeka

- Each week consisted of:
 - Taste test
 - Book work
 - Cooking demonstration
 - Reflection and sharing
- Our group consisted of ten teens
 - 4 boys and 3 girls attended all sessions
- Outcomes
 - 3/10 reported less sugar intake
 - 6/10 cooked a recipe at home during the program
 - 7/10 attended all sessions
 - 100% reported they would attend another 6-week class



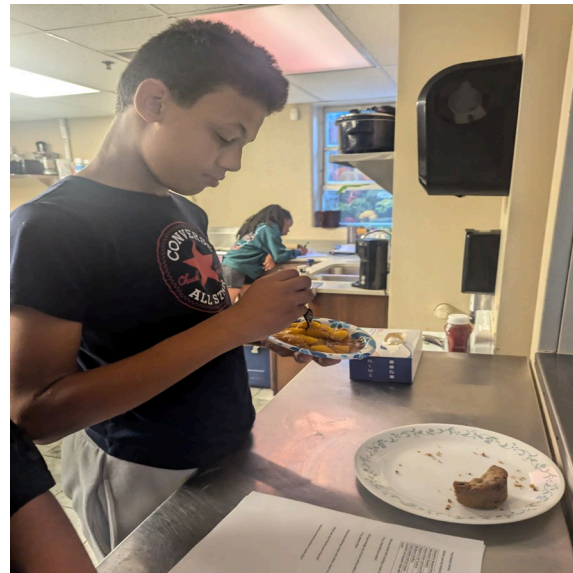
A Farm-to-Table Experience



**Oh, to savor the mundane
delight,
A fruit, a moment, a day turning
bright,
In the hustle and bustle, I
sometimes miss,
The beauty in simplicity, the
flavor of bliss.
So, here's to the banana, the
everyday gold,
A symbol of joy in a world that's
so cold,
May I pause and remember, in
life's busy flow,
To cherish the simple, the small
joys we know.**



Shake It Off



SENT Topeka- Southside Filling Station



“Trust and cooperation among neighbors helps to build resilient communities and strengthens social capital.”

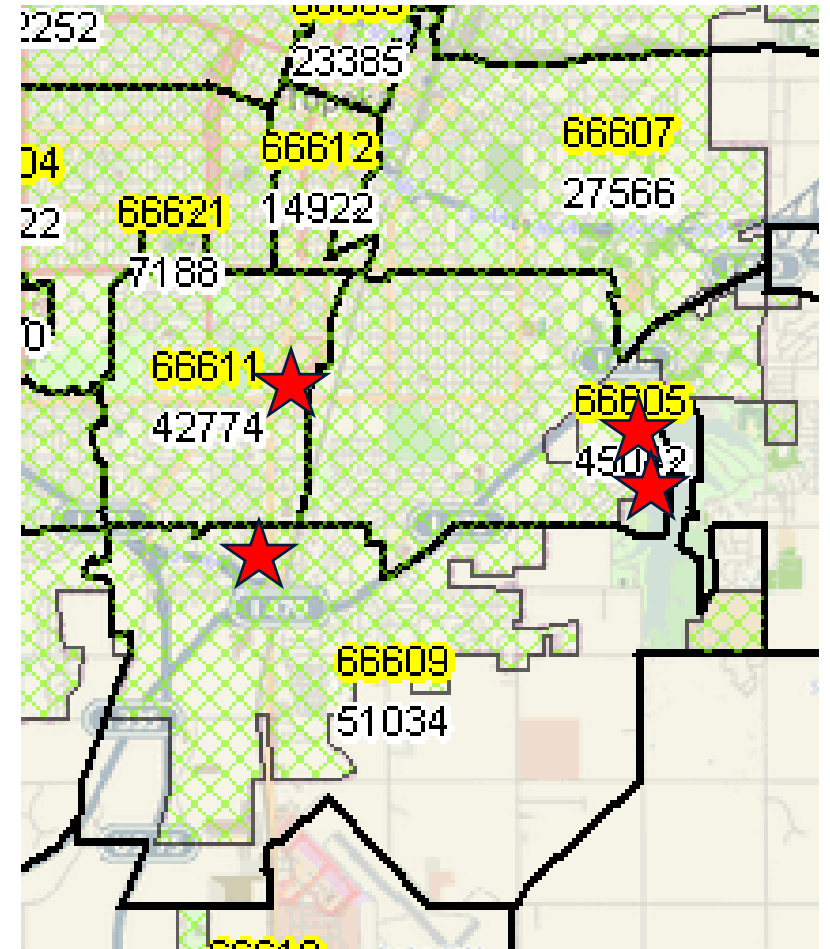
[Home - SENT Topeka](#)



[SENT Topeka opens new weekly food pantry](#)

The Oasis

- SENT's Southside Filling Station served a total of 301 families in their first month
 - 181 have an annual household income less than \$20,000 per year
 - 101 have an annual household income between 20,000 and \$39,999.00
 - Zip Codes served:
 - 66605
 - 66607
 - 66609
 - 66611



Take A Seat



Brenda's Final Thoughts

- Do your programs place emphasis on relationships and socialization?
- Check your bias... everyday
- Be inclusive in all areas of your organization
- Most importantly, show up for them



Mobilizing Your Community: Thinking Outside the Box



wibw.com

**Salute: Meet Topeka's Hope Dealer,
Rachel Holthaus**

<https://www.facebook.com/1192225483/videos/1052507619236184/>

"That is an amazing and brave recovery path that she has been on," Persinger said. "She is an open door for anybody who needs some inspiration on changing their life for the better. She encourages people to tell their story. A small story or big story, she really helps take away the fear of stigma."



Rachel Holthaus has made it her mission to spread hope in the community as she fills up a blessing box Tuesday outside of KVC Kansas, 419 S.W. 29th Street. *Evert Nelson/The Capital-Journal*

"The Hope Dealer" spends her time by driving her "hope mobile" around town and filling different blessing boxes in the city, picking items up from porches for a foster care resource room, speaking to groups of people about her personal experience from

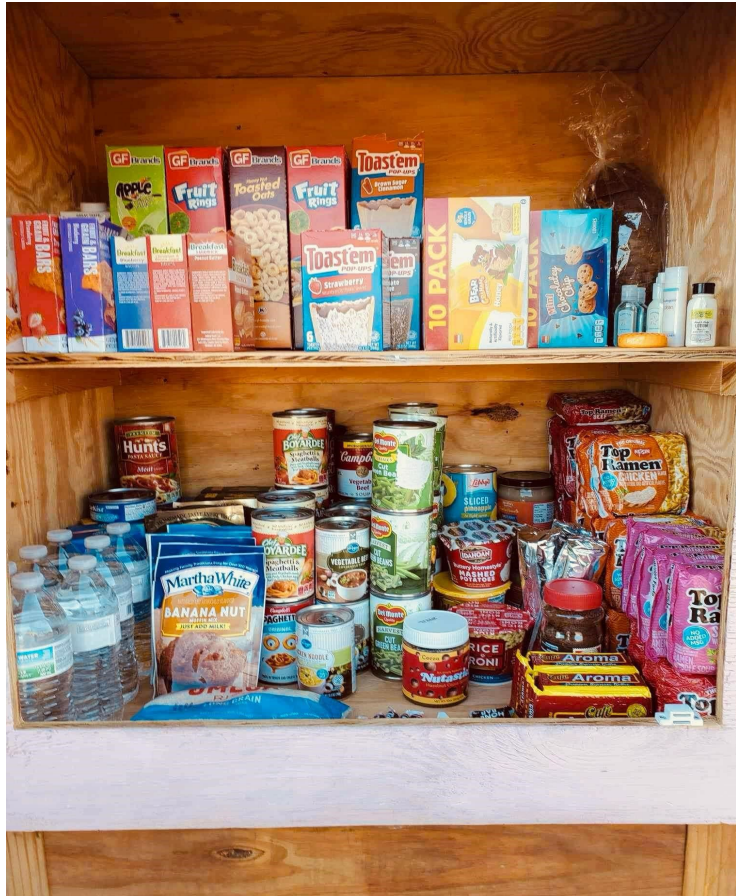




Rachel, The Hope Dealer



Bee The Blessing Box



Spreading Hope: Nicole and Kyle



Nicole Holthaus Clark

October 16 at 4:42 AM · 🧑

One year ago today, after seeing [Rachel Holthaus](#) post about it many times, I filled the Blessing Box closest to my house for the first time. It was a few days before my brother's birthday and I was feeling especially down at the time. Filling the box helped me feel better because as Rachel always says "Love is the antidote to pain." ❤️

I continued filling the same box for the next couple of weeks, and then [Kyle](#) started helping me. It became our thing to do together on Fridays, and it was Kyle who came up with the term "Fill the Box Friday." One or both of us has filled one of the 55 [Bee the Blessing Boxes](#) in Topeka every week for the last year. I feel very fortunate that we are able to help people in our community who have food insecurity.

We've had some help in the last year from friends donating money for us to purchase items to fill the box or actually physically helping us fill the box. Thanks to everyone who has helped....we appreciate YOU!!! We're going to keep doing our thing every week as long as we are able to. ❤️❤️



Spreading Hope: Nicole and Kyle



Spreading Hope: Planting The Seeds of Tomorrow



Spreading Hope: A Family Affair



Shannon Martinez is with John Martinez and 2 others.

March 23 · 🧑🏻‍🦱

Love that I was as able to share my gift of giving with 2 of my amazing grands !! We talked about food insecurity and how love is the antidote to pain. ❤️ They filled our local blessing box and it's a memory that will last a lifetime. Rachel the Hope Dealer continues to inspire us all! ❤️



👉 This is what I mean by planting seeds with kids. Look what Shannon Martinez grandson wanted to do for his 16th birthday 🧡🎂 — with Shannon Martinez.

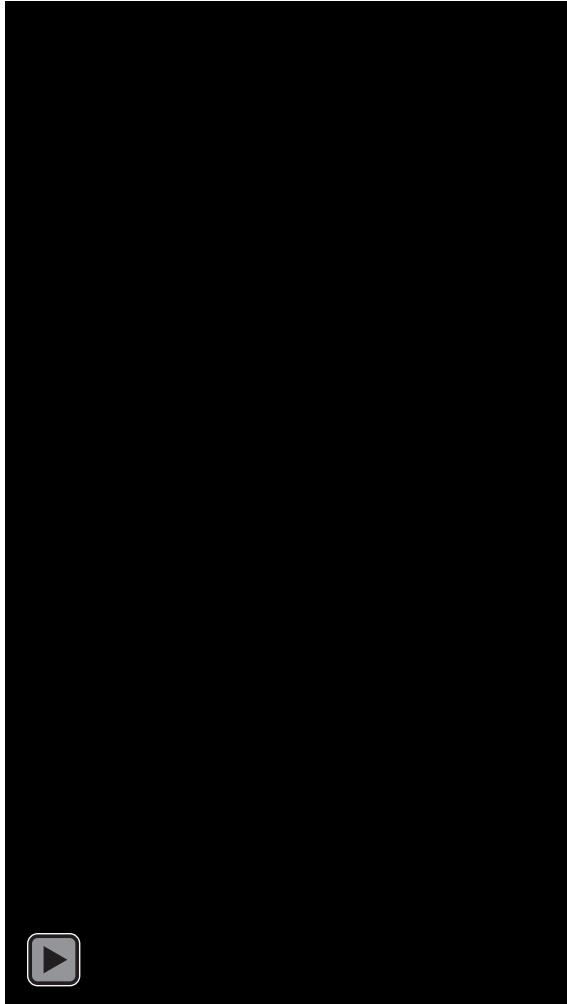


Shannon Martinez is with Talan Robertson and Josh Robertson.

September 15 · 🌐

After a weekend of travel Fall ball, on his 16th birthday, being away from his family and friends, this grand of mine wanted to be a blessing to those with food insecurity! ❤️ Highlight of the whole weekend. 🧡💜👉 #teachthemtobeablessing #fillblessingbox

Spreading Hope: Bee The Change You Want To See



Notable Resources

- [Food Insecurity - Healthy People 2030 | health.gov](https://health.gov)
- Leah's Pantry [Food Smarts – Leah's Pantry \(leahspantry.org\)](https://leahspantry.org)
- [EatFresh.org – Leah's Pantry \(leahspantry.org\)](https://leahspantry.org)
- [SNAP-Ed Connection | Home \(usda.gov\)](https://usda.gov)
- [Collective Impact \(ssir.org\)](https://ssir.org)
- [Hunger & Poverty in the United States | Map the Meal Gap \(feedingamerica.org\)](https://feedingamerica.org)
- [Household Food Security in the United States in 2022 \(usda.gov\)](https://usda.gov)
- [MMG 2024 Executive Summary \(1\).pdf](#)
- [Household Food Security in the United States in 2023](#)
- [Home - SENT Topeka](#)
- [Bee The Blessing](#)



Thank you!

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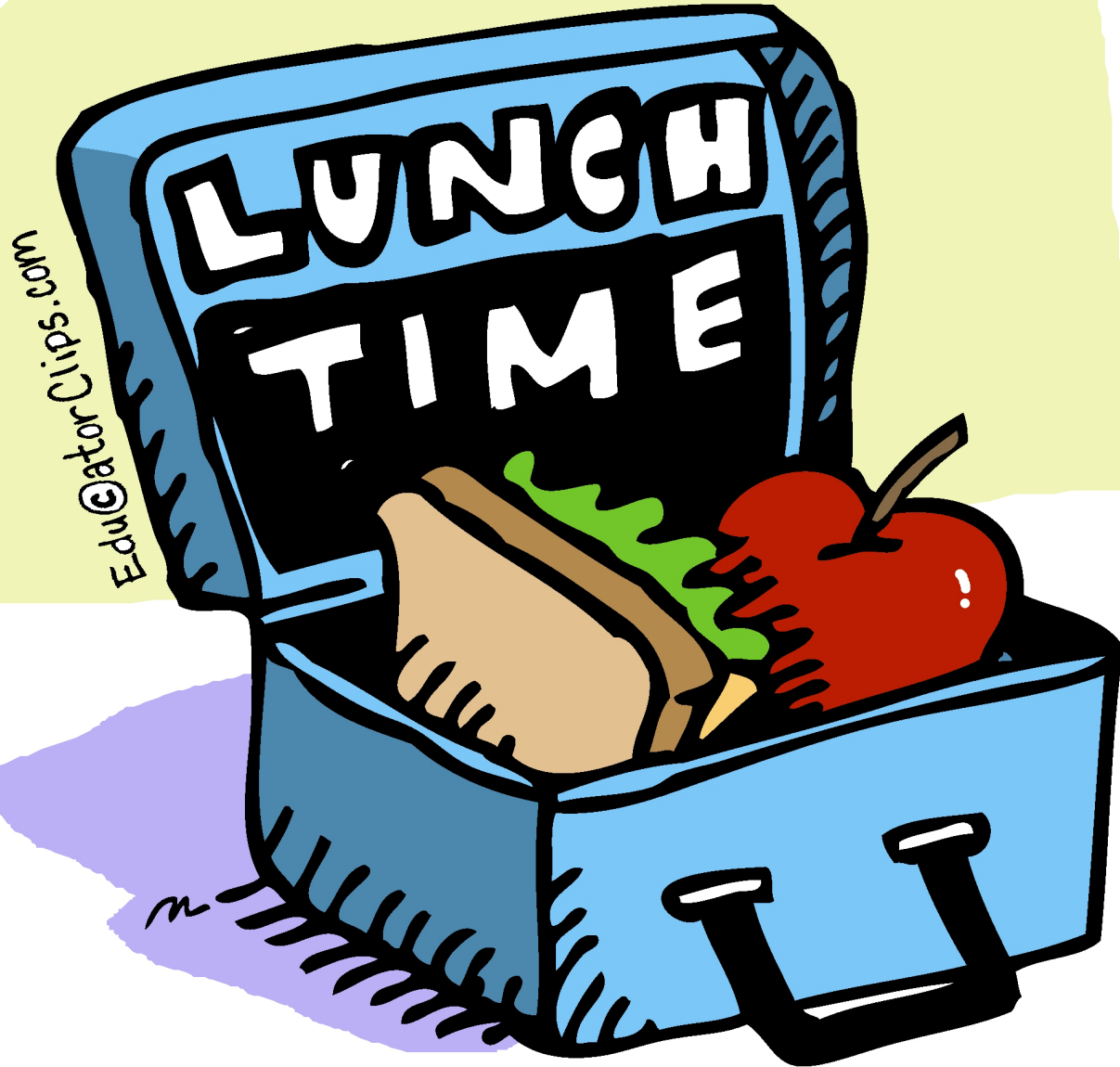
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Please complete the survey.

HES: Harvesting Hope:
Empowering Communities to
Overcome Food Insecurity





Boxed
lunches
available
in Room
130