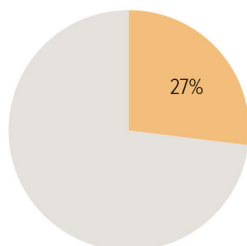


Report: SNAP delivers more nutrition assistance to children than any other program

Written by By New Mexico Voices for Children
Friday, 14 October 2016 05:08

1 in 4 U.S. Children Participate in SNAP

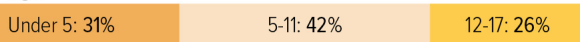


Sources: U.S. Department of Agriculture, "Characteristics of SNAP Households, Fiscal Year 2014," and U.S. Census Bureau 2014 population estimates

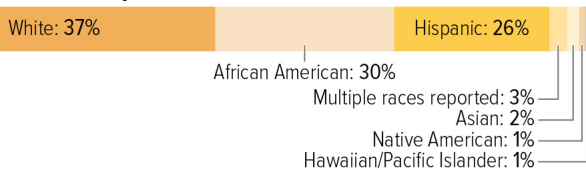
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Characteristics of SNAP Participants Who Are Children, 2014

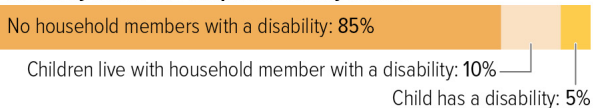
Age



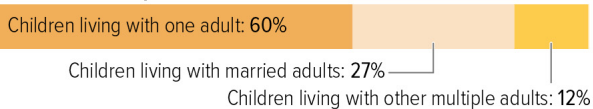
Race/ethnicity*



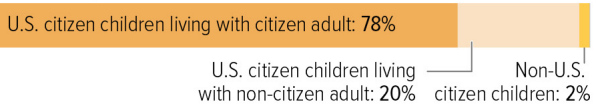
Disability based on receipt of disability benefit



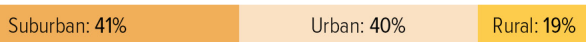
Household composition



Citizenship



Metro status*



*Among those for whom race or metro status is reported.

Sources: CBPP analysis of U.S. Agriculture Department 2014 SNAP household characteristics data and March 2015 Current Population Survey (CPS) (for metro status only).

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NM has highest rate of young children receiving SNAP benefits in nation

ALBUQUERQUE - A report released the week of Oct. 11 by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities calls the food assistance program Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly called food stamps, the single largest provider of nutrition assistance to children in struggling families across the country.

The report also shows that 46 percent of New Mexico's young children—ages zero to four—receive SNAP benefits. That's the highest rate in the nation.

“Getting a healthy, adequate diet is especially important for our youngest children, because nutrition plays a huge role in brain development,” James Jimenez, executive director of New Mexico Voices for Children, said. “Many of the skills that are critical for success in school and in adulthood are developed in the first five years of life. So we need to ensure that these infants and toddlers do not go hungry because of staffing shortages or problems with processing applications and renewals.”

Food insecurity in the early years of childhood can have consequences even when youth are getting the nutrition they need in later years, according to the report.

“[T]eens who had experienced food insecurity in infancy are more likely to score lower on achievement tests, repeat a grade, and fail to graduate from high school...,” the report reads.

Having access to SNAP as a child also improves long-term health and economic outcomes.

“SNAP is our most efficient and effective tool to combat hunger. Ensuring families can buy nutritious food helps kids succeed in school. It also brings much-needed economic activity to the state,” said Sovereign Hager, an attorney with New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty, which represents applicants in a case against the state concerning illegal delays and denial of SNAP and Medicaid. “We must maximize the benefit to New Mexico by removing unnecessary barriers for eligible families applying for and renewing benefits,” she added.

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Across the nation, 69 percent of SNAP participants live in families with children, according to the report. In New Mexico, that rate is even higher at 74 percent.

“Unfortunately, the budget cuts enacted last week—on top of previous budgets cuts and years of chronic underfunding for New Mexico’s SNAP program—are only going to make matters worse,” Jimenez said.

The report, *SNAP Works for America’s Children*, is available online at cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/snap-works-for-americas-children.

New Mexico Voices for Children is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization advocating for policies to improve the health and well-being of New Mexico’s children, families and communities.

Visit: nmvoices.org

By New Mexico Voices for Children