

# Hunger is **REAL** in Our Community (And **3 Easy Ways** You Can Help)

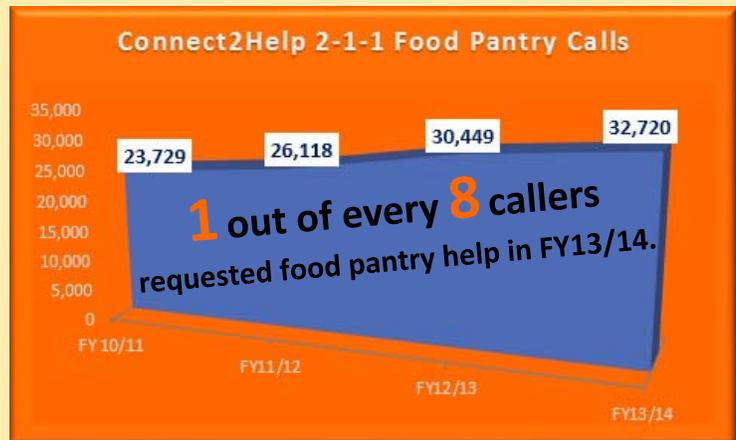
Katie\*, a 21-year old wife and mother of 2 called 2-1-1 for emergency food. Her husband worked, and the family received SNAP benefits (formerly food stamps), but they had run out because she had used them to buy formula for her infant. She had an appointment for WIC, but didn't have money to get the baby's birth certificate, which she needed for the appointment. 2-1-1 connected to her to a food pantry near her home to get food that day; 2-1-1 also referred her to a resource to help her pay for the birth certificate so that she could get WIC.



Jim\*, a 66-year old disabled veteran called 2-1-1 because he hadn't eaten in 3 days. He lived alone, and had no transportation and no one to help him get food. After making calls to several food pantries, 2-1-1 connected him with Hoosier Veterans Assistance Foundation (HVAF), who agreed to deliver food to his home.

Katie and Jim are 2 of the **tens of thousands of people** that call Connect2Help 2-1-1 for **emergency food each year**. Calls for food pantries have **risen by 38%** in the last 4 years, **despite the post-Great Recession recovery**. This rising trend in food needs also has been documented in the **Hunger in America 2014** study of partner agencies in the Feeding America ([www.feedingamerica.org](http://www.feedingamerica.org)) network. Gleaners Food Bank, an Indiana affiliate of Feeding America, released its study results in August of 2014. Their data are closely aligned with 2-1-1 calls.

**1 in 8** Hoosiers in Gleaners' service area is receiving food assistance from its network of 250 hunger relief agencies.



Gleaners' data also show that **half of the people** who rely on food from its network are **children and seniors**. Slightly more than half (**53%**) of the households calling 2-1-1 for food assistance included these vulnerable populations.

A significant number of people (**45%**) who use Gleaners' food pantry network also **receive SNAP benefits**. However, *especially with the rising cost of food*, these benefits often do not last the entire month.



A somewhat higher percentage—**65%**— of **2-1-1 food pantry callers reported receiving SNAP benefits**; however, *they still needed to look to food pantries to feed their families*.

Of the 2-1-1 food pantry callers who were NOT receiving SNAP benefits, **85%** of those pre-screened by 2-1-1 appeared to qualify for SNAP.

*Those are the facts. Hunger is REAL in our community.*

**The good news is that there are 3 easy ways to help.**

**1** **Donate dollars** directly to a food bank like Gleaners. **Each dollar** can provide the equivalent of **three meals**. *A tax deduction for you can mean food on the table for a family in need.*

**2** **Donate food** to a local food pantry. Goods like **soap, toilet paper, and diapers** also are especially helpful because these items can't be purchased with SNAP benefits.

**3** **Donate your time** at a food pantry. Working directly with those who need help makes abstract concepts like "hunger" and "poverty" **real and personal**.