



## FACTS ON HUNGER

- **Fully 1.3 million low-income New York City residents—more than one in seven—live in households that suffer from hunger or food insecurity** (lack of consistent, sufficient access to food), according to federal government data calculated by the NYC Coalition Against Hunger. Of these, 417,000—one in three—are children. These numbers are not surprising given that more than 1.7 million New Yorkers live below the meager federal poverty line (about \$20,000 a year for a family of four).
- **The number of people served by NYC's soup kitchens and food pantries rose by an estimated 20% in 2007**, on top of an 11% increase in 2006. Even before September 11, more than one million New Yorkers were forced to utilize the city's more than 1,200 emergency food programs.
- **The federal government cut the amount of commodities provided to NYC food pantries and soup kitchens by 12 million pounds in 2007.** Half of agencies reported receiving less government food support in 2007, while only 25% reported an increase.
- **Fully half of emergency food providers are forced to turn clients away, decrease portion size, or ration food for lack of resources.** A majority of agencies, 59%, report that they lack the resources to meet the increasing demand for emergency food (an increase from the 48% who reported so in 2006).
- **While hunger rates have continued to rise, the number of supermarkets in NYC decreased by 1/3 between 2002-2008** according to the Washington Post. For the many families and individuals with limited access to transportation, this has meant an increasing reliance on bodegas and stores with more costly, less fresh and nutritious food.
- **The number of families with children, immigrants, homeless people, and senior citizens who use soup kitchens and food pantries has continued to rise dramatically.** In 2007, 80% of agencies reported feeding more families with children, and 71% reported feeding an increased number of senior citizens.
- **The City of New York lost an estimated \$2.65 billion in 2007 from the side effects of hunger** (such as lost productivity and health care spending), according to calculations based on a national Harvard University study.
- **Nine out of ten food pantries and soup kitchens have annual budgets less than \$100,000; 12% of agencies have annual budgets under \$1,000.** The majority of pantries and kitchens are small, volunteer-run organizations: 81% have no full-time paid staff, and 60% have no paid staff at all. Only 5% have three or more employees.
- **Income inequality in New York has continued its growth to historic levels.** Between 2006-2007, the total worth of the 64 wealthiest New Yorkers rose by 270% to \$224 billion. In comparison, the 1.7 million New Yorkers below the poverty line earned a combined \$3.5 billion.
- **Of those surveyed in NYCCA's 2007 study, 53% of respondents reported spending their own personal money to support their feeding programs.**
- **More than 500,000 low-income New Yorkers are eligible for, but do not receive, food stamp benefits, causing more to rely on struggling emergency food programs.** Although the number receiving benefits has increased due to outreach programs and the weakening economy, it remains far below the peak reached in 1995.