



Kiwanis

Nebraska-Iowa District



A Moment on Hunger for Kiwanis Meetings

What is hunger? Is it that gnawing feeling in my stomach when it seems like a long time since I ate something? Probably not if it goes away when I do eat something.

A better description of hunger is when that hungry person doesn't know when - or if - he or she is going to eat again. Food insecurity may be a more descriptive term. The definition for it is when you don't know where your next meal is going to come from - or when.

Most of us have felt a little hungry. Probably most or all of us here today have never felt food insecure. But, very unfortunately, many children - and adults, too - even here in Iowa where we grow lots of food - do feel food insecure most or every day.



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Poverty and hunger in America often go hand in hand, but poverty is not the only thing that determines food insecurity. People living above the poverty line are often at risk of hunger as well. Research demonstrates that unemployment, rather than poverty, is a better predictor of food insecurity among people living in the United States.

Government statistics on poverty show that in 2015, 43.1 million people (13.5 percent) in the United States were in poverty, including 14.5 million (20 percent) of children under the age of 18. 42.2 million Americans lived in food-insecure households, including more than 13 million children. Food insecure means they are unsure where their next meal is coming from.



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Hunger hurts everyone, but it is especially devastating in childhood because hunger deprives kids of more than just food.

On empty stomachs, kids don't have the energy to focus, engage, learn and grow. Yet, this is the reality for 1 in 6 children in the U.S. who worry about when they'll have their next meal.