

Hunger and Malnutrition Definitions and Key Questions

Look up the meaning of these words and write your own definitions. Follow your interests and reputable sources to learn more about food and nutrition in your community.

food security/insecurity: Food security is a state when people have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. There can be food insecurity with and without hunger. Food security is often related to food justice.

Food justice is fair access to fresh, healthy, affordable food, as well as fair wages and treatment of those who harvest, prepare, and serve it.

Homelessness is lacking stable and appropriate housing.

Hunger is a feeling of discomfort or weakness caused by lack of food, coupled with the desire to eat.

Nutrition is the process of providing or obtaining the food necessary for health and growth.

Malnutrition is the lack of proper nutrition, caused by not having enough to eat, not eating enough of the right things, or being unable to use the food that one does eat.

Key Questions

- What are the causes and effects of hunger and malnutrition?
- Are you aware of areas or populations in your community that experience a higher degree of hunger or malnutrition?
- What have you learned about hunger or malnutrition that others might not know? What are some ways you can influence attitudes or behaviors?
- What is a food desert, and what do some nonprofits and community groups do to improve the food options in these areas?
- When speaking about and with people who live differently than you or in ways you may not know or understand, what are some ways to be respectful and inclusive?
- What resources in your community address hunger, such as a food pantry? How do these resources help individuals? How do they help the community?
- Contact a local nonprofit and ask what they do and their needs? What are some things you or others can do to support their work?

