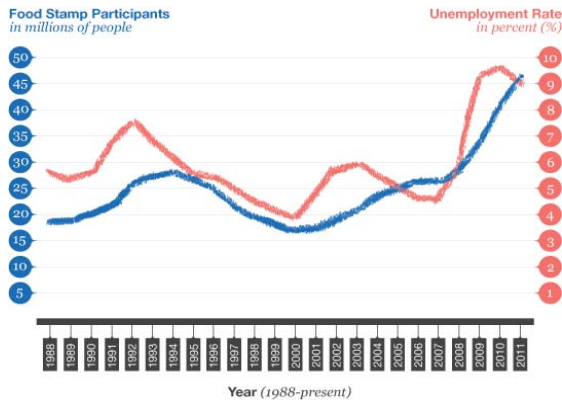


A Snapshot of Food Assistance in Michigan's 6th Congressional District

Food stamp need increases during periods of high unemployment



Food Stamp Usage by Children by County

Calhoun*	39%	Berrien	32%
Cass	36%	St. Joseph	31%
Van Buren	34%	Kalamazoo	28%
Allegan	12%		

Source: NYTimes Food Stamp Map
* Denotes counties partially in the 6th District

District Average is 32%

1 in 5 children (31,259 children) are enrolled in the federal free and reduced-price lunch program.

Though 1 in 4 families in the 6th Congressional district is dealing with hunger and fear of not being able to feed their children, federal dollars are helping thousands of families and children receive food assistance through food stamps and free- and reduced-lunches at school. Children under the age of five are more likely to be living in households that struggle financially with 25 percent of children under the age of 5 living in poverty. Yet, food insecurity and hunger are especially harmful in these early years of life when the foundations of life are being laid. Children who struggle with food insecurity early in life are more likely to start school unprepared and face difficulties in the classroom.

Children in the K-12 education system who come to school hungry are more likely to struggle with health issues as well as behavioral and socioemotional issues. Since children who are healthy do better in the classroom, ensuring that children have access to nutritious foods at home and in school can help deter the effects of hunger and poverty in the classroom.

Fortunately, federally funded food and nutrition programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and the free- and reduced-lunch program help thousands of children in Michigan access nutritious foods, thus allowing children to come to school well-nourished and better prepared for school success. These federally funded programs and others that assist low-income children and families must be prioritized in deficit reduction negotiations.