



What Does Holiday Hunger Mean?

City Harvest:
Value of Food Redistribution to People Report

June 2023

Holiday Hunger exposes a fractured society, fresh food is a luxury for millions.

The media is full of reports of the cost-of-living crisis and holiday hunger is becoming a familiar term at this time of year. But what does this mean to people's lives? City Harvest brings you the voices of our partners, helping understand the reality of what summer holidays mean to those already living on the edge.

Summer holidays are always difficult for the poorest and most vulnerable families in the UK due to the costs of childcare, and the absence of free school meals (FSMs) and services such as school breakfast clubs and food banks. This is often referred to as 'holiday hunger.'. The summer of 2023 looks set to be one of the most difficult on record for those in need. City Harvest's partners at the front line of food poverty in London report heightened strain as more families turn to them.

City Harvest's charity partners have reached capacity meeting the unprecedented rise in demand for their food services. Rising social care use is causing strain on charities, with 88% predicting an increase in the number of people accessing their services.¹

Partners have responded by doubling capacity (Kelvin Grove Supermarket), others are planning to provide meals for over 1,000 people a week during the summer period (Dormers Wells Nursery Infant and Junior School, Heatham House Youth Centre). A survey by Childhood Trust revealed that 89% of charities in London struggle with keeping up with the demand.²

97% of UK adults report that food costs are a serious concern.³

Benefits aren't covering costs and food is unaffordable.

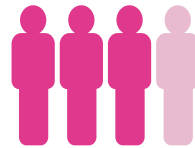
Higher interest rates, and increased energy and food prices are forcing a record number of families, many of whom work full time, to skip meals, use food banks regularly and rely on the charity sector for everyday support.

"People who are starting to need the food bank are embarrassed to ask for help. When we see children with nothing in their packed lunch, we find them food from the kitchen and make up a food parcel from the food bank and discreetly give it to the parents."

London Primary School

Annual food inflation rate for staple food items to May 2023 shows record increases:⁴

Product	Inflation Rate (May 2022)	Inflation Rate (May 2023)
Fresh and chilled fruit	5.4%	11.3%
Fresh and chilled vegetables	4.0%	20.7%
Milk, cheese and eggs	10.7%	27.4%
Meat	9.9%	16.3%
Fish	6.9%	16.6%
Ready-made meals	12.2%	16.8%



3 out of 4

households on Universal Credit have gone hungry, cut down or skipped meals in the last 30 days.⁵



11M

people in the UK live in relative poverty with 15% of the UK living in food insecure households.⁶

"During the school holidays I keep the food bank going as I know how many families need the food. We have 100-200 parents using the food bank twice a week. The food we receive feeds about 500 individual mouths a week. We support many families experiencing domestic violence and asylum seekers who have nothing."

London Primary School.

5.7M

Skipping meals

5.7 Million low-income families.⁷

4M

Going hungry

4 million families because they cannot afford food.⁸

34%

Live in absolute poverty

700,000 children or 34% of children in London.⁹

66%

Eating less nutritious food

66% have been forced to change what they eat due to high cost of food.¹⁰

1. Childhood Trust (2022b) Hunger Anxious and Scared
 2. Childhood Trust (2022b) Hunger Anxious and Scared
 3. Froud, E. and Fairey, L. (2023) Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: 1 to 11 June 2023, Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain - Office for National Statistics.
 4. Office for National Statistics (2023b) 'Consumer price inflation tables'.
 5. Earwaker, R & Johnson-Hunter M. (2023) Unable to escape persistent hardship: JRF's cost of living tracker rep. Joseph Rowntree Foundation
 6. Francis-Devine et al. (2023) Food poverty: Households, Food Banks and Free School Meals, House of Commons Library.

City Harvest's Ripple Effect

Food is a fundamental necessity. Poor nutrition has an impact on every aspect of people's lives. Children are particularly vulnerable as ill effects can be life long. By providing fresh, nutritious food City Harvest's work has a ripple effect beyond each specific meal.



Inadequate nutrition can result in weaker immune systems, stunted physical development and higher incidence of conditions such as Type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

*'One in three children is not growing well because of malnutrition.'*¹¹

Kelloggs

"When some kids start coming here, they can be very thin, or quiet and lack confidence. It only takes a few weeks to see a child come out of their shell, feeling secure and looked after. When the parents come to pick up their children, we make sure we put together food parcels for people we sense really need extra support. For many of our families this is the only fresh food they will eat."

A.P.P.L.E. Acton Play Project & Leisure Events.



The food City Harvest delivers to school food banks is also used for children who have nothing in their packed lunch or arrive at school hungry. In the classroom hunger affects behavioural issues, concentration & mood.

*'If a child arrives at school hungry, teachers say they lose one hour of learning time a day.'*¹²

Kelloggs

"A hungry child cannot focus. When the children who have no food at home eat at breakfast club, we see an immediate change in their mood. Being fed and feeling healthy gives children confidence. Confidence breeds success."

London Primary School.

41% of City Harvest's food is high-quality fresh produce.



The food City Harvest provides sits at the centre of vital services. Food draws people in need to a project, and then they can be helped.

"A hungry man is an angry man."

Community Centre Manager



Many of City Harvest's charities are changing people's futures. Access to free food is often the reason people attend a centre where they then receive help to address the issues in their lives.

Since 2018 City Harvest has delivered 148,115kg free food to Stockwell Park Community Centre.

Deprivation in Stockwell Park has contributed to heightened violence. The Community Centre addressed gang violence issues head on, and Stockwell Park became one of the first estates in the area to be 'gang-free'.

"The need to feed them was apparent, especially to help reduce gang crime. Stockwell Park welcomed these young people into the centre to eat and socialise."

"When they first came in, they ate separately, some facing a wall. It became clear they weren't used to eating together. The teenagers were encouraged to volunteer in the kitchen and help serve elderly and homeless community members, and have a meal themselves, giving them purpose, a warm space and a hot, nutritious meal."

Community Centre manager.

Carney's Community, a registered charity, gets disadvantaged and excluded young people off the street and away from a life of crime and despair by giving them skills, discipline and self respect. City Harvest has provided free food for 76,787 meals served after the twice weekly training sessions.

"By offering free food, people relax, feel safe, build trust. Then we can offer counselling, housing advice, and training to get back into work."

Project manager The Upper Room, soup kitchen for the homeless.

7. Earwaker, R & Johnson-Hunter M. (2023) Unable to escape persistent hardship: JRF's cost of living tracker rep. Joseph Rowntree Foundation
 8. Earwaker, R & Johnson-Hunter M. (2023) Unable to escape persistent hardship: JRF's cost of living tracker rep. Joseph Rowntree Foundation
 9. Childhood Trust (2022b) Hunger Anxious and Scared
 10. Earwaker, R & Johnson-Hunter M. (2023) Unable to escape persistent hardship: JRF's cost of living tracker rep. Joseph Rowntree Foundation
 11. Kelloggs (2013) A Lost Education The reality of hunger in the classroom.
 12. Kelloggs (2013) A Lost Education The reality of hunger in the classroom.

City Harvest's social value (SROI*)

£1 = £3.70

For every £1 invested, City Harvest delivers an estimated £3.70 of positive impacts for the final recipients of food donations.

*SROI stands for Social Return on Investment, the estimated benefit to society (both financial and non-financial) of City Harvest donations estimated as a financial value; unaudited estimates based on secondary research and City Harvest data

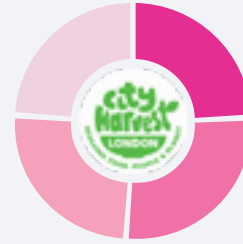
Breakdown of the Key Categories for Social Impact on People

Crime
£0.90

Increased
employment
£0.90

Health
£0.90

Education
£1.00



£75K

An average City Harvest recipient charity receives £75,000 worth of food a year.

This budget can then be spent on other services such as extra days opening, legal advice, counselling or extra support as needed



Key Findings

City Harvest interviewed charity partners to understand the aggravated effects of the summer holiday period and the cost-of-living crisis. They told us:

- **The food charity sector is shifting from an emergency service to a regular source of support for many families:** The number of families accessing 'emergency' food supplies is increasing and their use of these services is becoming regular – making charity work more vital to prevent widespread hunger prevention.
- **Large-scale investment is needed into funds that support parents during the summer holidays:** More investment into the Holiday Activities Fund (HAF) is needed to allow more organisations to serve more children. The HAF should be extended to cover all school holidays, increasing accessibility beyond summertime.
- **The charity sector remains dramatically under-supported:** 89% of City Harvest charity partners report financial challenges due to the dramatic increase of demand. 100% of charities report a need for more in-kind donations.
- **Mental health issues and physical abuse are increasing, linked to increased hunger:** Charities report a rise in mental health and domestic abuse problems as a result of the growing crisis in London.
- **The criteria for Universal Credit are not keeping up with the cost-of-living:** Charities want the government to expand Universal Credit criteria to account for the impact of the price inflation and increased interest rates. The Food Foundation estimate this will allow 800,000 more children to access Free School Meals lessening the burden on the charity sector during term time.



Thank you to everyone who helped put this report together, including: Shared Planet, Bain & Co & BEING.

Most of all thank you to all our wonderful charity partners whose work we are so proud to support.

Photographs by Oscar J Ryan at Dormers Wells Infant and Primary School

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