

INTRODUCTION

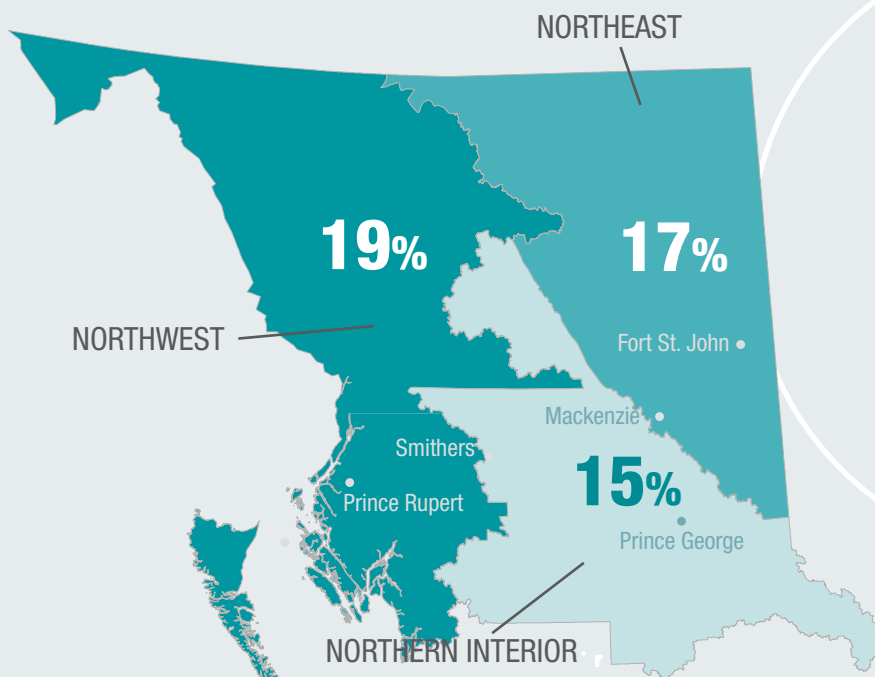
Household food insecurity is when a household worries about or lacks the financial means to buy healthy, safe, personally acceptable food.

Evidence shows that food insecure families struggle to afford a healthy diet and experience greater health and social challenges compared to people who are food secure.

NORTHERN HEALTH

KEY FINDINGS

RATES OF FOOD INSECURITY



16%

of households in
Northern Health
experience food
insecurity



LEVELS OF FOOD INSECURITY

BRITISH COLUMBIA

4%



MARGINAL

NORTHERN HEALTH

5%



5%



MODERATE



9%

3%



SEVERE



3%

MARGINALLY FOOD INSECURE: Worry about running out of food and/or limit food selection because of lack of money for food.

MODERATELY FOOD INSECURE: Compromise in quality and/or quantity of food due to a lack of money for food.

SEVERELY FOOD INSECURE: Miss meals, reduce food intake and at most extreme go day(s) without food due to a lack of money for food.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE & FOOD INSECURITY

79%

of households on social assistance in Northern Health **experience food insecurity**

BC AVERAGE:

76%



FOOD INSECURITY in HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN vs. WITHOUT CHILDREN

BC AVERAGE: 15%

25%



WITH CHILDREN ARE FOOD INSECURE

13%

WITHOUT CHILDREN ARE FOOD INSECURE

BC AVERAGE: 11%



CHARACTERISTICS OF FOOD INSECURE HOUSEHOLDS



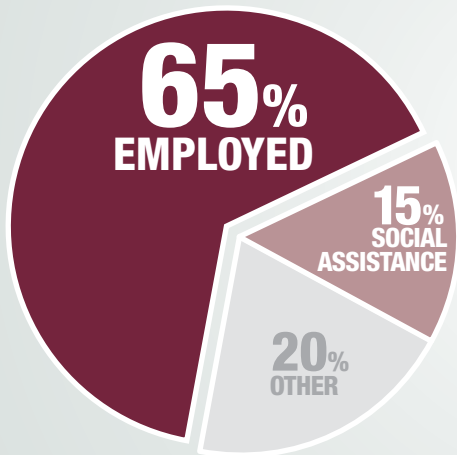
1 in 10 HOUSEHOLDS (12%) experience food insecurity



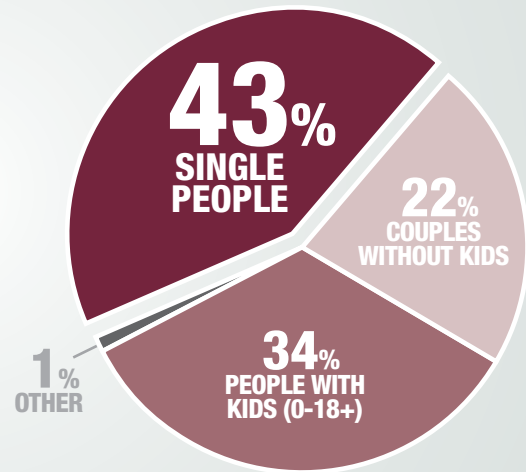
1 in 6 CHILDREN live in food insecure households

OF ALL FOOD INSECURE HOUSEHOLDS IN BC:

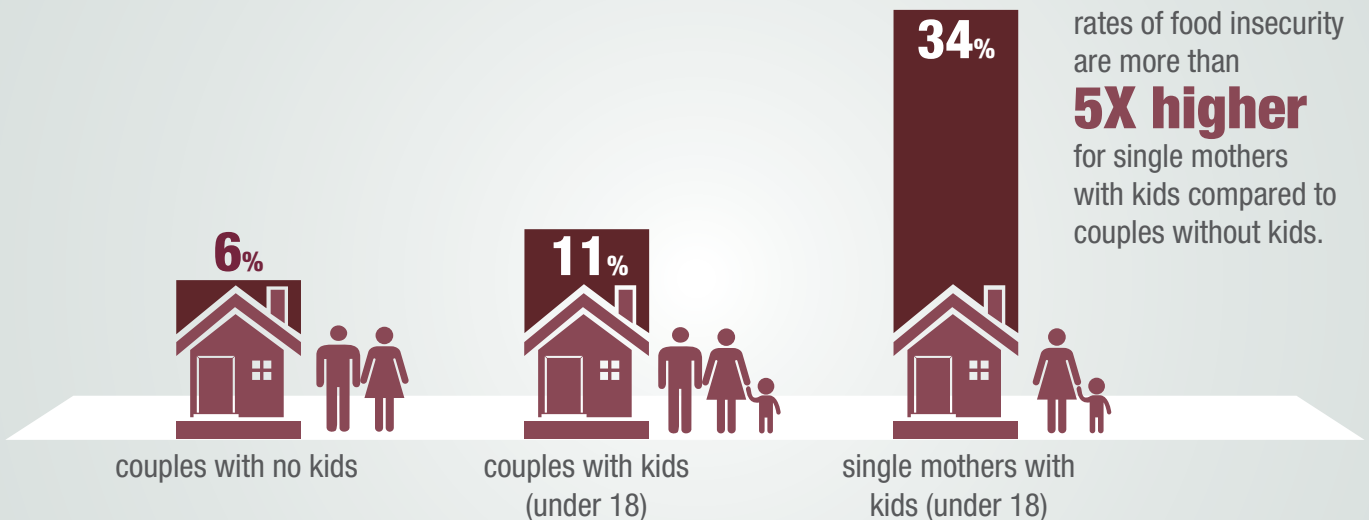
The majority are employed



The majority are single people



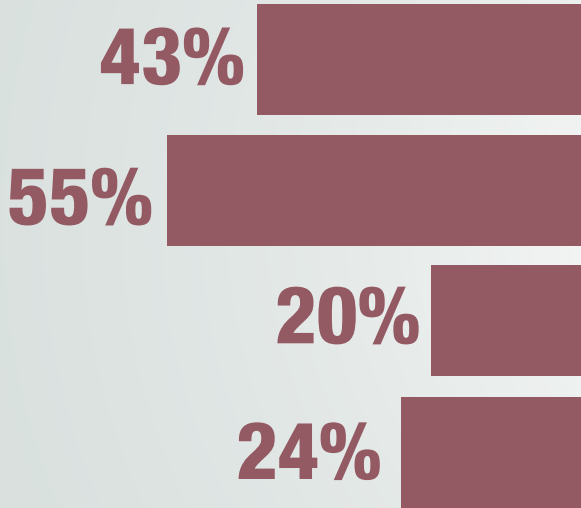
HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION & RATES OF FOOD INSECURITY



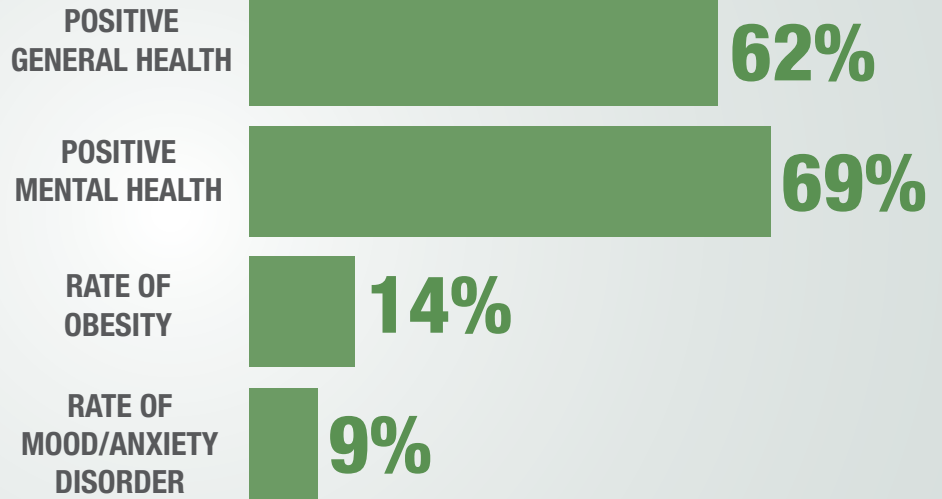


HEALTH & FOOD INSECURITY

FOOD INSECURE



FOOD SECURE

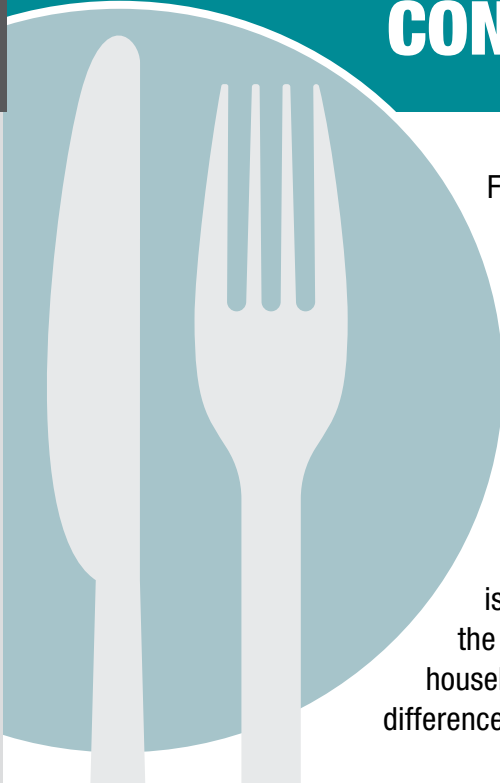


DATA SOURCES & METHODS

The Population and Public Health program collaborated with PROOF¹ at the University of Toronto to assess the prevalence of household food insecurity in BC. The findings presented here summarize data from the full report, *Priority Health Indicators for BC: Household food insecurity* report. Findings are based on data collected through the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) in 2011-12.²

¹ PROOF is an interdisciplinary research team in Canada exploring policy options to address household food insecurity.
² Data from 2011-12 represents the most recent data available for the province as BC did not participate in the optional food insecurity module during the 2013-14 CCHS cycle.

CONCLUSION



Food insecurity is a public health issue that influences physical and mental health across the lifespan. A recent study shows that people who are food insecure use up to 121% more healthcare dollars compared to those who are food secure, demonstrating that reducing food insecurity could offset considerable public expenditures in healthcare.

The root cause of household food insecurity is lack of income. Policy interventions at the provincial or federal level that address household income can make a significant difference to improve food insecurity.

For more information, including a provincial infographic and the full report, visit www.phsa.ca/populationhealth

