Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago

INSTITUTIONAL POSITION

Address Food and Nutrition Insecurity Among Children and Families

March 23,2023

WHEREAS, food insecurity, the primary measure of food hardship, is associated with poor diet and nutrient deficiencies, which may lead to chronic diseases, including kidney disease, obesity, cardiovascular disease, and type 2 diabetes;[i] and

WHEREAS, food insecurity is also associated with childhood developmental delay and psychological distress,[ii],[iii],[iv] and

WHEREAS, even marginal food insecurity is associated with poor health and educational outcomes among children;[v] and

WHEREAS, 10.2 % (13.5 million) of United States households were food insecure at some time during 2021, while food insecurity for Illinois families was close to the national average at 9.4 percent in the same year;[vi] and food insecurity rates were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic;[vii] and

WHEREAS, systemic and structural racism has resulted in children of color being more likely to experience nutrition insecurity due to living in food deserts, economic hardship and/or social disadvantage, and reduced access to healthcare and other supports;[viii] and food insecurity in Chicago has a disproportionate impact on Black/African American and Latino youth and families;[ix] and

WHEREAS, federal food assistance programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs, and the Child and Adult Care Food Program have improved food security and dietary intake among participants;[x], [xi],[xii],[xiii], [xiv], [xv] and

WHEREAS, living closer to healthy food retail is among the factors associated with better eating habits and decreased risk for obesity and diet-related diseases;[xvi] and

WHEREAS, there is strong evidence that fruit and vegetable incentive programs and subsidies, and interventions that increase an emphasis on produce among small, local grocers and other food retailers increase the affordability, access, purchase, and consumption of fruits and vegetables.[xvii] [xviii]

NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED: that Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago ("Lurie Children's") engage in policy, program, and research initiatives that: 1) examine and address food insecurity and nutrition among children and families; and 2) strengthen and expand access to nutritious food within the local emergency and retail food environments in Chicago and beyond; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED: that Lurie Children's support local, state, and federal efforts to: 1) increase the purchasing power of food-insecure families to acquire nutritious food, including protecting and expanding access to federal food assistance programs; and 2) to protect or strengthen nutrition standards within those programs.

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