



Food for Thought

FIGHTING HUNGER

FEEDING HOPE

Challenge to Feed Youngsters When School is Out

The school year is over, but for many families, visions of beach trips and summer camps are obscured by worry over how to feed hungry children when school meals are not available.

“You just have to make ends meet,” said Patricia, a Valley woman who cares for two of her grandchildren. Patricia said she tries to keep deli sandwiches, pasta, and other food on hand for the children, but it is hard, especially in the summer. She recently visited one of our pantries for supplemental groceries. “I try not to let my children be hungry because that’s not a nice feeling,” she said.

According to recent reports, about 14 percent of residents in the Valley are “food insecure,” meaning they lack the financial resources to ensure access to enough food to meet their basic needs.

During the school year, children from low-income families are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. But when school is out, things get tougher. Nonprofit groups and government agencies provide a patchwork

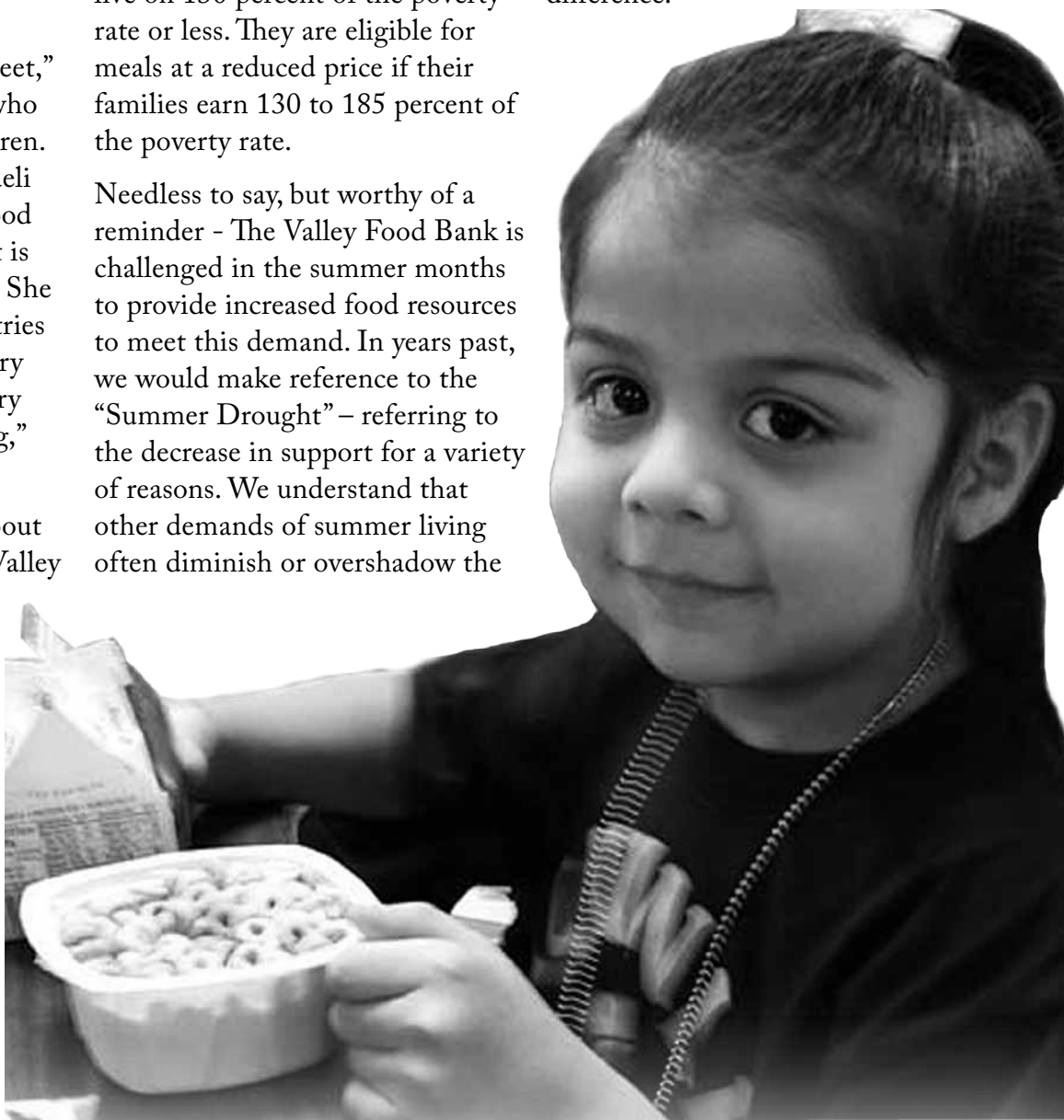
of help, but taking advantage of it can be a challenge.

Students are eligible for free breakfast and lunch if their families live on 130 percent of the poverty rate or less. They are eligible for meals at a reduced price if their families earn 130 to 185 percent of the poverty rate.

Needless to say, but worthy of a reminder - The Valley Food Bank is challenged in the summer months to provide increased food resources to meet this demand. In years past, we would make reference to the “Summer Drought” – referring to the decrease in support for a variety of reasons. We understand that other demands of summer living often diminish or overshadow the

needs of families in crisis.

Thank you for being part of the solution to the summer challenges. Your faithful giving makes all the difference.



Stories from the Pantry Network

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“I get fresh fruit, vegetables, and some bread once a month. I am not working right now. I have been on food stamps for six months. The food stamps last almost all month. But, I couldn't make it without the additional help. It is a crummy way to live. Hopefully jobs will pick up soon. It is a little embarrassing.”
~ Manuel

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“This is my first time here. I have been cleaning houses but barely made \$500 last month. I am normally a bookkeeper. I cannot find work and have been out of work since last October. A long time ago, I took a friend to the food bank and that is how I knew about this. My son works, but he is a full-time student so he can't really contribute. I am excited about the food. I haven't had bread in weeks. I was creating shampoo at fast food restaurants by squirting what hand soap I could into a cup. I got napkins from fast food places to use as tissue. I was washing dishes with just water. I am an educated woman. I don't do drugs. I am finding myself in a weird spot. These are tough times. Today I received food, some hygiene products, and household cleaning supplies and I am in Heaven. (So to speak)”
~ Patricia

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“This is my second time here. I come once a month. I have children. This is helping a lot. I am a single working mother. The food resources and other items, especially during the summer, helps us make ends meet and stretch my budget to allow me to purchase other essential items.” ~ Ruby



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