

Understanding food insecurity in Aotearoa & how you can help



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What is food insecurity and what does it look like for children in Aotearoa?

Food insecurity is defined as **the limited or uncertain availability of nutritional food needed for healthy growth and development.**

This can mean a household sometimes or often runs out of food or relies on socially unacceptable means to obtain food, such as food parcels or borrowing money.

In New Zealand, this manifests as children going to school hungry, not having lunch, or going home to empty cupboards.



One in five kiwi kids live without access to adequate food. The 'Growing Up in New Zealand' study found approximately 15% of 12-year-olds live in moderately food insecure households, with a further 2% in severe food insecurity.

How widespread is child food insecurity in Aotearoa, and who is most affected?

Child food insecurity is a significant issue in New Zealand, with 13% of children (aged 0–14 years) living in households where food runs out sometimes or often (according to a 2022 government report).

Māori and Pasifika communities are disproportionately affected, with rates of 22% and 38% respectively.

The highest rates of food insecurity are found in the most deprived communities, where 35% of young people experience moderate food insecurity and 5.8% are severely food insecure.



What are the primary causes of food insecurity in Aotearoa?

Food insecurity is a complex problem rooted in several interconnected factors.

Key causes include:



Income inequality, with many struggling with low wages



High cost of living, particularly housing which leaves less money for food



Historical & current inequities, that disproportionately affect Māori and Pasifika communities, limiting their access to economic opportunities and quality education

What are the consequences of food insecurity for children?

The consequences of child food insecurity are far-reaching.



It can lead to **health issues**, like malnutrition, and chronic diseases, as well as developmental and growth problems



It also creates **education barriers**, hindering a child's ability to concentrate and learn.



Furthermore, food insecurity can **negatively impact mental health**, causing stress, anxiety, and depression.

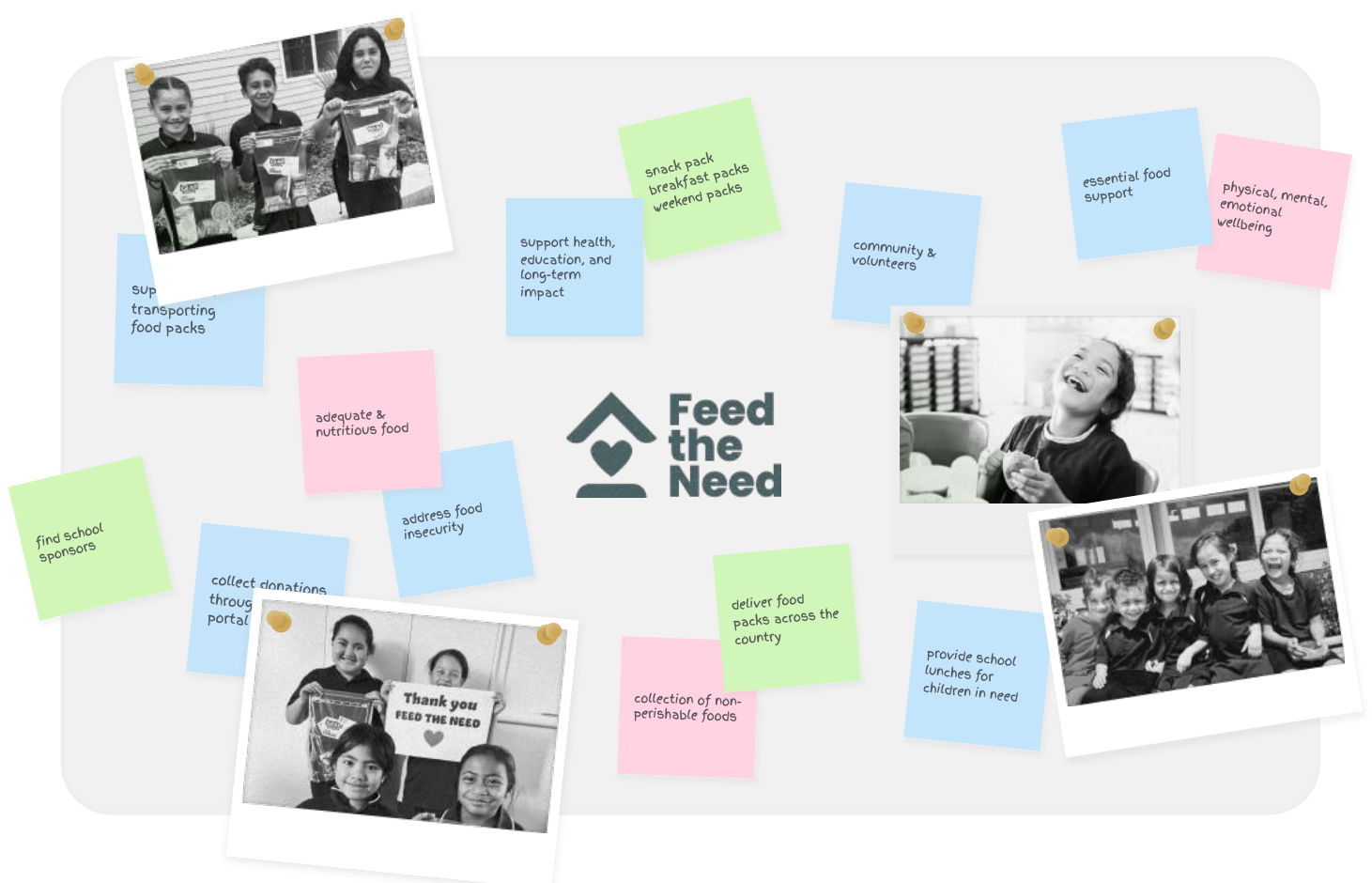


It can also have long-term economic impacts, leading to **diminished economic prospects** in adulthood.

What is *Feed the Need* and what is its mission?

Feed the Need is a New Zealand charitable organisation dedicated to providing nourishing food packs to children in need across the country.

Their mission is to address food insecurity among Kiwi kids by providing essential food support to schools and families, ensuring that children have access to adequate and nutritious food for their physical, mental, and emotional well-being.



What kind of support does *Feed the Need* provide to children and schools?

Feed the Need provides various types of food packs to schools, including:



**Snack
Packs**



**Lunch
Packs**



**Breakfast
Packs**



**Weekend
Packs**

They also support schools by providing meat for lunches, and other food items.

They focus on supplying food for kids at school who don't have food provided and packs for them to take home.

How can businesses and individuals support *Feed the Need* in its mission to combat child food insecurity?

There are several ways businesses and individuals can support Feed the Need:

Sponsor a school



Provide food packs to a specific school where children are in need

Pack as a team and deliver



Organise a group packing event at your workplace and help deliver the packs to schools

Collect non-perishable foods



Encourage staff to donate non-perishable food items

Fundraise



Organise fundraising events and donate the proceeds

Volunteer



Help with packing food parcels and delivering them to schools

Monetary donations



Donate funds to support the purchase of food



Beyond charitable efforts like *Feed the Need*, what are some broader solutions being considered to address child food insecurity in New Zealand?

Addressing food insecurity requires a multi-faceted approach. Some solutions include:



Implementing a living wage to ensure workers can afford basic needs



Increasing the availability of affordable housing to free up household budgets for food



Expanding access to food banks and assistance programs



developing education and nutrition programs to promote healthy food choices



Providing targeted support for Māori and Pasifika communities who are disproportionately affected

The overall aim is to address the root causes of food insecurity through economic reforms and social support.

Are you interested in supporting Feed the Need?

We'd love to hear from you 🙌

Contact us via **derek@feedtheneed.co.nz**
or find out more at **www.feedtheneed.co.nz**

