



Data Points

RESULTS FROM THE CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S HEALTH SURVEY

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in 2004 defined food security as “the ability of women to have access at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life.” Further, the USDA indicates that food insecurity without hunger is evident in a woman’s concerns and in adjustments to food management, including reduced quality of diets. Additionally, food insecurity with hunger means that a woman has repeatedly gone without food because there was not enough money to purchase more food.¹ Food insecurity has been shown to be a potential precursor to more serious health and developmental problems.

The California Women’s Health Survey (CWHS) collects information on food insecurity annually, in addition to other health-related issues and demographic characteristics. The

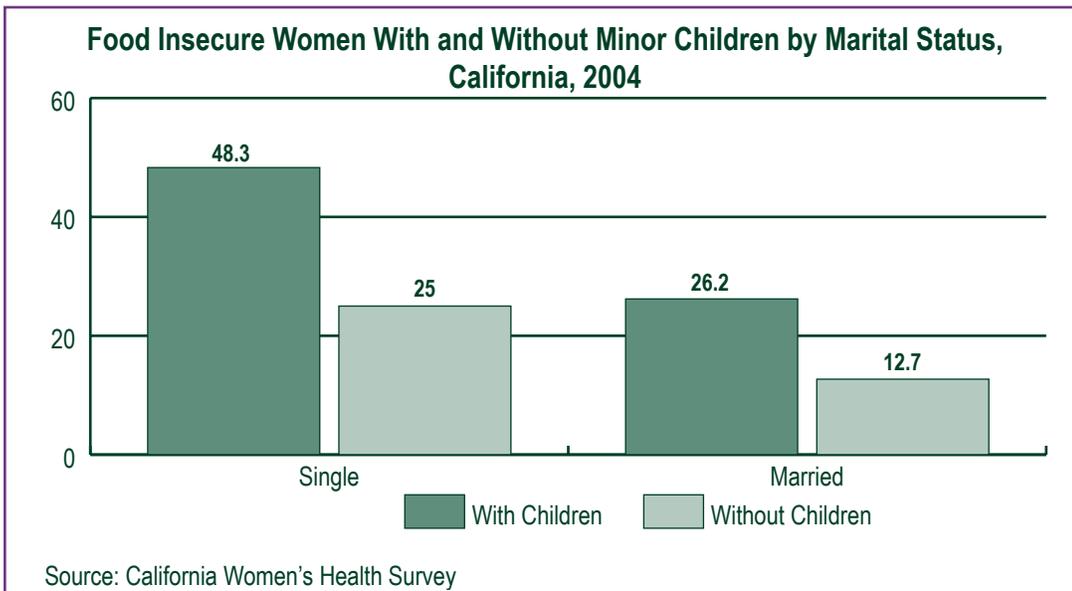
hunger and access to food module in the CWHS is based on a six-question scale that was derived from an 18-item USDA module to produce estimates of food insecurity. In 2004, the CWHS showed the following:

- Women with children under age 18 living in the home were more likely than women who did not have children under age 18 living in the home to be food insecure, 34.3 percent compared with 19.5 percent, a difference that was statistically significant.
- Food insecurity was substantially higher for women who had children under age 18 living in the household if they were single (48.3 percent) than women who were married (26.2 percent). The difference between these two percentages was statistically significant.

Food Insecurity Among Women Who Have Children Under Age 18 Living in the Household, 2004

Department of Social Services
Research and Evaluation Branch

Public Health Message: *Women who have children under age 18 living in the home are more likely than women who do not have minor children living in the home to be food insecure and single women with children even more so. Food supplemental programs need to be aware of the increased likelihood of food insecurity among this group of women.*



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Age 18 Living in the
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- 1 Bickel G, Nord M, Price C, Hamilton W, Cook J. A Guide to Measuring Household Food Security, Revised 2000. USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Analysis, Nutrition, and Evaluation, March 2000.

Department of Social
Services
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For additional copies of CWHS 2003-2004 Data Points please contact the Office of Women's Health:

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or contact OWH staff at P.O. Box 997413, MS 0027, Sacramento, CA 95899-7413 or call (916) 440-7626.