

For Immediate Release

21, December 2022

Contact:

Latosha Adams
Manager of Marketing, United Way of Frederick County
240-578-4008
ladams@uwfrederick.org

New Research: Over 15,000 Local Children Cannot Access Federal Food Programs Yet Need Assistance

ALICE in Focus report on children reveals that federal poverty data dramatically undercounts how many children are growing up amid financial insecurity.

Frederick, MD – United Way of Frederick County, in partnership with United for ALICE researchers, have released a new report that shows that 22,067 Frederick County children live in families that can't afford basic necessities. While 3,042 children are identified as in poverty by the federal government, an additional 19,025 are ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) and unable to afford a basic cost of living.

ALICE in Focus: Children reveals the disproportionate impact of financial hardship on children while also challenging the reliance on federal poverty guidelines for eligibility for assistance programs. The report finds that traditional measures of poverty and assistance programs are leaving thousands without support.

Because of low-income limitations based on the federal poverty level (FPL), 15,500 children are locked out of federal benefits such as SNAP (Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program) and FARMs (Free and Reduced Meals) at school even though their families struggle for basic necessities. Every state in the continental United States has the same federal poverty level -- \$13,590 for a single individual. SNAP and FARMs are income eligible at 130% of the FPL. An additional 1,000 children are within families who qualify for federal assistance, yet assistance is not received. In total, 16,546 children aren't receiving the assistance that they need.

"Using a non-geographic specific federal poverty limit has terrible consequences for communities where the cost of living is high," said Ken Oldham, CEO of United Way of Frederick County. "Thousands of children are locked out of receiving critical supports for food alone, not to mention affordable housing and educational opportunities, all of which can inhibit healthy child and teenager development."

Other findings from *ALICE in Focus: Children* include:

- Having two working parents didn't guarantee financial stability. Among households with two working adults, 16% of Frederick County children live in families whose income didn't meet the cost of basic needs;
- Nearly 6,000 children live in homes with single mothers and 69% of those children struggle every day with access to food, housing and other necessities; and
- Over 13,000 children live in rental units and 72% of those children are ALICE.

More data is available through the *ALICE in Focus: Children* interactive data dashboard which provides filters for regional and local geographies, age, race, disability status, living arrangements and household work status. Visit UnitedForALICE.org/Focus-Children.

ALICE in Focus: Children is the first installment in the *ALICE in Focus* Research Series, which draws from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) Public Use Microdata Samples (PUMS). Each installment in the series will highlight a specific segment within the ALICE demographic. Upcoming topics include people with disabilities and veterans.

###

About United Way of Frederick County

For nearly 85 years, United Way of Frederick County has been mobilizing the caring power of the whole community to improve lives. United Way produces the ALICE (Asset-Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed) Report which shows that approximately nearly 40% of households can no longer afford to live in Frederick County. Our investments and programs are aligned to support and increase the financial stability of these households.

United Way of Frederick County partners include global, national and local businesses, nonprofits, government, civic and faith-based organizations, along with educators, health providers, senior citizens, students, and others. The organization provides grants to local nonprofits, offers programs such as free tax preparation and matched savings, mobilizes volunteers, and engages in public policy advocacy. Learn more about United Way and how you can get involved, please visit UnitedWayFrederick.org.

United Way's Moving Forward United campaign raises critical funds to support ALICE households in Frederick County. Funds will support critical efforts like Ride United and other programs within the Prosperity Center framework.

Connect with us on social media:

Facebook: [@UnitedWayFrederick](https://www.facebook.com/UnitedWayFrederick) Twitter: [@UnitedWayFred](https://twitter.com/UnitedWayFred)
Instagram: [@unitedwayfrederick](https://www.instagram.com/unitedwayfrederick) YouTube: [youtube.com/UnitedWayofFrederick](https://www.youtube.com/UnitedWayofFrederick)

About United For ALICE

United For ALICE is a driver of innovation, research and action to improve life across the country for ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) and for all. Through the development of the ALICE measurements, a comprehensive, unbiased picture of financial hardship has emerged. Harnessing this data and research on the mismatch between low-paying jobs and the cost of survival, ALICE partners convene, advocate and collaborate on solutions that promote financial stability at local, state and national levels. This grassroots ALICE movement, led by United Way of Northern New Jersey, has spread to 24 states and includes United Ways, corporations, nonprofits and foundations in Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, Washington, D.C., West Virginia and Wisconsin; we are United For ALICE. For more information, visit: UnitedForALICE.org.