

### Three ways to Identify Food Insecurity by Ali Spencer, RD

Food insecurity is when someone lacks consistent access to the affordable, nutritious food they need to live a healthy, active lifestyle. Nationally, 16 million children don't have regular access to meals. In Utah, an estimated 12 percent of households — about 338,000 people — are food insecure.

This impacts everyone, but most especially children. Negative outcomes include poorer health, impaired ability to concentrate and perform in school, and increased behavioral problems. Additionally, food insecurity is linked to poorer diet quality and variety and to obesity.



How do you identify people who suffer from food insecurity?

1. Look at their physical appearance. Keep in mind that low body weight isn't necessarily a tell-tale sign, as food insecurity is often linked to obesity. However, you can look for other physical indicators of nutrient deficiencies like swollen or puffy skin, chronically cracked lips, or chronically dry, itchy eyes.
2. Observe their behaviors and listen to conversations. Children who are chronically hungry are likely to be anxious about when their next meal is. They may frequently complain of excessive hunger, go to school early to get breakfast, or rush to the front of the lunch line. Children may eat quickly and completely, refusing to leave food on their plates. You may notice a child who lingers around for more food or frequently asks for seconds.

3. Ask questions. If you're concerned a child isn't getting enough to eat, ask them about what foods they eat at home. What did they eat for dinner last night or breakfast this morning? Do they ever worry they won't have enough to eat, or has their family run out of food?

How Can You Help?

Donate! You can donate food, money, and time to the Utah Food Bank. They have programs like the Backpack Program and Kid's Café that help reduce hunger in children. They also have Food Box programs to help seniors who suffer from chronic hunger.

Anytime is a great time to give back and help families in need.

If you are or someone you know is experiencing food insecurity the Utah Food Bank and the United Way 2-1-1 Program (dial 211 to get connected) can provide you with resources in your local community that can help meet your needs.



Easy healthy snack:

If you like peanut butter/almond butter combine with some honey for a delicious protein rich dip for apples, celery, or pretzels. You can even spread it on rice cakes or whole grain crackers or bread!





## Local Program Highlight—Choose Gang Free

### By Lindsey Bonney

Choose Gang Free (CGF) is a unique and innovative program benefitting young people who are at risk of becoming gang involved. The Salt Lake Area Gang Project (Unified Police Department) employs CGF Advocates to work in partnership with local school districts and other youth agencies to serve the at-risk and gang involved youth.

Using an evidence-based curriculum CGF works with youth to reduce anti-social attitudes, behaviors, and association with antisocial peers. As well as increasing prosocial opportunities and protective factors.

CGF serves youth from 5th - 8th grade and are led by trained specialists who understand current gang culture and gang climates in different areas. These specialists teach youth how to identify positive peers and activities; how our choices affect us and those around us; making positive connections; negative consequences of gang involvement; and planning for the future.



Youth participating in CGF's secondary prevention services must attend a participating school and are assigned an advocate who checks in with them once a week. The focus of this level is to engage students in positive conversations about life, focus on building communication, improving skills to navigate them positively through life, school and boosting school attendance with an emphasis on the importance of graduating school and making post-High School plans. Students are given lessons to help with social and emotional skills, encouraged to find their "Why" and shown how to set and achieve goals for their future. Each youth that participates and their families can also receive additional services through their school or other partnering and community programs. When students graduate from CGF, they move into aftercare where their advocate becomes their mentor and provides life skills

training to help youth learn and build a successful future. Advocates can also help connect youth with employment opportunities, job shadowing and other activities to aid in their growth, development, and success.

To learn more visit [choosegangfree.com](http://choosegangfree.com)

### Car Seat Question Corner

**Q: Do all vehicles have top tether anchors?**

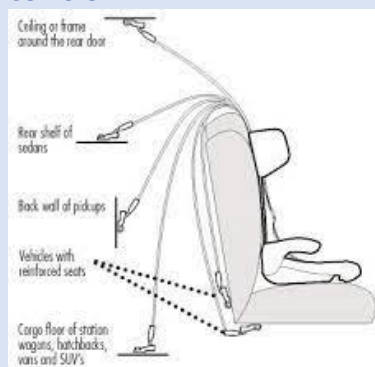
**A: All vehicles since model year 2001 are required to have designated tether anchor position.**

**This is what the symbol looks like:**



If you don't know where they are in your vehicle, consult your manual. They are located behind your vehicle seat but are in different locations depending on your vehicle. (see image below). If your vehicle is older than 2001, contact the manufacturer for a retrofit tether anchor kit, they may be able to help.

**All forward facing car seats need to have the tether installed properly to prevent head excursion in a collision.**



More car seat questions or want a seat check? Call 801-662-6583