

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Donna Wintz, IFCS Communications Manager

Phone: (970) 682-0075

Email: donnaw@ifcs.org

Small, Local Nonprofit is at a Critical Crossroads: Needs Community Support to Sustain Food Assistance Services

With a pervasive financial crunch and strained resources, food support is a basic and urgent need.

DENVER, CO, November 29, 2022 – Integrated Family Community Services (IFCS) has nearly tripled its services over the past 3 years, providing more food support to metro Denver area families than ever in the 58 year history of this nonprofit organization. During the pandemic IFCS adjusted operations quickly while many nonprofits closed, and they've been providing fresh, nutritious food to hungry households during some of the toughest periods we've seen in recent history. Now, while inflation tightens everyone's budget, IFCS is also feeling the squeeze: **at a critical crossroads, they need the help of the community to continue nourishing lives.**

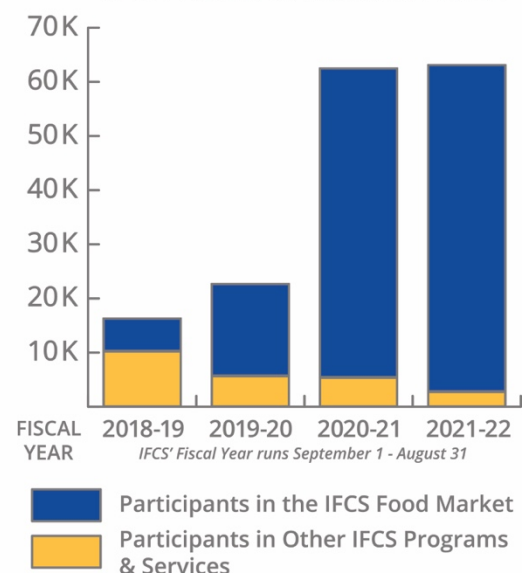
The number of visitors to the IFCS Food Market has not decreased since March of 2020; instead, **higher prices and limited resources have increased the needs of the community.** The reality of “food deserts” in our back yards plague even the wealthiest of neighborhoods (see map images on page 4)¹ and this year, IFCS is seeing the highest numbers – ever in their history – of visitors requesting support.

The Program Participation Graph (right) shows a persistence, and continual rise, in food insecurity.

Despite additional funding provided by partners, requests for IFCS rental and bill payment assistance have exceeded program capacity, requiring IFCS to shut down application forms in advance of program timelines. Requests for holiday



IFCS PROGRAM PARTICIPATION



¹ <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/8c535bd4ab10499ab5074dce2770df44>

food and gift support also exceeded available slots in half the time of previous years, requiring IFCS to turn away over 50% of registered children. Those who visit IFCS convey that the assistance allows them to focus on paying rent or navigating emergencies, and they can provide nourishing meals for their children thanks to the fresh produce, whole grains, protein, and dairy items they receive at the IFCS Food Market.

Inflation in the food and transportation industries is affecting IFCS' ability to stock their Market with healthy groceries, despite resourceful connections and bulk purchasing practices. **The funding that federal, local, and city grants provided through the pandemic is no longer available, and IFCS is at a critical crossroads.** As they look ahead to 2023, they recognize their limitations: they need the support of the community to continue alleviating hunger.

A monthly cost of \$30,000 currently allows IFCS to serve 6,000+ individuals with fresh, nutritious food, and relieves program participants to focus on paying rent and utility bills, or to navigate emergencies.

Starting off the new year on solid footing is critical: with higher inflation and signs of recession ahead, **IFCS needs assurances of funding or will be required to limit Market visits to once a month per family in 2023.** We can all imagine the unfortunate consequences such a cutback would have on families and the overall community. Before taking this step of reducing services they would like to appeal to local partners in alleviating hunger. **With news coverage of their situation and this current, critical crossroads, there is hope for positive outcomes** that could secure a 2023 of nutritional support for those who need it most.

To bolster community support for integral community services, **IFCS invites news media partnership in year-end fundraising efforts.** They have established a Text to Give campaign, which allows for easy mobile donations, and would be happy to provide supportive graphics and data to communicate the urgency of their needs this year. **A virtual tour/interview may be scheduled at IFCS to gather footage as well.**

As the holidays approach, hearts open to charitable giving. **Will you help spread the word about IFCS' critical crossroads and pave the way to a healthier, stronger community in 2023?**

ABOUT INTEGRATED FAMILY COMMUNITY SERVICES

Integrated Family Community Services (IFCS) provides basic human services and enrichment programs to low-income people using community resources. IFCS fosters self-sufficiency and respects the dignity of each client. IFCS traditionally served families in the South Denver metro area; however, due to the increased demand for food support in recent years, IFCS has expanded to serve the greater Denver metro area.

###

If you would like more information about this topic, please call Donna Wintz at (970) 682-0075, or email donnaw@ifcs.org.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

IFCS has grown and improved thanks to community support:

- [See how Program Improvements, Volunteers, Partners and Donor make IFCS better](#)

Several recent news articles have centered around food pantry cutbacks:

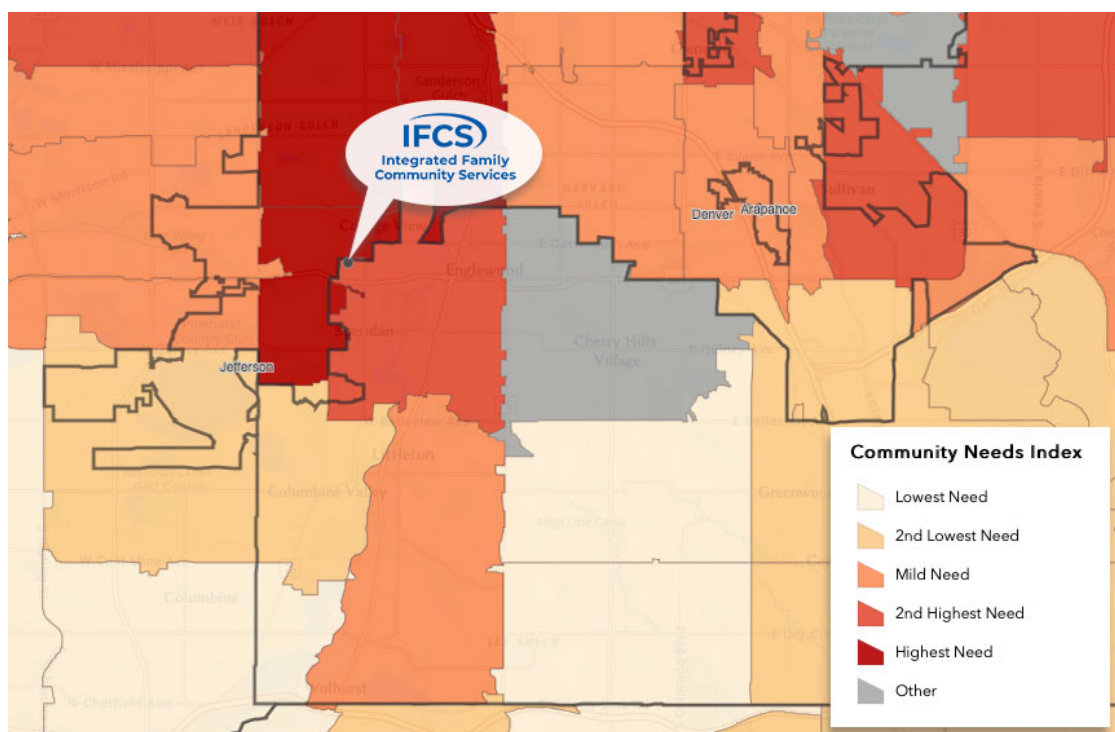
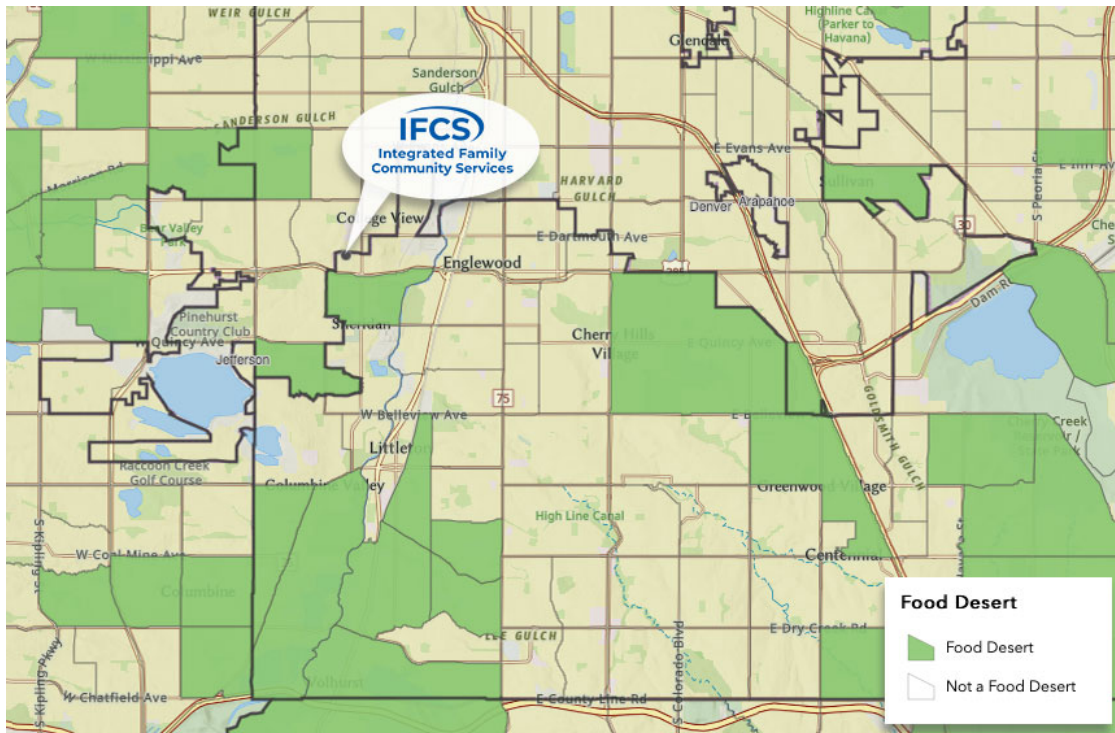
- [NPR: Demand at food banks is way up again. But inflation makes it harder to meet the need.](#)
- [NC: Where is the Meat? Iredell County Food Pantries low on donations and supply.](#)
- [Mountain West food banks struggle to meet rising demand for assistance.](#)

Hunger facts from Hunger Free Colorado (hungerfreecolorado.org):

- 1 in 3 Coloradans (33%) are struggling with hunger.
- More than 2 in 5 (43%) of individuals of color are now struggling to regularly access quality nutritious food.
- 1 in 6 Children (16%) are not getting adequate nutrition.
- The COVID-19 pandemic had a dramatic impact on our communities' health, economy, and food security.

See this data and more in a [Hunger Fact Sheet](#).

IFCS' service area includes various neighborhoods designated as "food deserts" and zip codes identified as having highest needs, as you can see by these maps.



Source credit: [CACFP Participation in Colorado](#)



**We're
at a
Critical
Crossroads**

**Will you help us continue
to nourish lives?**

Text
**BETTER
TOGETHER**
to 801801



— OUR CRITICAL CROSSROADS —

**IFCS needs
\$30,000⁰⁰
each month
to provide
fresh food
for 6,000+
IFCS Market
Shoppers...**

OR



**We'll need
to limit
visits to the
Food
Market
to once a
month per
family.**