

**ReNewed Hope Food Pantry COVID-19 Report
November 8, 2020**



From January through October this year, the ReNewed Hope Food Pantry provided food assistance for 21,874 household visits, reaching 100,641 people.

Goals for ReNewed Hope Hunger Relief Programs

1. Provide the broadest array possible of healthy and diverse food with a high nutritional value, such as fresh fruits and vegetables, grains, nuts/seeds, and protein.
2. Meet the unique needs of a client base transcending all ages, cultures, and health conditions.
3. Provide food for individuals facing hunger in a caring and respectful manner.

We met these goals during the pandemic with a great deal of help from the community, a response that far exceeded our expectations. In early March, we could not have imagined the response from area churches, neighbors, partnering organizations, area businesses, donors, and numerous volunteers all working together this year. (See list of donors and partnerships in 2020 on our Web site <https://renewedhopefoodpantry.org/partners/>) By the grace of God, and through contributions of everyone in the community, the ReNewed Hope Food Pantry was able to continue bringing food and hope to many neighbors during the COVID19 pandemic.

Our desire to serve those who face hunger comes from our desire to show the love of God. Our mission is to feed those who are hungry and do our part in repairing and rebuilding broken lives of neighbors. We plan to continue providing hunger relief programs as long as there are people facing hunger in our communities.

COVID19 and Hunger

During the COVID-19 pandemic, numerous people in Johnson County and nearby communities experienced food insecurity for the first time, alongside those who were already experiencing food insecurity before the COVID-19 crisis began. Stories of sudden job loss are commonplace with food pantry clients. Many are single parents or grandparents caring for children. Some are disabled, are veterans, or are facing health challenges that make working difficult.

Since the pandemic, more than 50% of clients visiting the ReNewed Hope Food Pantry are from the Latino community. Feeding America reports that across the United States: “Before the pandemic, Latino individuals were almost twice as likely to live in food insecure households as non-Hispanic white individuals (15.8% compared to 8.1%). Compared to other groups, a higher proportion of Latino workers are employed in the leisure and hospitality industry, and a lower proportion are employed in roles that can be performed at home. As a result, the unemployment rate across the U.S. among Latinos spiked to 18.9% in April 2020, higher than any other racial/ethnic group. [https://www.feedingamerica.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/Brief_Local%20Impact_10.2020_0.pdf] We have seen these effects with our own neighbors.

2020 Timeline: Response to COVID-19

Timeframe	Happening
March 12	COVID-19 public health department emergency declaration; developed plans to remain open and recruit new volunteers to replace those who had to stop volunteering
April	Expanded Tuesday mobile pantry from 2x/month to every Tuesday
April 14	Mobile pantry families served increased from 359 the previous Tuesday to 831 families on this Tuesday
May	Using VOMO (volunteer movement) to manage increased number of volunteers, moved to 1,000 volunteer hours per month
June 7	Expanded Sunday curbside pantry from 2x/month to every Sunday
June 26	Added Friday hunger relief program for SM West High School featuring USDA Farmer to Families produce boxes
July 16	Added part-time Receiving Team Member paid staff
August 11	Hosted Harvesters 6-week nutrition class online Project Strength
September 1	Added part-time Volunteer Coordinator paid staff

September 18	Added Friday hunger relief program for Overland Park Elementary school to Friday curbside pantry
Sept 27	Added special diets sign up
Sept 27	Added infants and toddlers sign up
November 2	Added part-time Client Relations and Data Manager paid staff
November	Collaborating with Harvesters to add exterior cold storage unit

Volunteer Management

Volunteer recruitment, engagement, and retention is a major focus to sustain the current level of hunger relief programs. The pantry must recruit and retain enough volunteers to maintain the increased level of hunger relief programs. The pantry has about 335 volunteer opportunities each month, ranging from 2 to 4 hours per volunteer activity. This comes to approximately 1,000 hours of support each month.

At the beginning of the pandemic, to encourage and recognize that our volunteers are essential in showing love to our neighbors, we created the We Are Essential video:

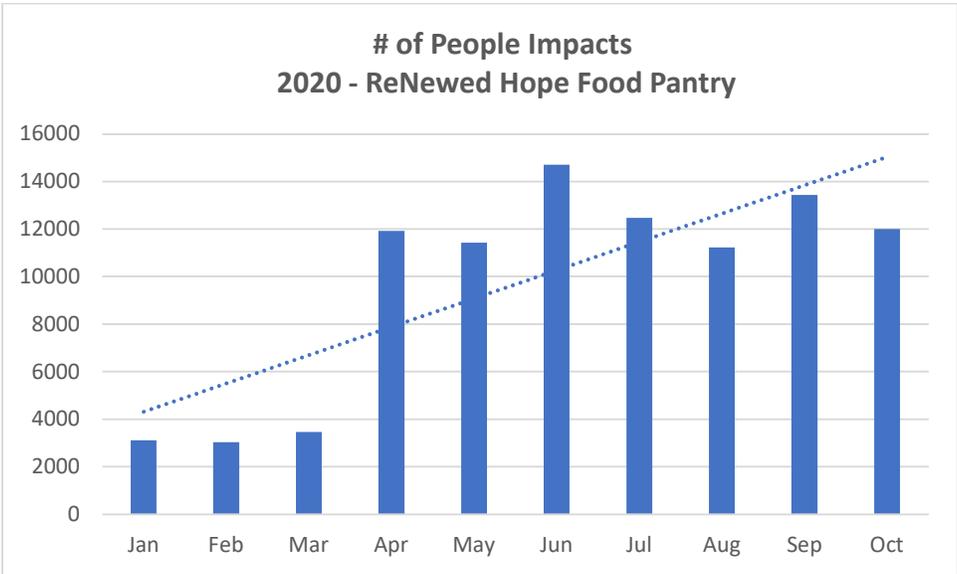
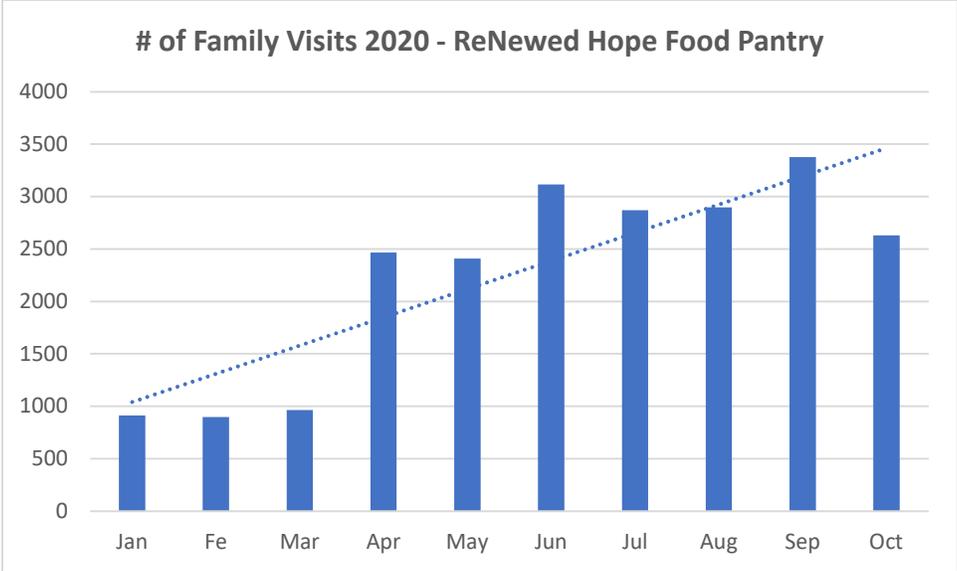
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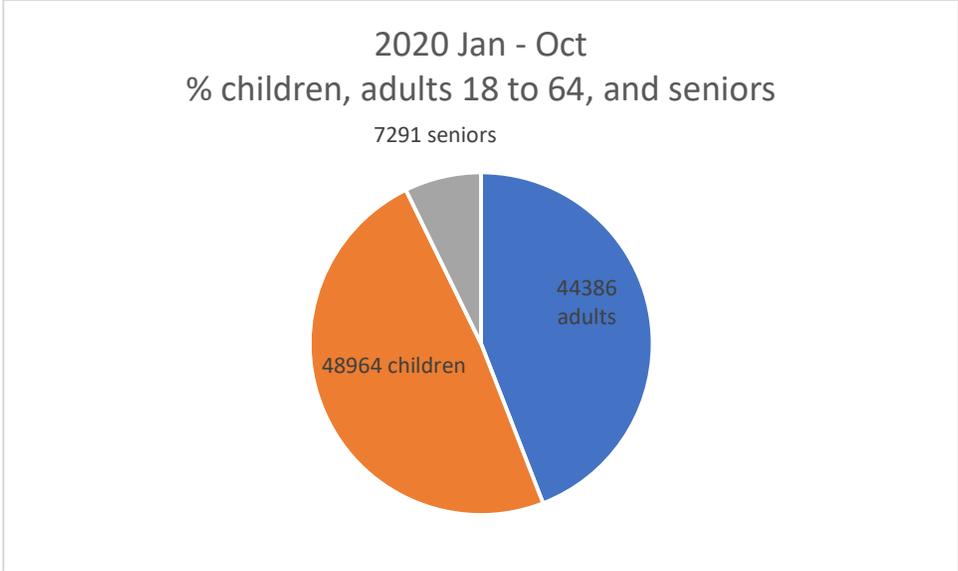
Part-time Staff

The ReNewed Hope Food Pantry has been a 100% volunteer organization until mid-2020. Hunger relief programs expanded dramatically to provide food assistance during COVID-19. To maintain this high level of service, we created 3 part-time staff positions: Receiving Team Member, Volunteer Coordinator, and Client Relations and Data Manager. To maintain this increased level of service, we will continue these part-time staff positions in 2021.

Sharing Food and Love with More People

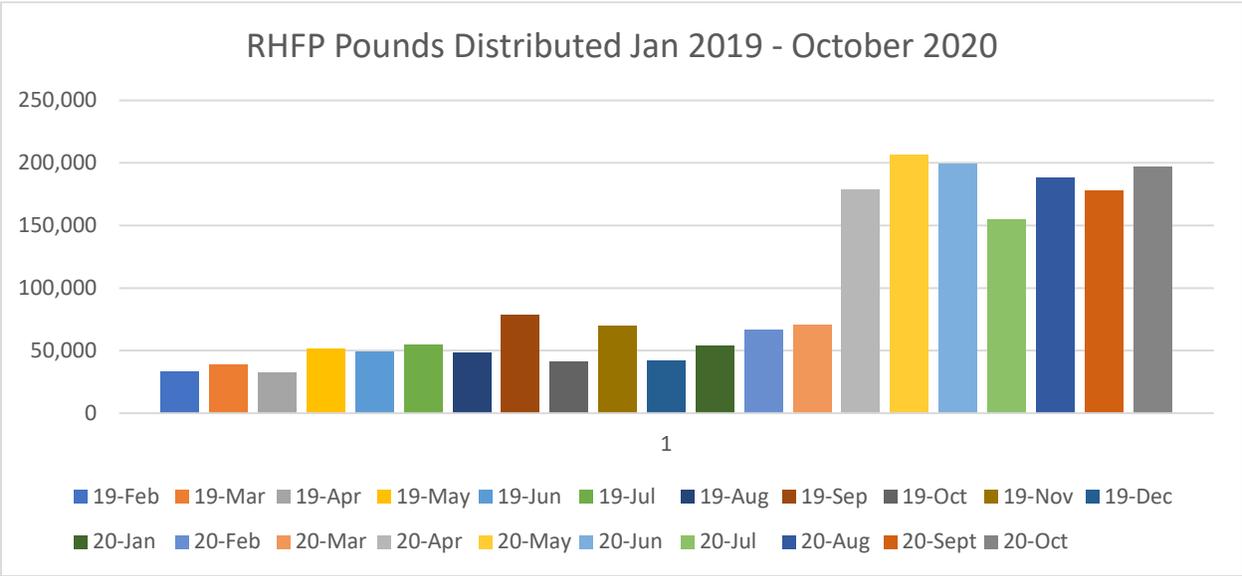
The number of people receiving food assistance at the ReNewed Hope Food Pantry increased dramatically during the COVID19 pandemic. We accomplished this by expanding hunger relief programs, recruiting additional volunteers, bringing in a lot more food, and adding part-time staff. Numerous partners from the community made this possible, from organizations providing grants to grocery stores and food companies donating food, to neighbors bringing bags of groceries or volunteering their time to distribute food. From January to October 2020, the ReNewed Hope Food Pantry served more than 100,000 people. (For comparison, in the previous year 2019, we served 27,000 people.)





Of the total people served in 2020, a high percentage (48%) are children.

Pounds of food distributed increased substantially compared to 2019 and early 2020 before the COVID19 pandemic.



Current Food Assistance Programs Give People Access to Nutritious Food

- Sundays 3 to 5 pm curbside food distribution

- Tuesdays 10 to 11:30 am mobile pantry
- Fridays 11:30 to 1 pm school pantries - Overland Park Elementary School and Shawnee Mission West High School - traditional pantry, curbside food distribution

Sunday Curbside Pantry

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, we provided service to clients on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month. In June of 2020, we expanded service to every Sunday.

Tuesday Mobile Pantry

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, we provided a mobile pantry on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month. In April of 2020, we expanded the mobile pantry to every Tuesday.

Friday School Hunger Relief Programs

Friday School Food Pantry: SM West and Overland Park Elementary

This year, we began collaborating more closely with schools near our pantry. We see a great opportunity to improve population health through school partnerships. School personnel are in a key position to recognize potential food insecurity in students. We do not want any students (or their families) going hungry. By helping students facing hunger overcome food insecurity we help them succeed in school and life. For students, education increases knowledge, skills in working with others, and instills positive values and habits. For society, education reduces poverty, promotes equality, enhances population health, and supports economic development. Thus, partnerships with schools is a key area of focus for us. This helps achieve student success in school, with far-reaching impacts for health outcomes and population health.

Other Food Assistance Services

Special Diets Sign up: This fall, we started offering a signup option for people facing hunger who follow a special diet (gluten free, low salt, low sugar, vegetarian, vegan). We offer specialized items for those who sign up for this service on Sundays from 4 to 5 pm.

Infants and Toddlers sign up: Last month, we also started offering a signup service for people with infants and toddlers -- sign up for diapers or wipes or baby food, etc. This is also offered on Sundays from 4 to 5 pm.

During COVID19, we started offering food box delivery for clients who request it -- those who don't have transportation or who need to stay home to social distance and don't have anyone else to pick up food for them. A few people are taking advantage of this service.

Ongoing Hunger Relief

The COVID-19 pandemic caused a public health and economic crisis. It has certainly dealt a blow to the economic health of individuals and communities near the ReNewed Hope Food

Pantry. Many of our neighbors in Johnson County and nearby communities are seeking assistance with food. As we navigate life and move into 2021, the demand for charitable food assistance is expected to remain at elevated levels.