

The OPINE (Asterhill's Blog)

Spring/Summer Series: "Food Insecurities"

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FOOD INSECURITIES: *Connections between Food Insecurities & Social Ecology for the Elderly*

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture reports 14% of all households in the country have experienced food insecurities during the past 12 months. This means that one or more elderly household members went without, and reduced their food consumption over a 30 day period, one or more times during the year. The USDA reported 8.8% of all elderly have experiences food insecurities, and this rises with those who live alone. As the elderly sacrifice diet and nutrition, they put their health at risk, leading to higher incidents of falls, respiratory and chronic illness. They face unique challenges with changes physically, medically and socially, making this an important public health problem.

It is essential to understand how the elderly respond to each other, and their environment. Insight in these areas may provide a great understanding in to factors that influence or contribute to their perceptions, behaviors and actions leading to this phenomenon. It is significant the positive impact social connectiveness has on the elderly's food provisioning skills and overall health. Equally important is negative impact the lack of social connectiveness has on the elderly living with growing social isolation. While social ecology and connectiveness may or may not be a factors influencing food insecurity and malnutrition, they are contributing factors to be considered.

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