

Food Insecurity Among  
Children: A Look at  
Prevalence, Programming,  
and Initiatives  
in Baltimore City

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# Introduction

- Emerson Nation Hunger Fellowship, Congressional Hunger Center



- A few facts about me:
  - Graduated from Stanford University with a degree in Human biology, focus in Global Development & Health
  - Daughter of refugees



# Why is it important?

- Vulnerability of children
- Economic Impact
  - Academic performance
  - Job readiness
- Health impact on children and parents
  - Development risks
  - Obesity
  - Depression



Alaimo, et al. 2002

Casey, et. al. 2001

Frongillo, et. al. 2005

# Methodology

- Interviews with different service-providers, academic institutions, and community stakeholders
- Data collection on programs
- Academic literature review
- Food insecurity surveys in schools

# Purpose

- Try to capture prevalence of food insecurity among children in Baltimore
- Create a complete “picture” of services for children and their families
- Complete a literature review of food insecurity among children

# Prevalence: U.S.

- The food insecurity rate for all U.S. households is 14.7%

VS.

- The food insecurity rate for all U.S. households with children is 21%.
- 10.7% of food insecure households with children report reduced quantity and quality of food for their children

# Prevalence: Maryland

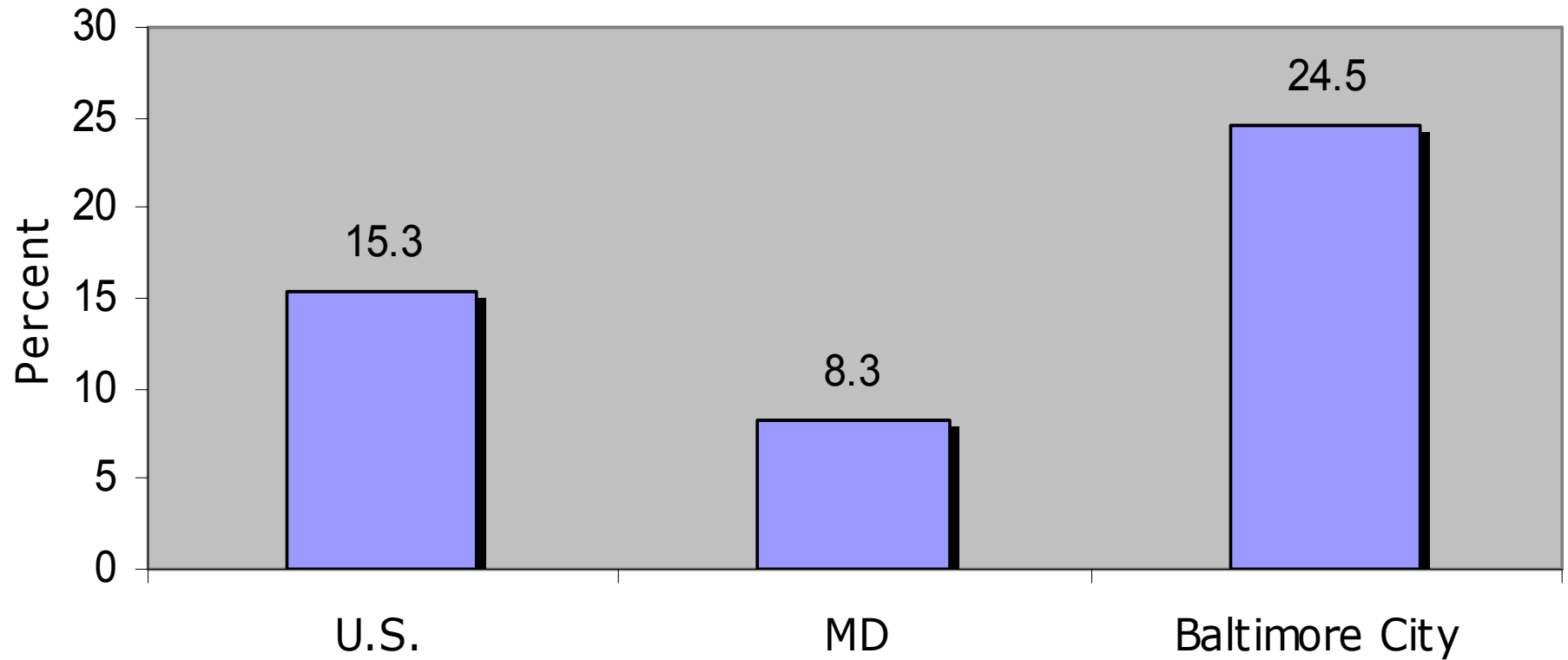
- 11.1% of households in Maryland are food insecure
- 4.3% of households in Maryland are categorized with very low food insecurity

# Prevalence: Baltimore City

- University of Maryland:  
**13.5%** of low-income families with children in Baltimore were food insecure.
- The Baltimore City Health Department's Community Healthy Survey (2009):  
**23%** of respondents reported being concerned about not having enough food in past 30 days

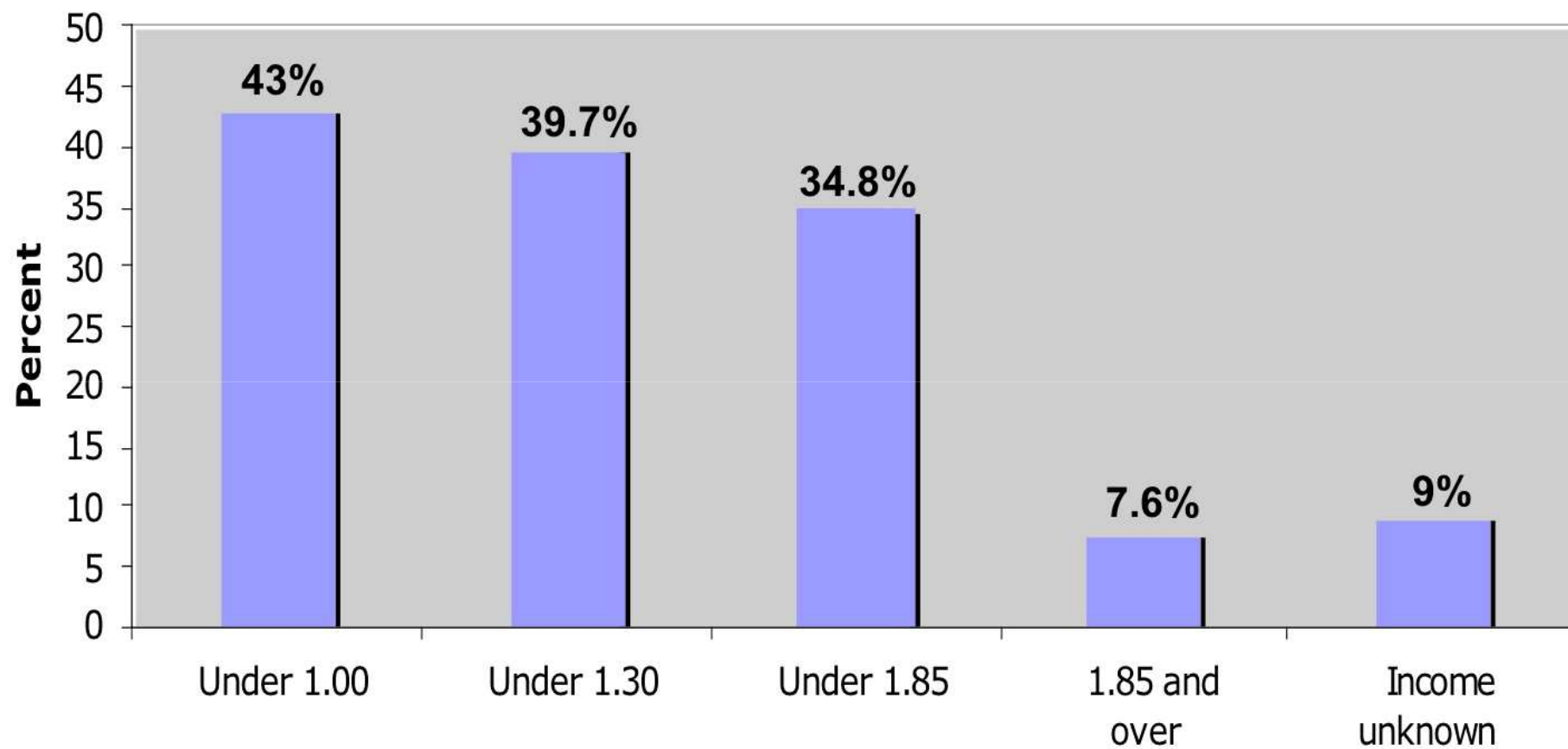


## Percent of households with children living below the poverty level



\*Data for graph from the American Community Survey

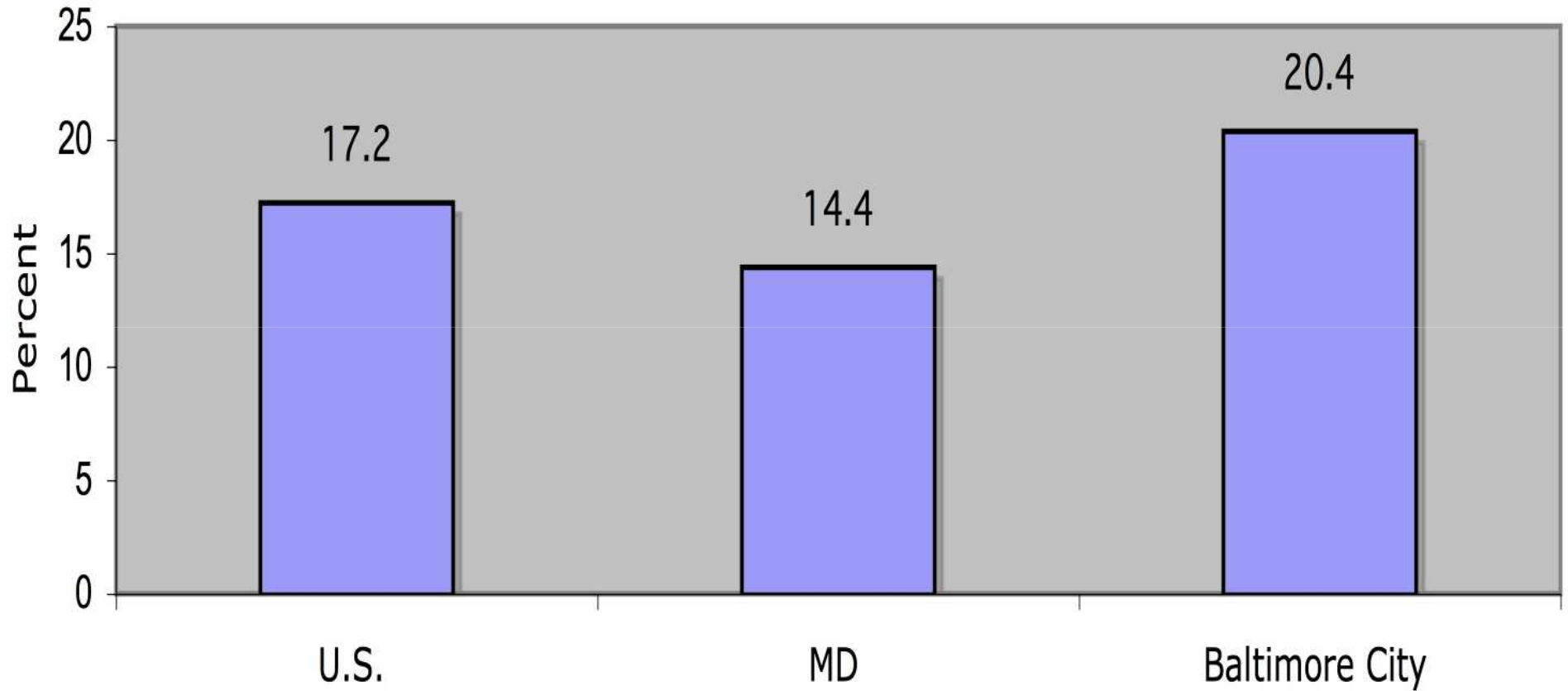
## Percent of Food Insecure Households by Income Level



\*Data from USDA (2009)

**Household Income-to-Poverty Ratio**

## Percent of 18 to 24 year olds with less than a high school diploma



\*Data for graph from the American Community Survey

# Services & Programs for Children

## School-based Program

- Food and Nutrition Education
- School Breakfast Program
- National School Lunch Program
- Child & Adult Care Food Program
- Summer Food Service Program
- School back-pack program

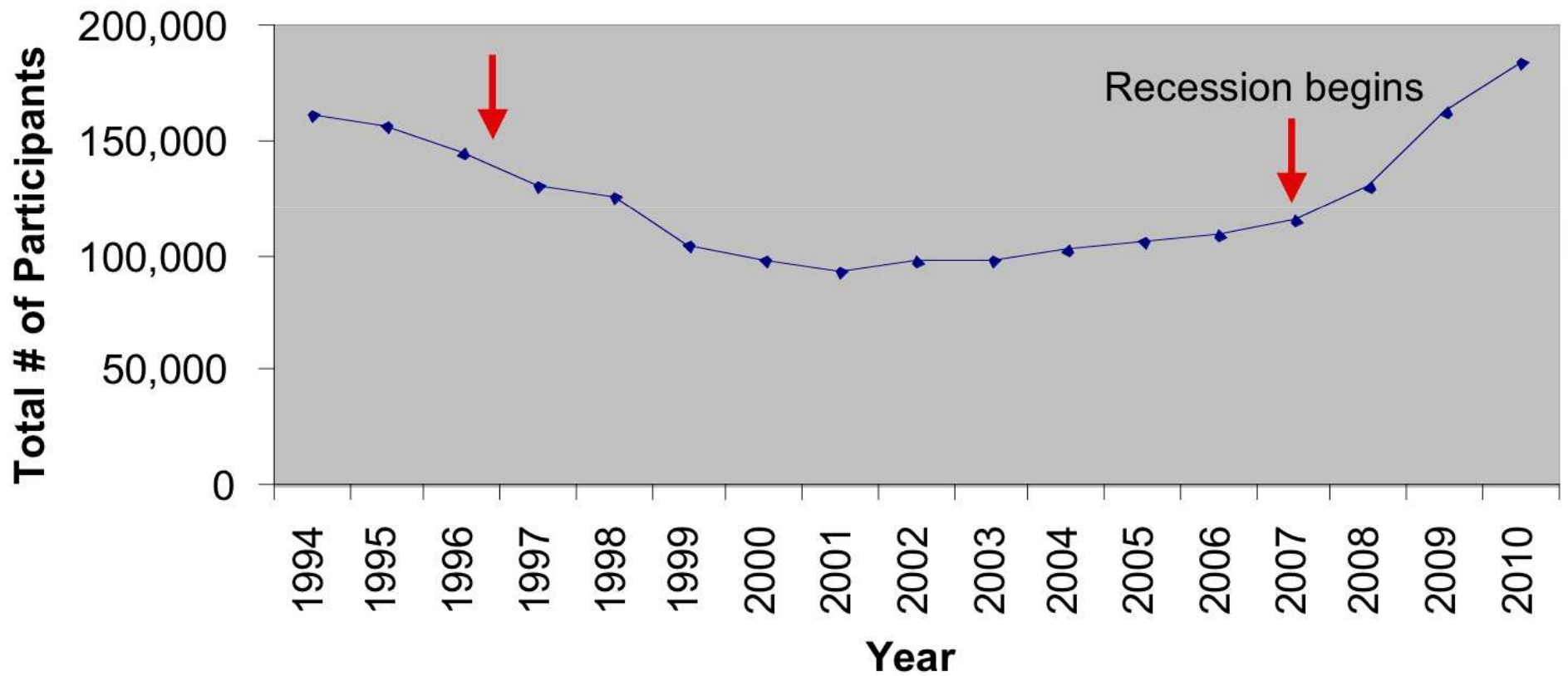
## Family-based Programs

- SNAP/FSP
- TANF/TCA
- LIHEAP/MEAP
- EITC/FINANCIAL EDUCATION
- WIC



# SNAP/FSP

**SNAP/FSP Total Number of Baltimore City Participants  
(for September)**



# SNAP/FSP

## Spotlight issue: Low monthly benefits

Thrifty Food Plan: price of purchasing a low-cost (economy) market basket of goods that meet nutritional guidelines.

~~TFP~~ = maximum SNAP benefit

Calculating Individual Benefits:

0.3 x net income = expected contribution (EC)

MONTHLY BENEFIT = maximum SNAP benefit – EC

# Boston Bounty Bucks

- BBB matches EBT spending at farmers markets dollar to dollar up to \$10, which means it doubles spending at markets up to \$20 per recipient.
- **Benefits:**
  - Incentivizes healthier eating
  - Increases spending power of SNAP benefits
  - Helps local farmers and farmers markets

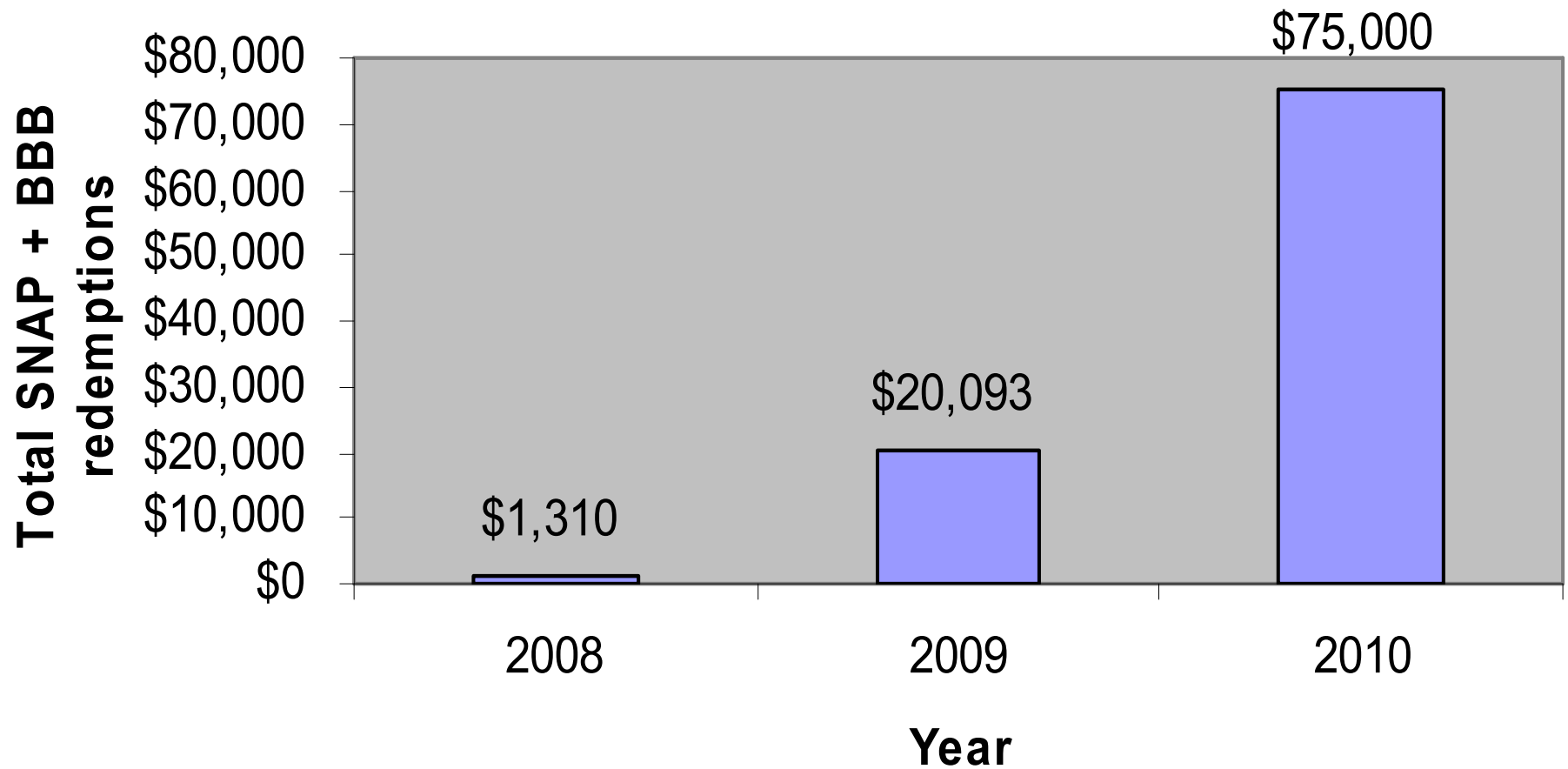
# Boston Bounty Bucks: Facts

- Boston Food Project and the City of Boston.
- Funding: \$30,000 from the Mayor's Fresh Food Fund and \$10,000 grants from Project Bread, Wholesome Wave Foundation, and Farm Aid.
- In a survey at Boston's farmers markets, 72% people using EBT said the BBB was a major deciding factor in why they decided to spend money at the markets versus a conventional store.



# BBB cont.

## BBB End of the Season Total Sales



# Summer Food Service Program

- Overview: provides up to breakfast, lunch, and snacks for children during the summer months.
- Eligibility: sites have to be in area where 50% or more of the children qualify for free/reduced meals or 50% or more of the children enrolled in programs qualify for free/reduced meals

**Federal Level**

**USDA, Food and Nutrition Services (FNS)**

**State Level**

**Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE):**

**Baltimore Housing Office of Community Services:** Runs SFSP for Baltimore City County

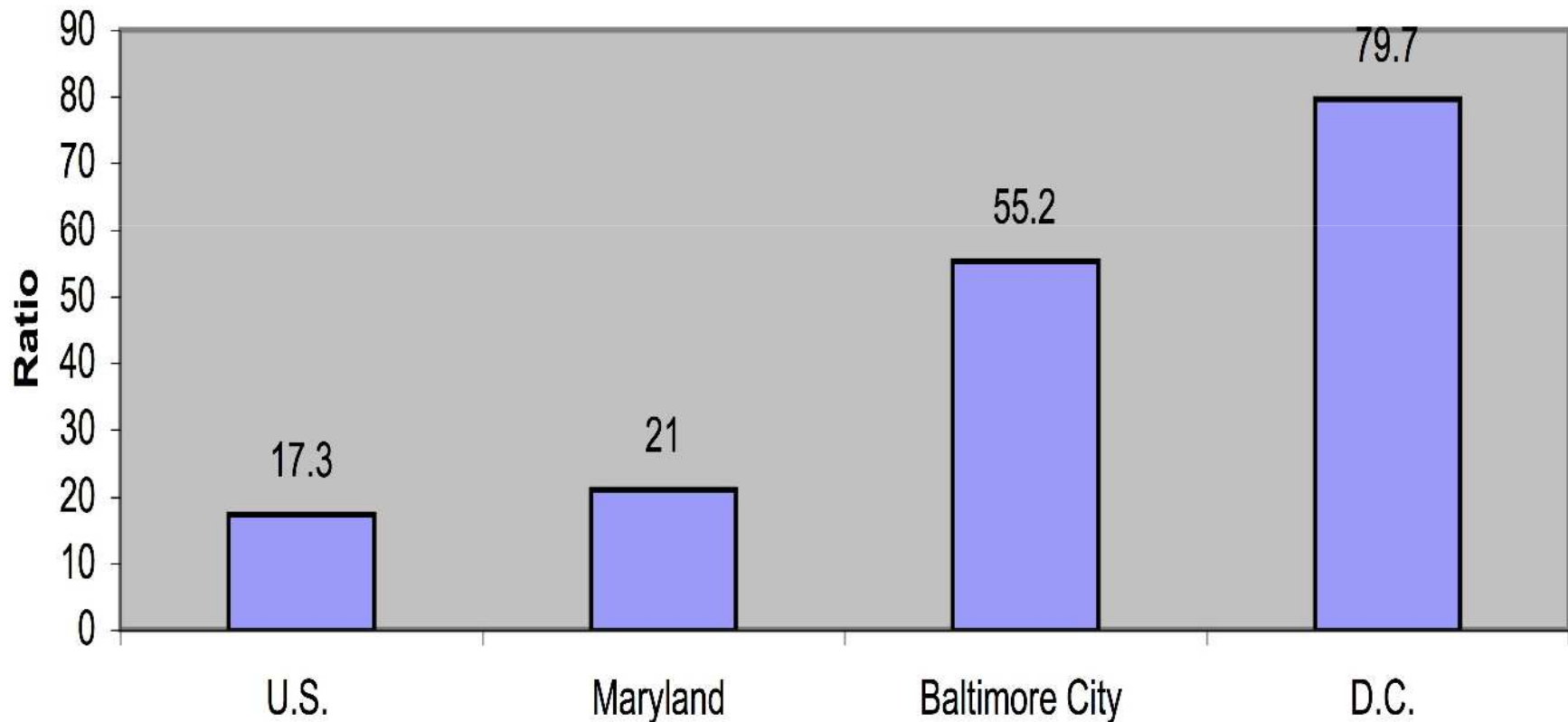
**Maryland Food Bank:**  
Runs SFSP for Baltimore County

Community organizations & Baltimore City Public Schools

Community organizations & Baltimore City Public Schools

# Spot Light Issue: Low Participation

SFSP participation compared to NSLP participation



\*Data from MD Hunger Solutions

# Additional Recommendations

- Link services through certification
- Institutionalize way to collect food insecurity data
- Promote programs that help with service gaps: i.e. Bounty Bucks
- Food insecurity summit or roundtables with cities like Philadelphia and Boston



# Work for the Future



- Continue to institutionalize ways of collecting food insecurity data
- Research on cross-utilization of programs
- Collect qualitative data from clients

Hands in Partnership  
Civic Works & Clifton Farm  
Moveable Feast  
Baltimore City Head Start  
Bureau of Maternal and Infant Care  
Food and Nutrition Services, Baltimore City Public Schools  
Center for a Livable Future  
Baltimore Montessori School  
Department of Human Resources  
University of Maryland School of Nursing  
Office of Sustainability  
Amazing Grace Lutheran Church  
Charm City Clinic  
Stadium School  
Johns Hopkins WIC Clinic  
Hampstead Hill Elementary  
Baltimore Green Space  
Maryland Hunger Solutions  
Kodem Kol: Kennedy Krieger  
Waverly Farmer's Market  
Southeast Baltimore Early Head Start  
Park Heights Family Support Center  
The Baltimarkets  
Maryland Food Bank  
Wolfe Street Academy  
Baltimore GASH Commission

Thank You!