

This is the second of four weekly emails being sent to you in observance of Poverty Awareness Month. This week's focus is families at risk.

POVERTY QUESTION OF THE WEEK: HOW IS POVERTY MEASURED AND WHAT IS THE CURRENT REALITY FOR FAMILIES?

Poverty is currently a measure of cost and deprivation rather than income and an adequate standard of living. It is time to reframe the conversation around poverty.

The Federal Poverty Level:

- Is based primarily on the cost of food
- Does not include child care, transportation, or taxes (created in 1960's)
- Does not adjust for urban vs. rural cost of living

Therefore, the federal poverty rate is not the best way to measure those in need of basic needs services.

In 2001, the Center for Public Policy Priorities (CPPP) published "Making It: What it Really Takes to Live in Texas," featuring the "Family Security Index". For more information on what it takes to make ends meet in Central Texas please visit www.cppp.org/fbe.

The Family Security Index (FSI):

- Is a "market basket" approach
- Reflects family size and composition
- Considers rural vs. urban costs

The current reality in Central Texas is:

- **Even working families are undeniably at risk**
- **Almost 40% of Central Texas families live at or below the Family Security Index income level, suggesting that any fluctuation in family income or expenses could threaten the family's ability to make ends meet. (www.centex-indicators.org 2006 report)**

The Basic Needs Coalition invite you to view the Poverty Images of Austin photo-exhibit on January 21, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at The Old School. Please bring two canned goods to benefit local pantries.

WHAT: Poverty Images of Central Texas Photo Exhibit and Food Drive

WHERE: The Old School, 1604 E. 11th Street, 78702

WHEN: Monday, January 21, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m