

40 mothers speaking out to end childhood hunger and poverty.

# Hungry for Change

A publication of Witnesses to Hunger

Volume 1, Issue 2

witnessestohunger.org

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- Whitney Henry
- Emily Edwards
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## Dear Friends,

Welcome to *Hungry for Change*, the Witnesses to Hunger newsletter. We are very excited about the chance to share our news and updates on a more regular basis.

This newsletter marks the direction we’re taking as an organization: we are advocates working for change. We started off simply as 40 mothers telling our stories through photography. Our pictures showed our lives—pain, hurt, hunger, and happiness—as we saw them.

But it didn’t stop there:

our pictures held stories and people wanted to listen. As time has gone on, we have become advocates against hunger traveling throughout Pennsylvania



We are 40 women speaking out and up and down the East Coast. We continue to bring hunger and poverty to the attention of policy-makers, and now, we look forward to sharing our stor-

ies and updates with all of you.

In this issue, be sure to check out the update from Angela Sutton on page 3. Don’t miss the note on our expansion efforts, and see some of our perspectives on the potential cuts to SNAP (the food stamp program) on page 2. And check out the back page if you just need some inspiration!

Witnesses to Hunger is about participation and action, and we’re excited to have this new way to participate and communicate with you. We hope you enjoy!

## Witnesses on Martha’s Vineyard

The Witnesses to Hunger exhibit continues to travel.

This August, Witnesses to Hunger Charlene Mitchell of Providence, RI and Imani Sullivan of Philadelphia presented their stories at the Vineyard Haven Public Library.

The event brought together residents as well as visitors to Martha’s Vineyard for a discussion of what it means to experience hunger and poverty

in America.

Charlene and Imani spoke to the audience and everyone got a chance to view the Witnesses to Hunger photo exhibit, which includes photography from an anonymous Witness to Hunger who lives on Martha’s Vineyard.

The exhibit was on display at the library throughout the month of August.



L to R: Witness to Hunger Imani Sullivan (Philadelphia), Dr. Mariana Chilton, and Witness to Hunger Charlene Hunt (Providence).



*"I think it's truly unfair to take the little that we do get and use it for your own purpose. We need those food stamps to feed our families. We receive those food stamps because we don't make enough financially to pay for food. How will we put sufficient food in our homes? I'm sure there is money elsewhere to pay the teachers with."* - Joanna Cruz



*"I would like to know— how are we going to stop hunger if you cut food stamps? Can you help me understand that?"*  
- Laticia Ansley

*"If they use the money I wish it to be used for more educational programs in the schools...More books, instead of gym classes. Offer more sports... [and] sex education should be offered with a portion of that money."*  
- Whitney Henry

## In the News: Proposed Cuts to SNAP

### Witnesses to Hunger react

In August of this year Congress passed an \$11.9 billion cut to food stamps to help pay for teacher's salaries and Medicaid.

Heading into November's lame duck session, a proposal is on the table to cut an additional \$2.2 billion from SNAP to pay for child nutrition pro-

grams like school lunches and the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program.

Recently, several Witnesses to Hunger spent time reading through media coverage of the proposed cuts and discussing the implications for their families.

Around the page are

thoughts that came out of that discussion, centering around a common theme: from nutrition programs to education to medical care, more public policy attention must be directed to our nation's children.

*\*\*Editor's note: in each issue, we plan to feature Witnesses' reactions to current events in policy or the com-*



*"I feel that we need to use the food stamp money to make sure the teachers are really teaching the children before giving them more money. The parents need to be in the classrooms. Don't take the money and use it for just the teachers but [also], better after school programs and make more youth programs."* - Tianna Gaines

*"I need to understand why my food stamps are getting slashed for Medicaid and I still can't get the meds I need without a co-payment."*  
- Emily Edwards



## Witnesses Welcomes New Mothers



The women of Witnesses to Hunger have become powerful voices for change in Philadelphia over the past two years. Inspired by these successes, we will be expanding the project over the next several months.

Jenny Rabinowich, program manager at Witnesses to Hunger, is working to recruit five new Witnesses in each of three new cities: Boston, Baltimore, and Camden, NJ. Additionally, five new women will join the Philadelphia Witnesses to Hunger community.

As with the original group

of forty-two Philadelphia mothers, the new Witnesses will each be given a digital camera and asked to photograph the experience of hunger and poverty in their and their children's lives.

Next, each Witness will be interviewed by a Witnesses to Hunger staff person and one of the Philadelphia Witnesses. Each mother will have the opportunity to share the stories behind her photographs.

The advocacy won't end there, though. By becoming Witnesses to Hunger, these women will be joining our powerful sisterhood dedicated to working for a better world for children nationwide. Welcome!

## Update from Angela Sutton



My name is Angela Sutton, and I am a proud member of Witnesses to Hunger. During the past two years, I have worked hard both with the project and on my own.

I remain committed to the advocacy work of Witnesses. Recently, I gave a presentation for the Half in Ten campaign where I told my story and spoke about the importance of federal assistance programs.

My children Jahzire (10) and Ayaan (3) are both doing well in school. And recently, I have made plans to return to school myself: I am currently completing an externship at Drexel and will enroll by September 2011 to finish my bachelor's in behavioral health.

Though I have faced many challenges throughout my life, I stay focused on maintaining a positive attitude. Out of every bad situation, there is always something good.

*\*\*Editor's note: in each issue we will feature an update from one of the Witnesses to Hunger.\*\**

## Spotlight on Social Services

*Winter is on the way!*



Do you or someone you know have questions about getting food stamps? Call the Food Stamp Hotline at 215-430-0556.

In each issue, we'll highlight one or two services we think people should know about. Have ideas? Call Cara, 215-762-7638.

### Weatherize your home for free!

The Friends Neighborhood Guild will perform weatherization projects (i.e. roof insulation, air-leak sealing, etc.) on your home free of charge. To make an appointment with one of their counselors, **Call 215-923-1544.**

### LIHEAP may help YOU

LIHEAP helps with heating bills. To apply, you need social security numbers for each household member, proof of income for each household member (unless you receive public assistance, SSI, or food stamps), your current heating bill, and proof of address. The program starts **Nov. 1.** Call PGW at **215-235-1000** for an application, or go online to <http://pgworks.com>. Stay warm!

# Hungry for Change

By Tianna Gaines

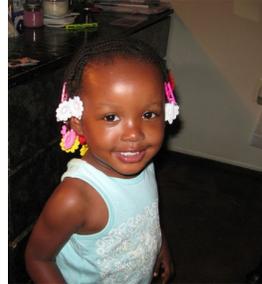
We are a group of women  
with many different faces.  
But our eyes know and see  
the same injustice.

Our children have seen pictures  
not from magazines  
but out of our own backyards.

The pain and the struggles are near  
the front of the White House steps  
we step and walk  
over the empty cracks of our lives.  
This is our hunger for change  
our hunger  
to see a better life.

# I'm growing up!

Each child below is the son or daughter of one of  
the Witnesses. The photos are from 2008, a re-  
minder that each child is growing. Can you guess  
who's who?



# Just for Fun! Word Search

Can you find all the Witnesses to  
Hunger-themed words?



WITNESS  
MOTHERS  
COMMUNITY  
STRONG  
SURVIVOR

HUNGER  
CHILDREN  
PARTICIPATION  
ADVOCACY  
FUTURE

FOOD  
LAUGHING  
LOVE  
PEACE  
HUMAN RIGHTS

# Witnesses to Hunger

40 mothers speaking out to end childhood  
hunger and poverty.

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Witnesses to  
Hunger operates  
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