

Jewish Family Services of Greater Hartford





Lunch & Learn: Kosher Food Access in Greater Hartford

Presented by: Katie Hanley, LMSW
JFS Chief Executive Officer
May 28, 2026 | 12:00 PM





Housekeeping

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- We are recording this session and will provide **access to the slides and recording following this webinar**
 - The Zoom chat functionality is shut off; our team will monitor the **Q&A for questions or issues throughout**
 - **Questions** will be saved for a Q&A section at the end of the presentation. We will respond to as many questions as time allows
 - If you'd like to turn on closed captioning: More > Show Captions
 - Please keep your **audio muted**



About JFS

Jewish Family Services enhances and strengthens quality of life through the Jewish tradition of caring and compassion.

- **Key areas of support** include mental health, Holocaust survivors, financial stability, older adults, in-home care, and food pantry
- The **Anja Rosenberg Kosher Food Pantry** is the only kosher food pantry within 80 miles of Hartford. Currently serves approximately 1,300 individuals of all backgrounds





What We'll Cover

Survey

- Context & Framing
- Design & Methodologies

Results

- Respondent Demographics
- Key Findings & Stories

Next Steps

- Implications for Our Work
- How You Can Help
- Q&A



Framing Our Conversation

Why Kosher Food Access?

- Designed to understand **kosher food access** across CT
- Many respondents would **not identify** as food insecure
- Broader lens captures those experiencing **hidden** food insecurity
- **These are people you know**—deeply connected to Jewish communal life
- Food insecurity affects people across **age, household type, and employment status**



Survey Design & Data Sources

- Key informant **interviews**
- Tested **draft** survey with JFS clients
- **Public data** about the Jewish population and food insecurity in Connecticut
- **Coordination and collaboration** with key community partners
- Statewide **survey** of Jewish adults in Connecticut



Respondent Demographics

422

respondents
from 7 counties
in CT

20

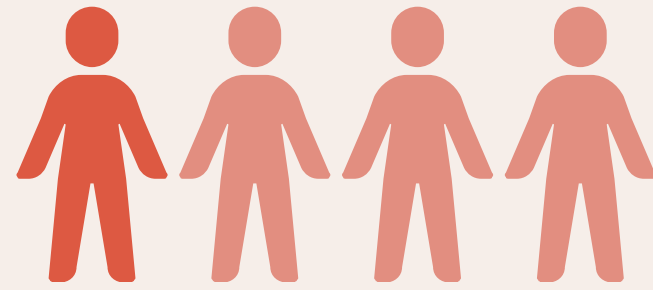
referring
agencies

- **89%** are “very” or “somewhat” connected to the Jewish community
- **44%** older adults
- **36%** households with children
- **82%** keep kosher at least “sometimes” and most require a hekhsher

Key Findings

Kosher Food Insecurity

Food insecurity is a **real and meaningful issue** within Connecticut's Jewish population.



25% of survey respondents experienced marginal or low/very low food security in the last year.

Key Findings

Beyond the Numbers



15%

“often” or “sometimes” **ran out of food** before they could afford more

17%

could not afford **healthy, balanced meals** at least some of the time

10%

skipped meals or delayed bills to afford food

6%

reported **being hungry but not eating** because they did not have enough money for food

Behind every one of those percentages is a person or family navigating impossible choices.



Key Findings

Particularly Vulnerable Groups



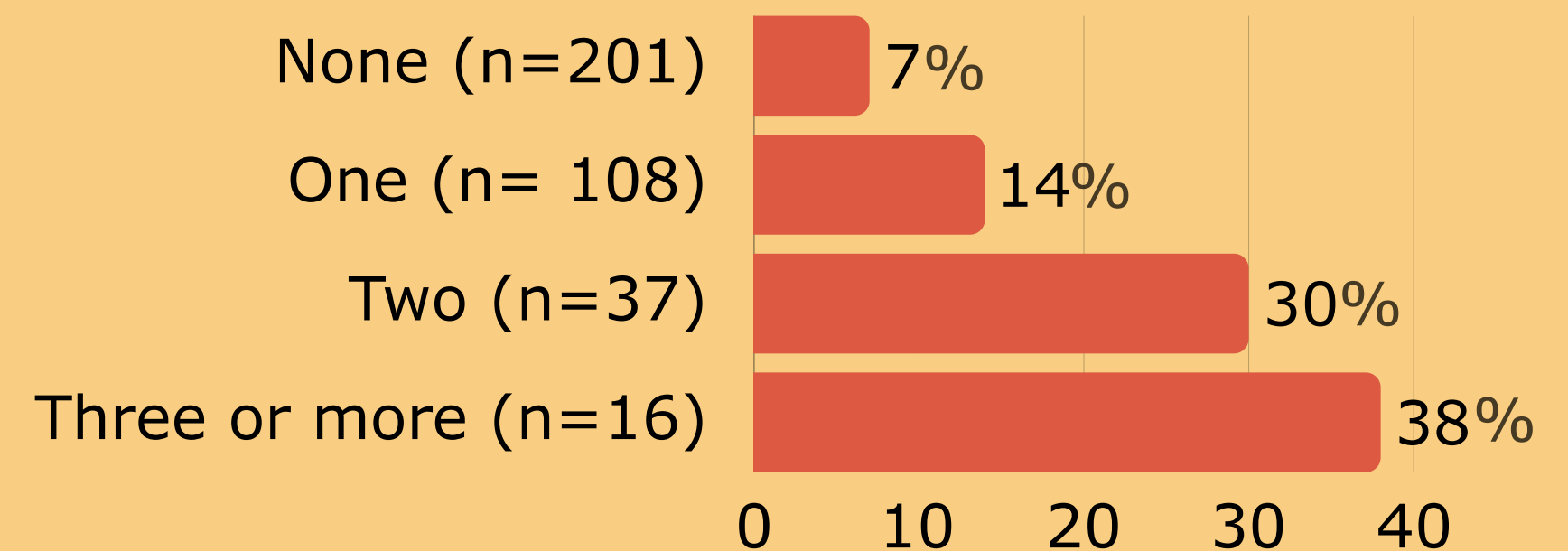
Marginal, low, or very low food security by group:

- 31% of households with children
- 23% of households with older adults and no kids
- 44% Russian-speaking respondents

Low or very low food security by group:

- 29% respondents from households where someone has a disability

Percentage of Respondents with Low/Very Low Food Security by Number of Traumatic Events





JFS Client Story

Dee*, CCS and Food Pantry



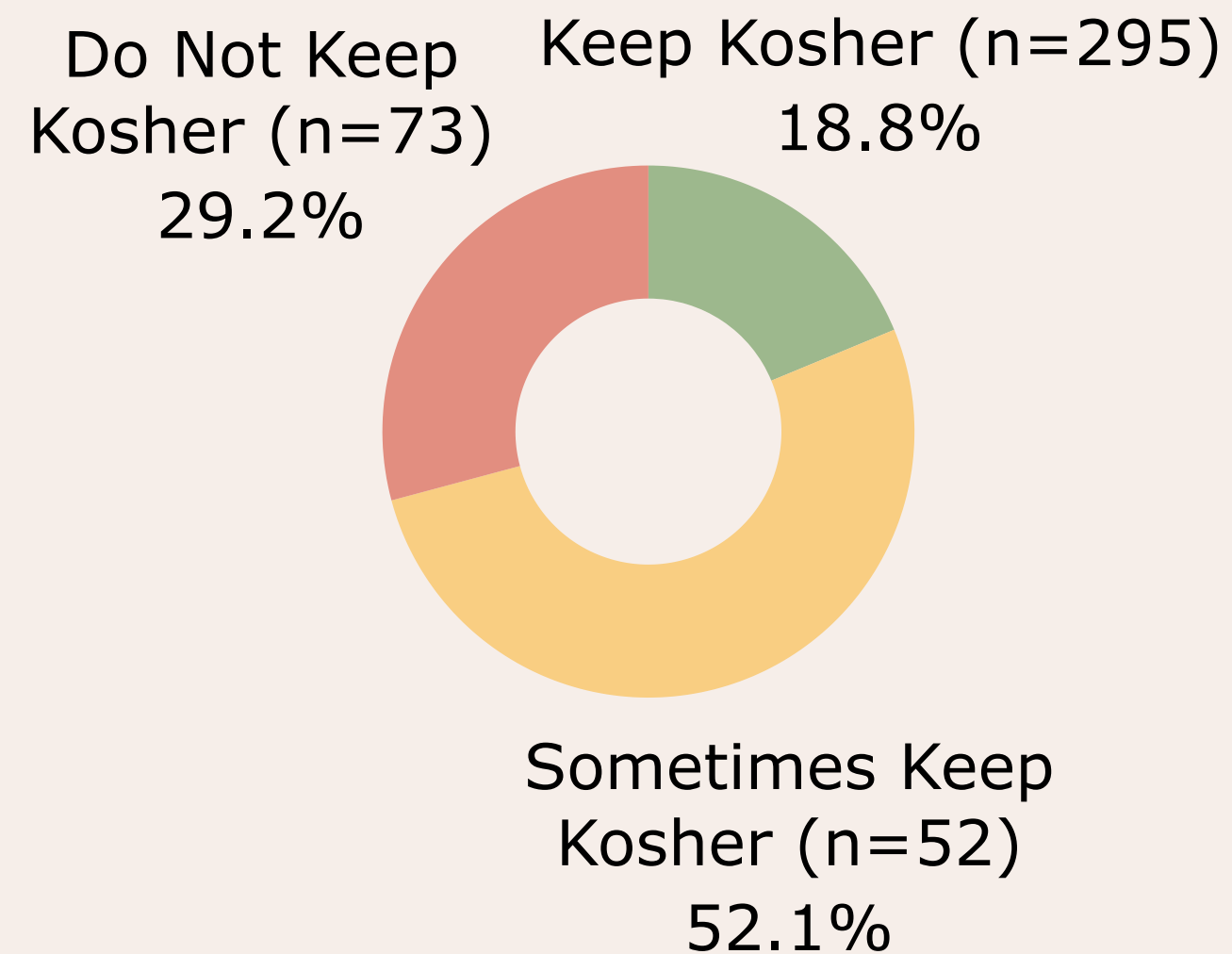
**client name changed to protect confidentiality*

Key Findings

Particularly Vulnerable Groups Cont.



Percentage of Respondents with Low/Very Low Food Security by Subgroup





JFS Client Story

Lena*, Holocaust Survivor Program



**client name changed to protect confidentiality*

Key Findings

Barriers to Kosher Food Access

Convenience

54% of individuals who keep kosher described **limited access** to prepared kosher foods and kosher restaurant options.

Cost

46% reported that **cost significantly impacts** their ability to purchase kosher food.

Availability

24% found that **availability issues**, such as inconsistently stocked products, created challenges for them in accessing kosher food.

Proximity

1 in 4 said they traveled **20 minutes or more** to purchase kosher food.

Implications for Our Work

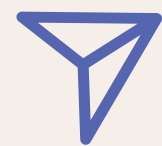
- **Interconnectedness** of food insecurity and other issues points to need for holistic resources
- **Kosher** food pantry is an essential community resource
- **Culturally-appropriate** food offerings make people feel seen
- Working with partners to **advocate for expanded access** to affordable, kosher food
- Public education around kosher food access **within and beyond the Jewish community**



How You Can Help



Stay informed about food insecurity and kosher food access in our community and beyond (resources available on our website)



Share resources and connect community members to support services



Talk openly about food insecurity and help **reduce stigma**



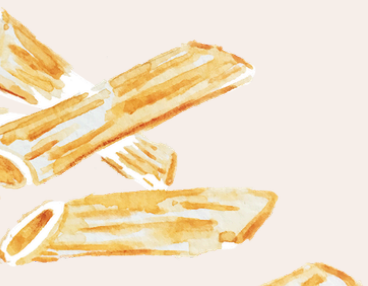
Advocate for **policies and programs** that strengthen food access and economic stability



Support the Anja Rosenberg Kosher Food Pantry through **donations, volunteerism, and advocacy**



JFS



Q&A

Please add your questions to the chat



Thank You!

Scan the QR codes or enter the bit.ly URLs in your internet search bar.



**Findings Memo &
Resources**

jfshartford.org/kosher-food-insecurity-study/



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