

Addressing College Students' Basic Needs

Food and Housing Insecurity on Campus



Hailey Badger

Analyst

hbadger@eab.com

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As the costs of higher education rise and institutions expand access to more diverse students, the number of students on campus financially unable to meet their basic needs is growing. This research initiative will:

- Help institutions serve these students with existing resources today, and
- Plan for a growing population in the future

Four-Part Webconference Series

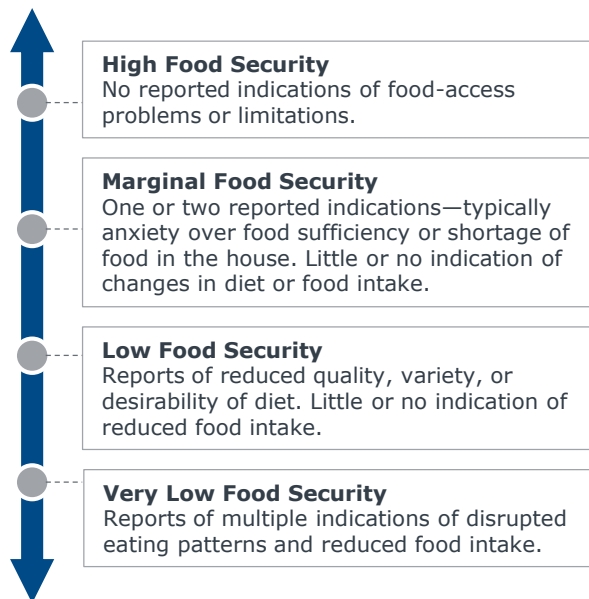
- 1 [What You Should Know About Food and Housing Insecurity on Campus](#)
Available to stream now
- 2 **Connect Basic Needs-Insecure Students with Campus Resources**
April 10, 1:00-1:45 ET
- 3 [Build an Institutional Strategy to Support Basic Needs-Insecure Students](#)
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June 6, 1:00-1:45 ET

Speaking the Same Language

Key Terms and Definitions

Range of Food Security

USDA Economic Research Service



Indicators of Housing Insecurity

Experienced any of the following in the last 12 months...

- Had difficulty paying rent
- Didn't pay full cost of utility bills
- Didn't pay full cost of rent
- Borrowed money to help pay bills
- Moved in with others, even briefly, because of financial problems
- Moved two or more times

Indicators of Homelessness

Experienced any of the following in the last 12 months...

- Didn't know where you were going to sleep, even for one night
- Thrown out of home by someone else in the household because of financial problems
- Stayed in any place not meant for regular housing, even for one night
- Didn't have a home
- Stayed in a shelter
- Evicted from home

The “Starving College Student”

Outdated Stereotypes Shape Public Perception of Struggling Students

Widespread Misperceptions Abound



Skimps on Meals to Buy Beer

"I remember many nights where I traded dinner for beer money!"



Eats Ramen Because They Like It

"They could always go to the dining hall if they're really hungry."



Works to Supplement Spending Money

"I worked through college too...kids these days are just spoiled."



Access to Additional Resources

"They're paying tuition, they can't really be hungry."

“

A No-Win Situation

“For many people, it’s a **contradiction in terms – homeless college student**. If you’re a college student, you had to be with it enough to get yourself into college, so obviously you can’t be homeless.”

*Paul Toro
Professor of Psychology
Wayne State University*

”

Contrasting Stereotypes with Reality

Hunger and Housing Insecurity a Real Problem for Today's Students

College-Going at an All-Time High...

17%

Growth in **undergraduate enrollment** in the U.S.,
2004 - 2014

2X

Number of **FT university students** in Canada has
doubled since 1980

...But No Longer the Ticket Out of Poverty

“Students and families all over the country are saving, working, taking out loans... Yet they still find themselves facing an unreasonably high price for college, **and fall short of the resources they need to successfully complete degrees.** Unexpected costs, even those that might appear modest in size, can derail students from families lacking financial cushions.”

The Real Price of College
The Century Foundation



Alarming Prevalence of Basic Needs Insecurity

36%

Of students at four-year institutions in the U.S. qualify as having low food security

64%

Of food insecure students also experience housing insecurity

39%

Of Canadian university students experience food insecurity



Who Is the Basic Needs Insecure Student?

Three Groups of Students Struggling on Campus



1

Chronically Poor

Increased access brings more low-income students to college



51%

Of K-12 students in U.S. public schools who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch



2

Newly Struggling

High costs overextend middle-class families, so basic needs insecurity is often just one unforeseen expense away



57%

Percentage of food insecure students in the University of California system for whom hunger was a new phenomenon



3

In Crisis

Some students unexpectedly lose necessary support (e.g., LGBTQ students, victims of domestic violence)



39%

Of LGBT individuals say they were rejected by a family member or close friend

A Snapshot of Campus-Level Data

Consistent Findings Across Institutional Sizes and Types

U.S. Public Institutions



42%

Of students report low food security at a **large system**



21%

Of students report low food security at a **mid-sized research university**

U.S. Private Institutions



23%

Of students report some level of food insecurity at a **small private institution**



22%

Of students experienced very low food security at a **mid-sized, very selective university**

Canadian Institutions



15%

Of students report severe food insecurity at a **small research university** in Canada



30%

Of students experience some level of food insecurity at a **large research university**

Source: Anderson, Nick. "For the Poor in the Ivy League, a Full Ride Isn't Always What They Imagined." Washington Post. May 16, 2016. Hungry for knowledge: Assessing the prevalence of student food insecurity on five Canadian campuses. Toronto: Meal Exchange. Martinez, Susanna, Maynard, Katie, and Lorrene Ritchie. *Student Food Access and Security Study*. University of California. 2016. "Starving College Student" Is Not a Joke: *Changing the Culture Around Food Insecurity on Campus*. University of Nevada, Reno. EAB interviews and analysis.

Looking Down the Pipeline

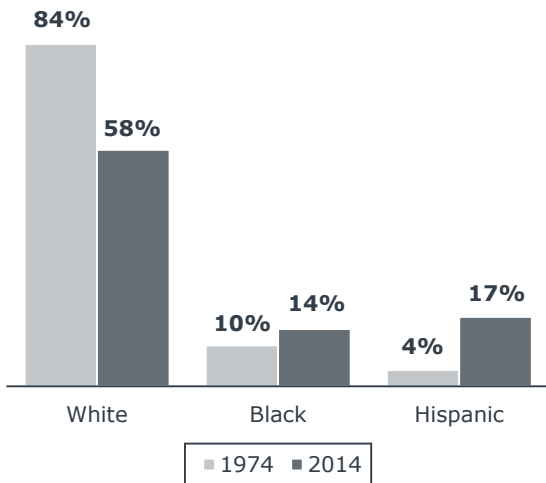


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Urgency of Addressing Basic Needs Will Continue to Escalate

Increasingly Diverse Make-Up of Post-Secondary Enrollment

National Center for Education Statistics



Need Will Grow in the Years Ahead



9%

Of white students in four-year colleges come from food insecure households



16%

Of Hispanic students in four-year colleges come from food insecure households



18%

Of black students in four-year colleges come from food insecure households



56%

Of Aboriginal post-secondary students in Canada experience food insecurity

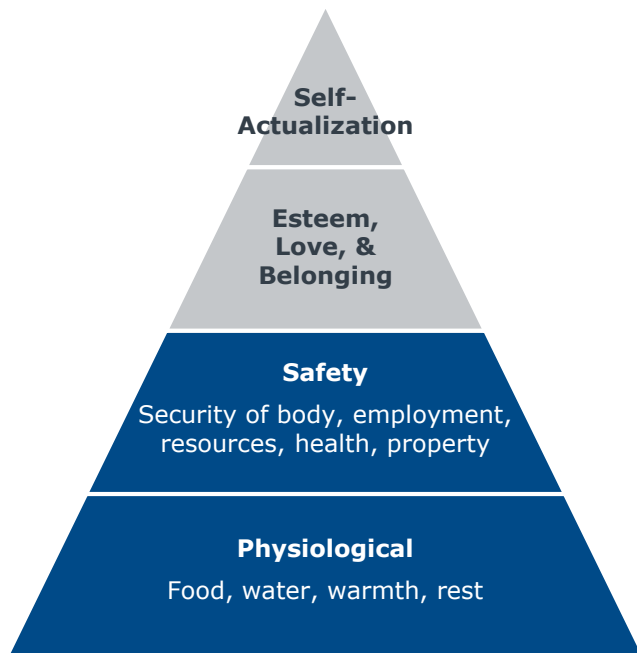
Source: NCES Digest of Education Statistics; 2015, retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/ch_3.asp; *Assessing Food Insecurity on Campus*, The Urban Institute, 2017; Silverthorn, D. (2016). *Hungry for knowledge: Assessing the prevalence of student food insecurity on five Canadian campuses*. Toronto: Meal Exchange. Retrieved from: <http://mealexchange.com>; EAB interviews and analysis.

Whatever the Cause, the Consequences Are Real



Severe Personal and Physical Impacts for Basic Needs Insecure Students

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Under-Resourced Students Face Constraints on Their Time and Focus



*"When I leave the dining hall I take an apple or a banana with me. I always think ahead about food – **it never leaves my mind.**"*



*"I'll take photos of a textbook with more than 500 page **so I can avoid buying it.** It takes hours but you get into a rhythm."*



*"Trying to do homework when you **haven't eaten in 70 hours** is not going to happen."*



*"**I never know if I'll have quiet,** or an internet connection at night, so I try to get as much done as I can during the day."*

Source: Anderson, Nick. "For the Poor in the Ivy League, a Full Ride Isn't Always What They Imagined." Washington Post. May 16, 2016. Sj, Taylor. *This is What It's Like to Be Homeless in College.* Vice. July 23, 2015. EAB interviews and analysis.

The New Frontier in Student Success



Institutional Priorities Around Student Outcomes



Mental Health and Well-Being

55%

Of students with very low food security also report symptoms of depression



Early Academic Indicators

25%

Of basic needs insecure students consequently drop a class

A+

Academic Performance

15X

Higher chance food insecure students will fail a class



Retention and Graduation

<20%

Of basic needs insecure students will graduate in five years

Source: Goldrick-Rab, S., Broton, K., and Eisenberg, D., *Hungry to Learn: Addressing Food & Housing Insecurity Among Undergraduates*, Wisconsin Hope Lab, 2015; Dubick, James, Brandon Mathews, and Clare Cady. *Hunger on Campus*. 2016. Retrieved from http://studentsagainsthunger.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Hunger_On_Campus.pdf; Goldrick-Rab, S., *Paying the Price*, 2016; EAB interviews and analysis.

Increasing Recognition of a Growing Problem

Nascent Efforts Sprouting Up to Address Basic Needs Insecurity

Media Coverage Increasingly Common

"The Hidden Crisis on College Campuses: Many Students Don't Have Enough to Eat"

The Washington Post
April 3, 2018

"It's Hard to Be Hungry on Spring Break"

The New York Times
March 17, 2018

"Even at Elite Colleges, Students Go Hungry"

The Boston Globe
February 5, 2018

Ad Hoc Efforts Pop Up to Support Students in Need



Student Emergency Funds



Snack Shelves



Campus Employment Referrals



Food Pantries



Case Management

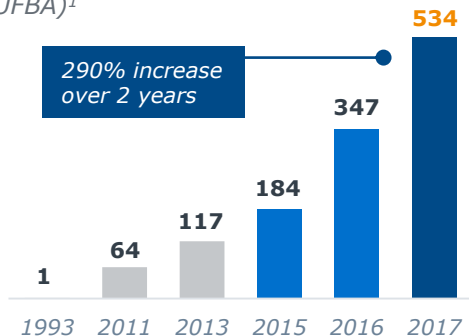
Source: Dewey, C., *The Hidden Crises on College Campuses*, The Washington Post; Fernandes, D., *Even at Elite Colleges, Students Go Hungry*, The Boston Globe; Jack, A., *It's Hard to Be Hungry on Spring Break*, The New York Times; EAB interviews and analysis.

The Rise of Campus Food Pantries

U.S. and Canadian Institutions Providing Direct Support on Campus

Pantries Spread Rapidly on U.S. Campuses

Members, College and University Food Bank Alliance (CUFBA)¹



A Growing Focus On Canadian Campuses

Campus-based Hunger Relief Programs, 2004-2016



Low-Resource Investment for Food Pantry Start Up



Staffed by **student volunteers**



Build up food and other supplies through **donation drives**



Leverage **extensive food pantry network** and established best practices.

¹ CUFBA was founded in 2011; 1993 represents the first campus-based food pantry

Making This Work on Your Campus

Three Lessons Learned from Food Pantry Early Adopters



Start Small

- Consider applying visit or item limitations
- Collect utilization data to understand need and illustrate demand



Proactively Prevent Stigma

- Consider implications of pantry name, location, and student experience
- Leverage student voices to promote use



Leverage Creative Funding Opportunities

- Tap into local non-profits and businesses (e.g., local grocer) for monetary or in-kind donations
- Harness campus support with food drives and bounded giving campaigns



The Campus Pantry Startup Toolkit published by the College and University Food Bank Alliance (CUFBA) includes startup guidance on partnerships, operation, physical setup, marketing, fundraising, and more.¹

1) CUFBA Campus Food Pantry Startup Toolkit, retrieved from <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B48pfvvhHPAKncGNoVWNCMHhVWkE/view>

Addressing Students' Basic Needs

Study Roadmap

Addressing College Students' Basic Needs

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Basic Needs Insecurity Not Unique to Colleges

But Students Face Additional Challenges in Seeking Help

Public Support Programs Abound...



Temporary Assistance
Programs



Child Care



Women and Children
Programs



Supplemental Nutrition
Assistance



Support for Young Families

...But Many Barriers Prevent Students From Accessing Benefits



Lack of awareness



Fear of social stigma



Perception of benefits as charity



Assumption of ineligibility



Arduous application process

Break Down Barriers to Existing Resources

Three Steps to Identify and Connect Students with Available Support

Centralize Information



Basic Needs
Resource
Portal



Eligibility
Screening and
Personalized
Guidance

Create Structured Channels for Surplus Campus Resources



Leftover
Campus
Catering
Alerts



Unused
Meal Plan
Sharing

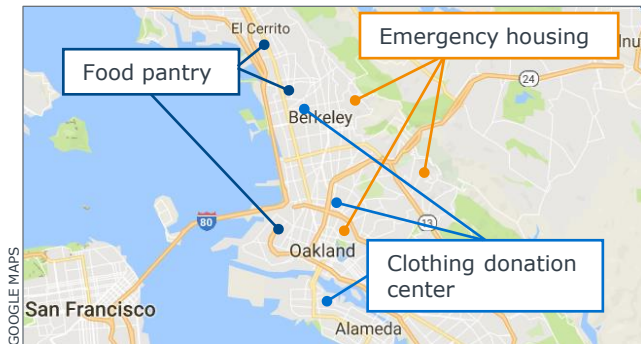


Emergency
Housing
Alternatives

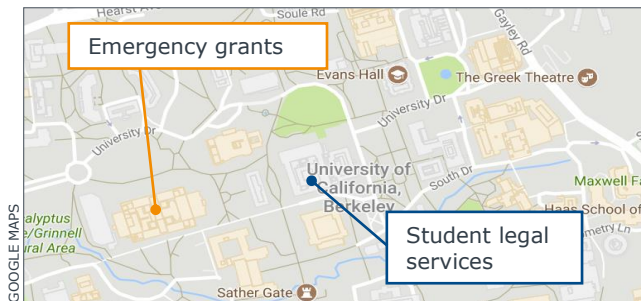
Reducing the Information Gap

University of California Berkeley's Basic Needs Resource Portal

Resources Exist in the Community...



...And on Campus



Key Steps in Creating the Portal

- 1 **Inventory Available Local Resources**
Basic Needs Committee engages in one-time audit of available resources for students experiencing food and/or housing insecurity
- 2 **Centralize Information Online**
Resources are compiled and organized into an easily accessible web portal
- 3 **Publicize Resource Portal**
Educate campus partners about website and market widely across campus

Easy Access to Streamlined Information

User-Friendly Design Empowers Students to Access Support



Easy to Navigate

Categorize comprehensive list of resources into areas of focus



Self-Accessible

Provide students crucial information without needing to visit an office or talk to a staff person



Clear Next Steps

Compile information to ease benefits access (e.g., hours, public transportation options)

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Guiding Students to Assistance

Non-Profit Single Stop Provides Start-to-Finish Support



The Single Stop Benefits Screening Process

Jane Q. Student comes into the Single Stop office

Staff member assists Jane Q. through the benefits screening process

Based on the results, staff member walks Jane Q. through benefits applications

Jane Q. is approved for cash assistance, WIC, and disability benefits

Proactive Screening of Incoming Students

LaGuardia CC Sends At-Risk Students to Single Stop Benefits Screens



Students **flagged based on FAFSA responses**: income, size of household, and financial dependency status



Flagged students encouraged to visit Single Stop for **in-depth benefits screening and consultation**

95%

Of students flagged for benefits screenings **visit Single Stop**



75%

Of students who visit Single Stop **receive public benefits**

Maximizing Existing Capacity

Single Stop Partners with UMass Boston to Bolster Student Support

Minimal Up-Front Investment

Existing staff member will serve as Single Stop coordinator, requiring no additional staffing

Online, Self-Service Screener

UMass partnership will include online benefits screener, enabling students to access support independently

Wider Network of Resources









Single Stop software screens for local and non-profit resources, as well as federal and state benefits

Single Stop Online Benefits Screener

Where do you live?

By continuing, you agree to Single Stop's **terms & privacy**.

Single Stop can connect you to all kinds of resources:

			
MONEY	FOOD	HEALTH	EDUCATION
			
WORK	LEGAL	IMMIGRATION	HOUSING

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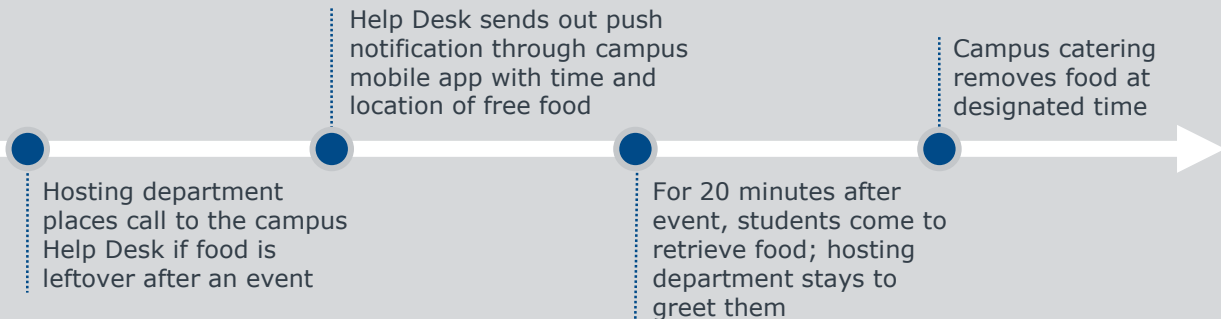


Emergency
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Coordinated Efforts to Distribute Surplus Food

Fresno State's Catered Cupboard Makes It Easy to Participate

Streamlined and Efficient Process for All Involved Parties



Keys to Success

Convenient for Students and Departments

Students find out about free food on campus in real time, and departments reduce food waste

Targeted Recruitment

Outreach was targeted toward the 20 departments that use catering most frequently

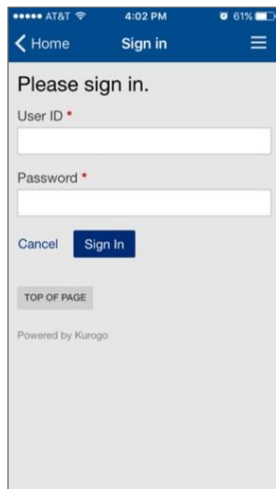
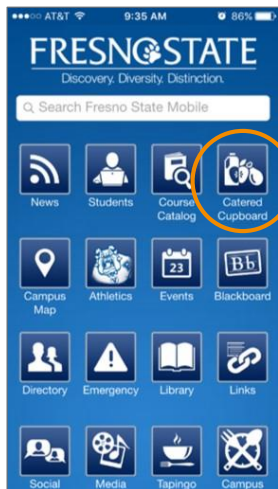
Integrated with Fresno State App

Leverages connection the university already has with students

Target Outreach to Students' Pockets

Fresno State Uses Mobile App with Push Notifications

- 1 **Featured Prominently on App Main Page**
- 2 **Authentication Required to Verify Student Status**
- 3 **Push Notification Alerts Students to Food on Campus**



- 5 Events with leftover food advertised on app **each day**

Reaching Students Where They Are

Social Media Campaigns Connect Students with Leftover Food

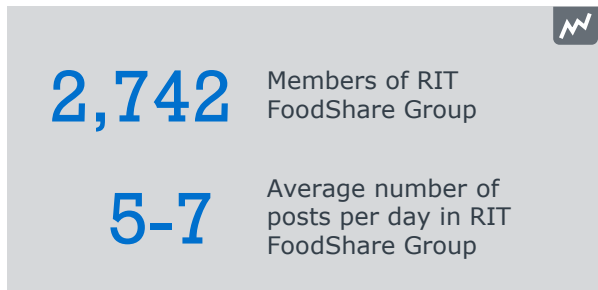
Rochester Institute of Technology's FoodShare Facebook Group



Organizations (e.g., student clubs, academic departments) post to the group when there is leftover food



Group promoted in presentations to student groups, faculty senate, staff council, different student affairs divisions



Connecting Students with Each Other

NYU's Share Meals App Facilitates Direct Connections



Student-Created App Enables Shared Meal Swipes



Students download Share Meals app **to offer or claim swipes** into the dining hall



Student with excess meals **meets student who needs swipe** in dining hall

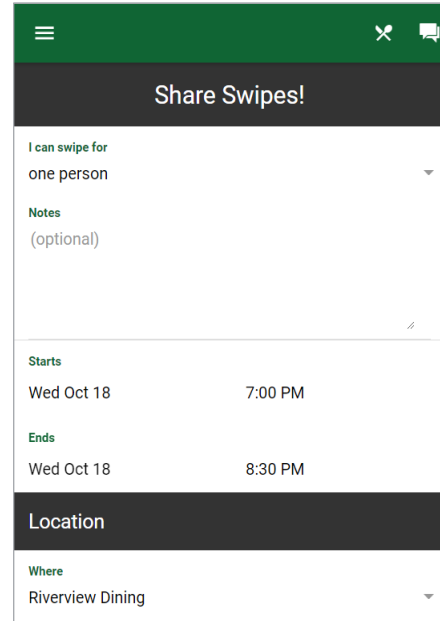


Social media, word of mouth, press coverage, and tabling **promote usage**

600

Meal swipes offered through Share Meals in 2016-2017

Share Meals Mobile App



The screenshot shows the 'Share Swipes!' screen of the mobile app. It has a green header with a menu icon, a close icon, and a chat icon. The main content area is white with a dark green header 'Share Swipes!'. Below this, there are sections for 'I can swipe for one person' (with a dropdown arrow), 'Notes (optional)' (with a text input field and a pencil icon), 'Starts' (with a table showing 'Wed Oct 18' at '7:00 PM'), 'Ends' (with a table showing 'Wed Oct 18' at '8:30 PM'), 'Location' (with a dark green header), and 'Where' (with a dropdown arrow showing 'Riverview Dining').

Starts	
Wed Oct 18	7:00 PM

Ends	
Wed Oct 18	8:30 PM

Location	
Where	Riverview Dining

Expanding Basic Needs Support

Colleges Seeing an Increase in Housing Insecurity and Homelessness

64% Of food insecure students also experience **housing insecurity**

“

“Housing insecurity doesn't care about the prestige of your institution, or whether it's a two-year or a four-year college. It doesn't care about your gender or your religion or your background. **Hard circumstances can fall on anyone.** Some people have a safety net for that kind of thing. Some people don't.”

Behind the Problem of Student Homelessness
New York Times

”

Housing Insecurity Poses Additional Challenges



Much more **resource intensive** to address



Difficult to weigh **chronic versus crisis need**



Fewer available resources to leverage

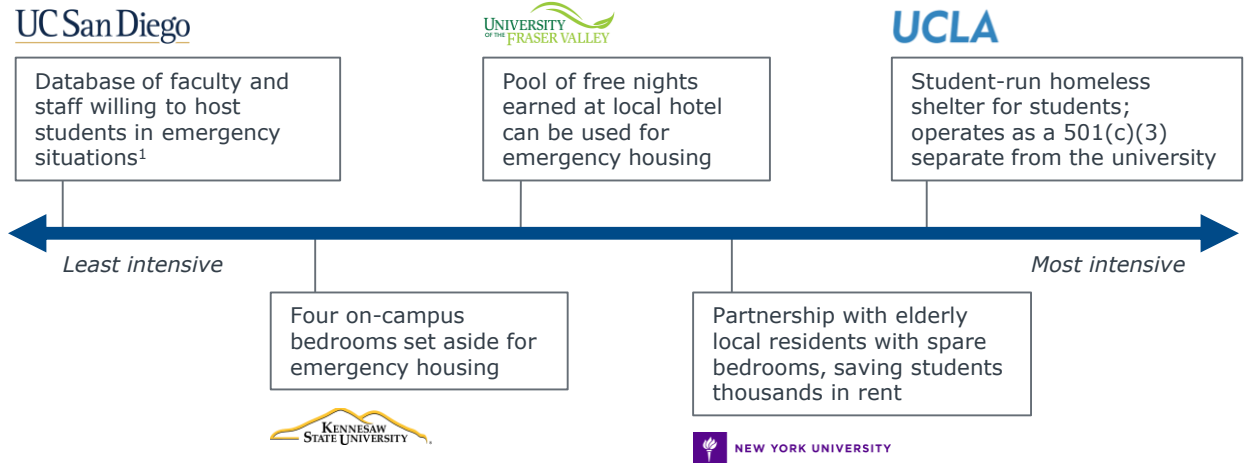


Additional **legal** and **safety** related considerations

Emergency Housing Not One-Size-Fits-All

Colleges Using a Variety of Approaches to Tackle Student Needs

Spectrum of Emergency Housing Programs



1) Database is currently in development

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Using This Research on Campus

Forthcoming Resources from the Student Affairs Forum

Webinar Series

Each section spotlighted in 30- to 45-minute webinar sessions; perfect for team meetings and brown-bag workshops



Book-Length Publication

Every best practice from the study compiled in a bound publication, featuring guidance and worksheets for your team



Implementation Toolkit

Templates and examples from profiled institutions help student affairs leaders avoid “reinventing the wheel” and streamline new initiatives



Executive Briefing

Ready-to-go resource for senior leaders that explains the current state of affairs on campus and what institutions are doing to meet students' demand





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