

How National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and SNAP (Food Stamps) Treat Income Differently

School Meals (NSLP)

The NSLP counts the gross income of all persons living in the home, regardless of relationship or legal obligation to support.



SNAP (Food Stamps)

SNAP counts the gross income of persons living in the same home who also purchase and prepare most of their food together. SNAP usually does not count the income of other household members.*



*SNAP does count the income of spouses living together and children under age 22 living with parents – even if they are not sharing food.



Children who get SNAP qualify for free school meals, even if the household's gross income exceeds the NSLP gross income tests.

EXAMPLE:

Mary and John Smith have a 10 year old. Mary earns \$2,300/month gross. They share an apartment with John's brother Tom who makes \$3,500/month truck driving. Tom buys and prepares most of his own food.

NSLP: The income of Mary, John and Tom is counted for the NSLP using the gross income test for a household of four (4). With \$5,800 in gross income, they are *over 130% FPL income* for free meals and *over 185% FPL* for reduced-price meals.

SNAP: Mary and John can apply for SNAP for a family of three (3). SNAP does not include Tom's income because he does not share most meals with Mary and Tom. Their son qualifies for free school meals if the family gets SNAP.