



FAMILY ACTIVITY GUIDE



9
MILLION
children face
hunger

We know how much our children enjoy snack time. We gladly prep their grapes, yogurt and quickie mac & cheese. Imagine if your child missed a snack, or worse a meal. What would his or her attitude be like? It could certainly make focusing in school much harder.

Roughly 1 in 8 children don't have enough to eat in the United States—that's around 9 million kids. Some of these kids may live in your neighborhood or go to school with your child. Despite the severity of this problem, hunger often gets overlooked.

This guide will help your family talk about the issue of hunger and ways to address it in your community.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In the words of real kids who have experienced hunger:

“We eat rice for breakfast, lunch and dinner sometimes because there isn’t much food in the house. My mom and dad have to go without just so that us kids can have food in our stomachs,” Zoey from Louisiana

“When I’m hungry, I get tired or I’ll get distracted. But when I’m not, I’m on-task and I can focus. If I’m full, I’m ready for whatever happens.” Elijah from Texas

Discussing Hunger with Your Kids



1. What is the connection between money and food on a family’s table?

ANSWER: Food costs money. When there is not enough money available, it’s hard for parents to buy food.

Talk about other things that cost money—for example: clothes, toys, entertainment and school supplies. Some of these things are necessities, and some aren’t. Food is perhaps the biggest necessity of all. When a family can’t afford food, it causes many problems.

2. Why do parents wait to eat only after the kids eaten first and are full?

ANSWER: Because when there isn’t enough food to go around, parents cares more about the kids’ full tummies than their own.

3. What do you think might happen if the kids couldn’t free food from school or a pantry?

ANSWER: They would be sad because they may experience hunger more often, and it doesn’t feel good to be hungry.



PICTURING HUNGER

Sometimes it can be difficult to talk about a big issue like hunger. To start the conversation, you can ask your child the following questions:

- What does it feel like to be hungry?
- What would you do if you couldn't eat for a whole day?
- What things might be harder to do while hungry?

In the space below, work together to draw or write the story of someone who is facing summer hunger. If more direction is needed, ask a question, such as: How would you feel if you had to go the entire school year without breakfast or lunch?

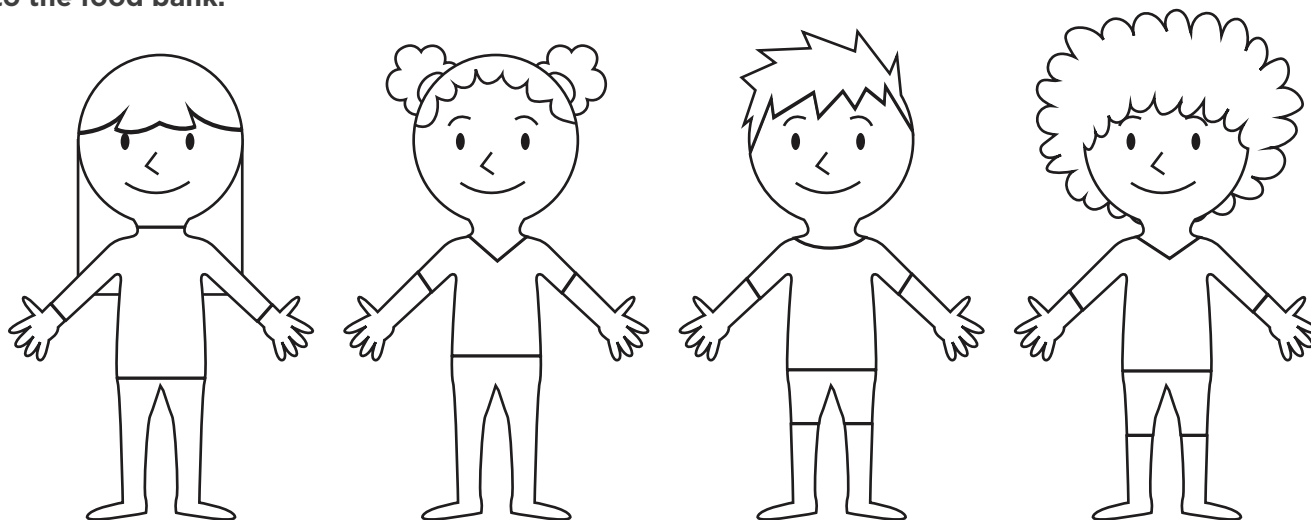


How Do You Feel When You're Hungry?

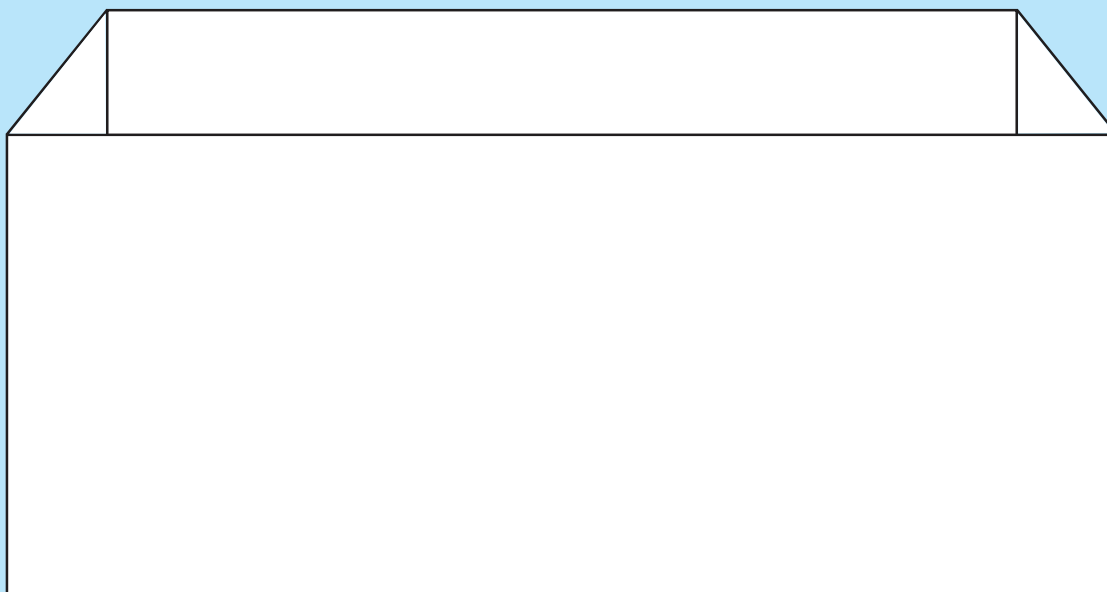
I'M HUNGRY TO HELP

A food bank is a place that collects and stores food for people in need. Food donations are key to their success. Dried and canned goods such as peanut butter, soup and beans are some of the best foods to donate because they're high in good for you protein. What other items do you think would be good to contribute?

Using a pencil or marker, have your child draw the food item that he or she can bring to the food bank.



Donation Box



FIGHTING HUNGER STARTS AT HOME

We all have a role to play in the fight against summer hunger. Let's encourage our kids to do what they can at home and in their community.



1. START A DONATION JAR

Find a spot in your house to collect donations for your local food bank or food pantry. If you give your kids an allowance, help them form good budgeting skills allocating 10-20 percent for charity. When kids use their own money to help others, it not only instills pride, it builds empathy for those in need.

2. HOST A LEMONADE STAND OR BIRTHDAY PARTY

Raise funds for Feeding America with a lemonade stand or host a birthday party where guests are asked for donations instead of presents. Visit [FeedingAmerica.org/fundraise](https://www.feedingamerica.org/fundraise) for online tools to organize your fundraiser, spread the word and track your progress.

3. PLANT A FAMILY GARDEN

Collect a harvest to donate to a local food pantry. This project will engage your child in efforts to fight hunger as well as promote sustainability. If your family would like to expand this idea, consider working with others in your area to create a community garden. If weather is a concern, small indoor gardens are also possible.

JUST FOR FUN!

Get artsy and color the comic above.

FOSTERING UNDERSTANDING

GET READING

Reading stories is a great way for children to understand the complex realities of other people's lives. Consider adding these books to your family's read-aloud list. Picture books that deal with hunger include:

- [*Maddi's Fridge*, by Lois Brandt](#)
- [*Watercress* by Andrea Wang & Jason Chin](#)
- [*Kindness Is My Superpower, a Children's Book About Empathy, Kindness and Compassion*, by Alicia Ortega](#)

You can purchase these books through [AmazonSmile](#) to support Feeding America.

IN SOMEONE ELSE'S SHOES

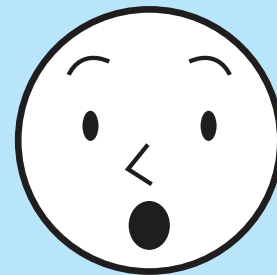
One of the ways to get kids thinking about others is to encourage empathy. Start by asking them to imagine what a friend going through a tough time might feel. Then explain that empathy is the ability to understand situations different from their own—in other words, what it's like to be someone else. When they have the ability to understand, they'll want to help them more.

Feeling Faces

Match the face with the right emotion and have your child share an example of when he or she has experienced that emotion. You can repeat the activity with examples of when others may have experienced those emotions.



SURPRISED



HAPPY

ANGRY



SAD



FAMILY ACTION CHECKLIST TO END HUNGER

- CREATE** a donation jar and start contributing money.
- BUY** extra food items to donate to the food pantry.
- SHARE** food with someone in need.
- CONTACT** your local food bank to ask how you can help.
- INVITE** a friend to volunteer with you at a food bank.
- READ** a book or a news article that deals with hunger or other issues.
- ORGANIZE** a community food drive or a local fundraiser.
- YOUR FAMILY'S OWN IDEA:**



Visit [FeedingAmerica.org](https://www.feedingamerica.org) to learn more about hunger and how you can help.



Feeding America® is the largest domestic hunger-relief organization in the United States. Through a network of 200 food banks, 21 statewide food bank associations, and over 60,000 partner agencies, food pantries and meal programs, we helped provide 6.6 billion meals to tens of millions of people in need last year. Feeding America also supports programs that prevent food waste and improve food security among the people we serve; brings attention to the social and systemic barriers that contribute to food insecurity in our nation; and advocates for legislation that protects people from going hungry.

Mission

Our mission is to advance change in America by ensuring equitable access to nutritious food for all in partnership with food banks, policymakers, supporters, and the communities we serve. We envision an America where no one is hungry.

HOW FEEDING AMERICA PROVIDES MEALS



DONATIONS ARE MADE: Feeding America secures donations from national and local retailers, food service locations, food companies and government agencies.



FOOD IS MOVED: The Feeding America network of food banks moves donated food and grocery products to where they are needed most.



FOOD IS DISTRIBUTED AND STORED: Member food banks ensure the safe storage and reliable distribution of donated goods to local feeding programs.



FOOD REACHES PEOPLE IN NEED: Food banks provide food and grocery items to people in need at food pantries, soup kitchens, youth programs, senior centers and emergency shelters.

IMPACT

The Feeding America network provided **6.6 billion meals** to children, families and individuals last year.

Every dollar donated helps provide at least **10 meals** to families in need through the Feeding America network of food banks.

If you, or someone you know, need help with food, please use our food bank locator to find resources near you: [FeedingAmerica.org/FoodBank](https://www.feedingamerica.org/FoodBank)

To learn more about our fight to end hunger in America, visit [FeedingAmerica.org](https://www.feedingamerica.org) or follow us on social media @FeedingAmerica on

