

# HUNGRY TO HELP

## FAMILY ACTION PLAN



**MAKE  
SUMMER  
THE SEASON  
TO END  
HUNGER.**

The end of the school year marks the beginning of a hungry season as millions of kids lose access to school meals during the summer. Join the fight to end hunger with your family. The ***Hungry to Help*** Family Action Plan includes:

- Family conversation starters on the topic of hunger
- Hands-on community action ideas and family activities
- Children's activity sheet to draw their perfect world
- A summer checklist to guide your progress

Visit [feedingamerica.org/hungrytohelp](http://feedingamerica.org/hungrytohelp) for more resources and ideas.

**FEEDING  
AMERICA**

## DEAR FAMILIES,

### One in six children in the U.S. do not have enough to eat.

Right here in America, more than 13 million children don't have enough to eat. Summer is an especially tough time for children who face hunger. When school ends, so do the school lunches on which millions of kids rely—sometimes as the only meal they are sure to get during the day. Children need proper nutrition to grow and learn, making hunger an urgent problem that needs to be solved.

This guide will provide ways for you to talk to your child about hunger, help your child develop empathy for others, and take action as a family. “Ways to Approach the Topic of Hunger With Your Child” gives suggestions for how to have conversations about this sensitive topic. “Community Action Ideas” lists ways that your family can fight hunger both at home and in the community, and the children’s activity sheet will help you and your child get creative and imagine a world without hunger. And since change does not happen overnight, the “Summer Checklist” provides a reference to keep your child engaged in this issue.

To get started, read two real stories from people facing hunger. Discuss how each of you might feel if you were dealing with hunger. Then review the action plan to identify steps your family can take to help those in your community who don't have enough to eat.

### STORY 1

“My mom works really hard to make sure me and my brother have a roof over our heads and enough to eat. When we're eating, she'll make sure we eat first and are full. Then if there's leftovers she'll make dinner for herself. I get free lunch and breakfast at school, which helps my mom make sure we have enough food for the weekends. Without the lunch program, I would be sad. To everyone who makes it possible I want to say thank you. Because you're making kids like me happy and our parents happy too, by making it easier for all of us to get enough to eat.”



### STORY 2

“I'm a painter and I work a lot. Most weeks I work six days, from sunup to sundown, to make enough to support my family. It's barely enough, however, and I cannot always depend on the paychecks since my work is so dependent on the weather. If it rains and I miss two days—those are two days I do not get paid. Those are two days of pay my family cannot afford to miss.”

“As a father, it is so painful when your child asks you for something to eat and you cannot provide it for her. My daughter would say, ‘Can I have some milk?’ And I would have to say, ‘I'm sorry I don't have milk.’ That's really, really hard to say.”

# CONVERSATION STARTERS

## Ways to Approach the Topic of Hunger With Your Child

### 1. Make it relevant.

Encourage your child to put himself or herself in someone else's shoes. What would he or she think and feel if there wasn't enough to eat? Share information about what is happening in your city with the Map the Meal Gap resource at [map.feedingamerica.org](http://map.feedingamerica.org).

**2. Teach through example.** Designate a jar to collect money for a hunger relief organization, and add your own spare change. Suggest bringing meals to people in your community who may be ill or facing a family emergency, and invite your child to help.

**3. Share your own stories.** Perhaps you have a meaningful volunteer experience, or perhaps you have experienced hunger yourself. Sharing these experiences will help your child make a personal connection to the issue.

**4. Provide an explanation.** Explain that there are many reasons why people suffer from hunger and that they may face hunger for different lengths of time. If you and your child have unanswered questions, visit [feedingamerica.org](http://feedingamerica.org) for more information.

**5. Encourage children to talk about their emotions.** Help your child understand that it's okay to feel sad or frustrated about problems they see in the world, including hunger. Make sure to discuss the ways that your child can take action to help solve these problems.

**6. Engage them with their own imaginations.** Ask your child to describe his or her perfect world. What creative ways can your child come up with to solve problems like hunger? Have your child draw and color his or her perfect world using page 6 of this guide.

**7. Show them how they can make a difference.** Prepare meals for a local meal program, collect food for the local food pantry, or take part in a walk to end hunger. Getting involved in



direct service, such as serving meals to people in need or volunteering at a food bank, can help children connect to those affected by hunger.

**8. Inspire them to make choices.** If your family decides to make a monetary donation, involve your child in the decision about where the money should go. If a birthday or holiday is coming up, give your child a choice of making a donation of food or money to a food bank or pantry in your community.

**9. Make a plan for your family.** Show your child that ending hunger will not happen overnight—it's important to have a long-term plan. Use the Community Action Ideas (page 4) and Summer Checklist (page 7) to guide you.



# COMMUNITY ACTION IDEAS

By encouraging empathy at home and in your community, you can inspire and empower your kids to take action. Use the list below to decide which actions are right for your family.

## ENCOURAGE EMPATHY



**1** **“I’m Thankful” collage:** Discuss what you and your child are grateful for. Be sure to help your child understand that not all children have the things that he or she may take for granted. Create an “I’m Thankful” collage based on what you discuss.

**2** **Recommended reading list:** Reading stories are a great way for children to understand the complex realities of other people’s situations. Picture books that deal with hunger include:

- *Maddi’s Fridge* by Lois Brandt
- *One Potato, Two Potato* by Cynthia DeFelice
- *Uncle Willie and the Soup Kitchen* by Dyanne DiSalvo-Ryan

Consider adding them to your family’s read-aloud list.

**3** **Write for change:** Have your child write a story from the perspective of someone who is facing hunger. Depending on your child’s age, he or she may want to rely on pictures as well as words to tell the story. Try the following writing prompts:

- What if you come home from school and there is not any food for a snack or dinner. What would you think and feel?
- What if your family did not have enough food for breakfast. What might you and your family have to do?

## TAKE ACTION AT HOME



**4 Create your own collection box:** Find a spot in your house to collect food items to donate to a local food pantry, as well as a donation jar for monetary contributions. Involve your child in the process by inviting him or her to decorate the box or jar and to help decide where the donations should go.

**5 Create a fundraiser:** Raise funds for Feeding America or your local food bank 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 own fundraiser, spread the word, and track your progress.

**6 Plant a family garden:** Use your outdoor space to plant a garden and collect the food to donate to a local food pantry. This project will also engage your child in efforts to fight hunger as well as to promote sustainability. If your family would like to expand this idea, consider working with others in your area to create a community garden.

## ENABLE ACTION



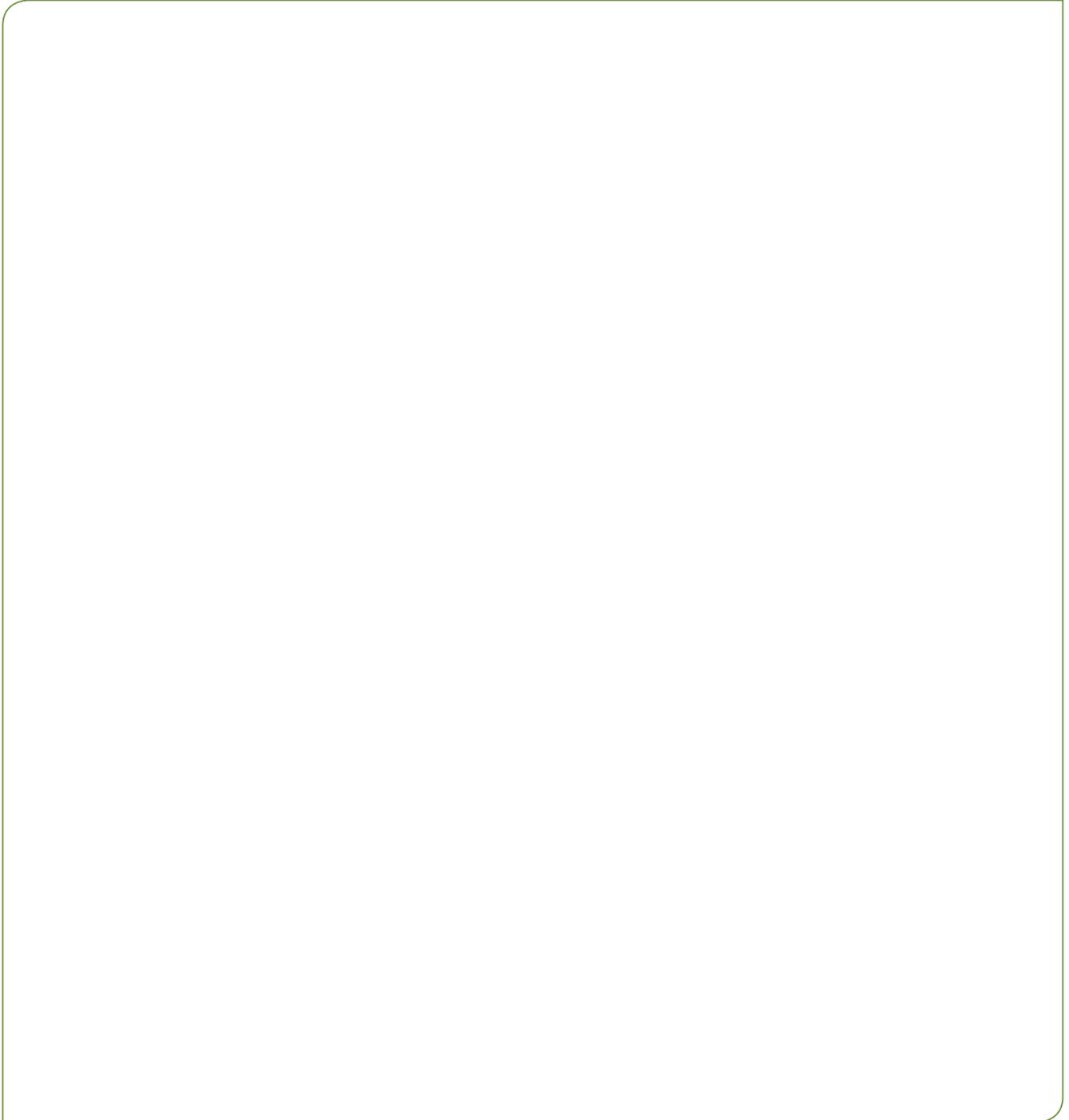
**7 Draw for change:** Introduce your child to artists who use art to convey a message. Examples could include Frida Kahlo and JR's Inside Out Project. Invite your child to turn his or her hunger-fighting ideas into a drawing or a mural. Inspire others with your child's artwork by sharing on social media with @FeedingAmerica and #hungrytohelp.

**8 Hold a community food drive:** Work together with a camp, church, or local supermarket to organize a community food drive. Your child will see the huge impact that a group of people working together can have.

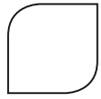
**9 Volunteer:** Find family volunteer opportunities through your local food bank. Your child will be able to see the effects of their hard work through the amount of food donations sorted or the number of meals served, as well as getting to know people directly affected by hunger. To find your local food bank, visit [feedingamerica.org/foodbank](https://www.feedingamerica.org/foodbank).

## **HUNGRY TO HELP DRAW YOUR PERFECT WORLD**

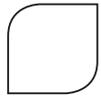
Engage your child's imagination and ask him or her to describe the perfect world. How can this world be free of problems such as hunger? Get creative with your child and draw what this perfect world might look like together!



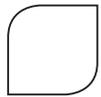
# SUMMER CHECKLIST TO HELP END HUNGER



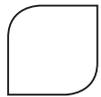
**Create** a donation jar and start contributing money.



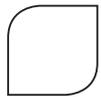
**Buy** extra food items to donate to the food pantry.



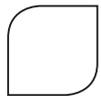
**Share** food with someone in need.



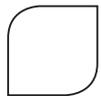
**Contact** your local food bank to ask how you can help.



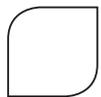
**Invite** a friend to volunteer with you at a food bank.



**Read** a book or a news article that deals with hunger or other issues.



**Organize** a community food drive or a local fundraiser.



**Our own idea:** \_\_\_\_\_

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





Feeding America® is the largest hunger-relief organization in the United States. Through a network of 200 food banks and 60,000 food pantries and meal programs, we provide meals to more than 46 million people each year. Feeding America also supports programs that prevent food waste and improve food security among the people we serve; educates the public about the problem of hunger; and advocates for legislation that protects people from going hungry.

## Mission

The mission of Feeding America is to feed America's hungry through a nationwide network of member food banks and engage our country in the fight to end hunger.

### 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 provides more than **4 billion meals** to children, families, and individuals each year.

**Every dollar** donated to Feeding America helps provide **11 meals** to people facing hunger.

To learn more, visit [FeedingAmerica.org](https://FeedingAmerica.org),  
or follow us on social media @FeedingAmerica on   

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