



Become a Champion to End Hunger

Stakeholder Guides

Background

Everyone agrees that no child should ever go hungry and yet childhood hunger exists in our country. In 2009, more than 4 million households with almost 9 million children in the United States were food insecure. Of those, almost 1 million children in those households simply did not get enough to eat-- they had to cut the size of their meals, skip meals, or even go whole days without food at some point during the year. (Household Food Security in the United States, 2009)

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is striving to end childhood hunger in the United States. The Federal Government will do its part, but we can't end childhood hunger alone. We encourage you to look over this stakeholder guide and think about the resources, interests, and talents you can contribute.

The Stakeholder Guide to End Childhood Hunger provides ideas about actions you can take in your community to help us reach the goal of ending childhood hunger.

Read the Guide! Get Inspired! Take Action! Become a Champion to End Hunger!

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What can **state and local governments** do to End Childhood Hunger?

- 1 Develop a plan for your State to end childhood hunger.** Your plan can include steps such as policy initiatives to support anti-hunger goals, efforts to increase awareness in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), plans to expand the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) in each community, and commitments to increase awareness in the School Breakfast Program. Several States have already gathered experts from State and local governments, food policy councils, advocate groups and schools to create plans.
- 2 Adopt Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) policies that improve access, participation, and customer service.** Please see the SNAP webpage for information about modernization initiatives, policies such as broad-based categorical eligibility, as well as grant opportunities to improve access, participation, and customer service.
- 3 Make sure your State has a SNAP Outreach Plan.** To affect childhood hunger directly, focus outreach on families with children who may not know they are eligible. For example consider reaching out to citizen children living with noncitizen adults. Find out more about State SNAP outreach plans. Also, make sure to use the free SNAP outreach materials provided by USDA. Toolkits for States and community partners, materials for print and ordering, Public Service Announcements, and many more items are available.
- 4 Promote direct certification to determine the eligibility of children in child nutrition programs based on SNAP enrollment information.** Children receiving SNAP benefits are automatically income eligible to participate in any of the child nutrition programs. State governments can promote participation in the child nutrition programs by building strong direct certification systems and supporting greater reliance on the direct certification of children into these programs by schools and the agencies that administer SNAP.
- 5 Make sure kids in your community have access to the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).** SFSP reimburses providers for healthy meals served to kids while school is out, yet SFSP serves only about 20 percent of the children eligible for these meals. Parks and recreation programs, schools, churches, and many other organizations can serve meals in areas with high numbers of children certified for free and reduced-price meals at school and should be feeding kids in the summer. See USDA's Summer Food website for more information and for a SFSP outreach toolkit.

6

Make school breakfast a priority in your schools. Only about one-third of the students who eat a free or reduced-price school lunch eat a school breakfast as well. Increasing participation in the School Breakfast Program in your community helps make sure that all students are ready to learn during the school day. Also make sure to investigate alternative service methods like Grab 'n' Go carts and Breakfast in the Classroom to maximize participation. See USDA's School Breakfast website for help.

Government



7

Increase awareness of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP benefits supplement the food budget of low-income families, enabling them to buy more and healthier food at the grocery store. USDA provides many free SNAP outreach resources for States, local governments, and community organizations. You'll find outreach toolkits, materials to download and order, Public Service Announcements, and more here. Every \$5 in SNAP benefits spent at local grocers and farmers markets generates up to \$9.00 in total economic activity. Making sure all who are eligible are receiving benefits will help stimulate the economy in your community. Read more about the economic impact of SNAP participation in *The Economic Benefits of SNAP*.

8

Cross-promote nutrition assistance programs. For example, your county eligibility workers assist clients with SNAP, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Medicaid applications and can also help connect them to school meals, SFSP, WIC, Food Distribution on Indian Reservations, The Emergency Food Assistance Program and others. Cross-promotion of nutrition and anti-hunger programs can also take place at food banks, community clinics, Aging and Disability Resource Centers, Area Agencies on Aging, homeless shelters, childcare centers, schools, public health departments, hospitals, veteran's affairs departments, polling places, libraries, the Department of Motor Vehicles/Secretary of State offices, 211 call centers, VITA tax sites, jury duty locations, and many more places.

9

Increase the accessibility of healthy food options for under-served neighborhoods. In the U.S., more than 6.5 million children live in low-income neighborhoods more than a mile from a supermarket. For many families, it might be difficult to access supermarkets that carry fresh and healthy food options. Local governments can help those families by providing incentives for food retailers to locate in under-served neighborhoods and ensuring there are public transportation options to improve access to supermarkets.



What can **elected officials** do to End Childhood Hunger?

1

Governors' Challenge to Ending Childhood Hunger. Governors can challenge Mayors and other local elected leaders in every city and county of their State to develop and implement an action plan to end childhood hunger. Plans should be specific, list clear goals, and include year-round action items with opportunities for community partners, faith-based organizations, school districts, and interested residents to get involved.

2

Develop a State Plan to build awareness, increase access, and promote community partners. Governors can take a strong and active stand in ending childhood hunger by creating a State Plan that includes coalition building and strengthening existing resources available in their State. Governors cannot end childhood hunger alone, but need to engage in a collaborative effort with private, non-profit, and faith-based organizations to meet the varying needs of the State. Governors can turn to our partner organization Share Our Strength for ideas on state partnerships and state plans.

3

Make a Commitment to End Childhood Hunger. Elected officials can lead by example and publically “Make a Commitment to End Childhood Hunger” on the USDA Food and Nutrition Service’s (USDA FNS) website. By doing so, elected officials can collaborate with the USDA FNS to jointly promote nutrition programs and resources available. In a collaborative effort with the USDA FNS, elected officials can coordinate joint community roundtables, conduct webinars, distribute outreach materials, and provide technical assistance to specific plans for addressing childhood hunger. All it takes is one click to start. www.endhunger.usda.gov

4

Create a website presence to discuss the issue. As an elected official, your leadership on this issue is imperative, and providing an online venue to discuss the problems and solutions in your communities is critical. Elected officials can create a web presence on their current public website dedicated to ending childhood hunger. You can learn more about food insecurity among children through our Background page on the USDA FNS website. You can also add our widget to your page.

5

Use various media outlets to expand reach and create awareness. The opportunity to reach the public through various media avenues presents itself daily for elected officials. Inclusively, many elected officials have blogs, twitter accounts, Facebook fan pages, radio and TV guest appearances, and newspaper editorials that provide the platform and the public reach to talk about childhood hunger. We encourage you to take every opportunity available to promote the campaign.

6

Create an Ending Childhood Hunger Awareness Day.

Elected officials can make a proclamation to end childhood hunger and dedicate an official day to the cause. The "Become a Champion to End Hunger Day" in your jurisdiction can be part of your local health fair, state fair, or its own day and be a call to action for all residents, anti-hunger advocate groups, and community and faith-based organizations to show their support.

**Elected
Official**

7

Create challenges to increase awareness of Federal nutrition programs. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) are key nutrition programs that can directly increase children's access to healthy foods. SNAP, for example, has more than 40 million participants, nearly half of which are children. Elected officials can create challenges specific to each of these federally funded programs. For example, establishing a target increase of just 5 percent in each program can yield tremendous benefits for children and your local economy.



What can **faith & community-based organizations** do to End Childhood Hunger?

- 1 Conduct outreach** for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), school meals, Food Distribution on Indian Reservations, and the Emergency Food Assistance Program and cross-promote Federal nutrition assistance programs. Talk about nutrition

assistance programs in your services and meetings. Many people are not aware of the multitude of programs available to individuals and families in need. Those who participate in one Federal nutrition program may not be aware that they are eligible for additional assistance. USDA provides many free resources -- especially for SNAP outreach. See the SNAP outreach page for outreach toolkits, outreach materials, information about receiving reimbursement for outreach activities through your State, radio ads, public service announcements, and more.

- 2 Become a sponsoring organization for afterschool and summer sites.** One reason for low participation rates in the afterschool and summer meal program is the lack of accessible locations. Becoming a sponsoring organization that recruits and oversees the meal service in more sites would increase the access to the programs in your community. Contact your State agency to become a sponsor or a feeding site.
- 3 Use FNS' "52 Nutrition Messages" in your community and church bulletins.** The 52 nutrition messages include healthy eating tips and information about nutrition and anti-hunger programs in a format for organizations to cut and paste into newsletters and email listserv messages. Click [here](#) to review the 52 Nutrition Messages.
- 4 Encourage your networks and congregations to volunteer** to end hunger in your community. Volunteers can conduct SNAP prescreening and application assistance, provide activities and supervise children at SFSP sites, and spend time helping at local food banks. Find opportunities to volunteer and list your organization's volunteer opportunities at [Serve.gov](#).
- 5 Make sure your services are accessible.** If you already provide services that help to fight hunger, list your organization with the National Hunger Clearinghouse. The National Hunger Clearinghouse is funded by USDA and managed by World Hunger Year and collects and distributes information about community-based resources and government programs that address the immediate and long-term needs of struggling families and individuals. People can call the National Hunger Hotline (1-866-3-HUNGRY or 1-866-348-6479) to find help.

6 Increase accessibility of farmers' markets. Your organization could help make fresh fruits and vegetables more accessible to under-served communities by hosting a farmers' market and encouraging local farmers markets to accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. To find out about how to start a farmers' market, [click here](#). To find out more about accepting SNAP benefits at farmers' markets, [click here](#).



7 Partner with a local food bank and host a food pantry. To find food banks in your area, [click here](#).



What can **corporations, foundations, and individuals** do to End Childhood Hunger?

1 Provide funding for your State's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) outreach plan. States are reimbursed by the Federal Government for up to half of the costs of outreach. Because State budgets are tight, States often need partners to help with their share of the costs to conduct outreach at the local level. To learn more about the benefits of this arrangement, [click here](#).

2 Focus corporate giving on initiatives that support feeding the hungry and improving nutrition. Afterschool and summer food service program sites are able to attract more children to their meal services when they are able to provide fun and interesting activities for children while they are there. It can be difficult for sites and sponsors of the programs to afford the costs of these activities, so funders can help by paying for these program enhancements.

3 Use corporate assets to support the infrastructure used to alleviate hunger. Provide physical space for showcasing information on hunger programs, screening of possible food aid recipients, and/or application assistance by non-profit or government workers. Use refrigerated trucks to transport food from food banks to pantries and soup kitchens. Donate land to use for community gardens or school gardens.

4 Push out messaging and education to customers and employees. Push out messaging and education to customers and employees. Air public service announcements related to childhood hunger and nutrition on intercoms and on televisions in stores. Distribute Food and Nutrition Service program and nutrition education materials in retail stores and to employees. [Click here to order and download free outreach materials.](#)

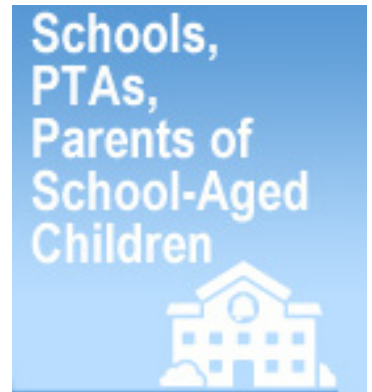
5 Find additional opportunities and ideas for how your organization can support anti-hunger efforts [here](#).



What can **schools, PTAs, and parents** do to End Childhood Hunger?

- 1 Make sure all children who are eligible participate in school meals-- both breakfast and lunch.** Help the school foodservice staff with applications and direct certification efforts. Only about one-third of students who eat a free or reduced-price school lunch also take advantage of a school breakfast. You can help with outreach and program planning by using the Expanding Your School Breakfast Program website as a guide.
- 2 Implement nutrition education lessons** into the curriculum in your classroom, physical education lessons, and cafeteria. Breakfast in the classroom is a perfect opportunity to incorporate healthy foods into lessons. As we work to end childhood hunger, we must simultaneously work to improve children's eating habits and knowledge about healthy eating.
- 3 Encourage your school to participate in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).** If 50 percent or more of the students in your district are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals, your school can continue to receive reimbursements for meals served during the summer months. For families whose children receive two meals a day during the school year, filling the summer meal gap at a safe and comfortable location puts parents' minds at ease and stretches their summer food budget. Find out more about the SFSP [here](#).
- 4 Join the HealthierUS School Challenge.** The HealthierUS School Challenge recognizes schools that are creating healthier school environments through their promotion of good nutrition and physical activity. Schools that meet special meal and physical activity criteria can win several categories of awards ranging from Bronze to Gold Award of Distinction. Find out more [here](#).
- 5 Promote and partner with other organizations that sponsor the SFSP or afterschool meals and snacks.** Schools can help ensure that their students do not go hungry over the summer by promoting the afterschool and summer meal sites in the community.

6 **Help children get nutrition benefits through other programs by sharing certification information with SFSP and Child and Adult Care Food Program sponsors.** Students at your school or their siblings may be automatically eligible for other child nutrition programs. Schools can ease the burden that other sponsors have in determining children's eligibility for their programs by sharing the income eligibility information they have for the families of their students that participate in the National School Lunch Program.



7 **Plant a school garden.** School gardens can be used as an educational tool to teach children about producing healthy food and making healthy food choices. When children understand where their food comes from, they are more interested in trying new fruits and vegetables. Help students plant a fruit, vegetable, or herb garden or develop partnerships with gardening groups. For more information about starting a school garden, [click here](#).



What can **volunteers and civic groups** do to End Childhood Hunger?

1 Volunteer and help recruit volunteers at your chosen anti-hunger organization. There are many programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) screening and application assistance centers, Summer Food Service Program sites, food banks, and other anti-hunger organizations, that can use your help to make sure that all eligible people have access to nutrition assistance and anti hunger programs. To find opportunities in your community, visit Serve.gov. To find volunteer opportunities with local food banks, click [here](#).

2 Conduct outreach for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), School Meals, Food Distribution on Indian Reservations, and The Emergency Food Assistance Program and cross-promote Federal nutrition assistance programs. Talk about nutrition assistance programs in your services and meetings. Many people are not aware of the multitude of programs available to individuals and families in need. Those who participate in one Federal nutrition program may not be aware that they are eligible for additional assistance. USDA provides many free resources -- especially for SNAP outreach. See the SNAP outreach page for outreach toolkits, outreach materials, information about receiving reimbursement for outreach activities through your State, radio ads, public service announcements, and more.

3 Think about ways to use your professional skills in a volunteer capacity. Think about what you do every day for work. Your skills may be of use to a nonprofit organization. If you are a painter, an anti-hunger organization may need help painting a children's play room. If you have Web site building skills, offer them up to an anti-hunger organization looking to expand its Web presence. The options are limitless, and the experience of donating your time and skills will be rewarding.

4 Become a sponsoring organization for afterschool and summer sites. One reason for low participation rates in the afterschool and summer meal program is the lack of accessible locations. Becoming a sponsoring organization that recruits and oversees the meal service in more sites would increase the access to the programs in your community. Contact your State agency to become a sponsor or a feeding site.

- 5 Increase accessibility of farmers' markets.** Your organization could help make fresh fruits and vegetables more accessible to under-served communities by hosting a farmers market and encouraging local farmers markets to accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. To find out about how to start a farmers market, [click here](#). To find out more about accepting SNAP benefits at farmers markets, [click here](#).



- 6 Partner with a local food bank and host a food pantry.** To find food banks in your area, [click here](#).



What can **youth** do to End Childhood Hunger?

1

Volunteer at your local anti-hunger organization. Some examples of places you may be able to volunteer are at food banks, food pantries, soup kitchens, or any other anti-hunger organization that helps people learn about hunger or helps people get food. Search for volunteer opportunities at Serve.gov.

2

Participate in school lunch and school breakfast. Many students who are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals -- especially school breakfast -- don't take advantage of them. Start eating a school breakfast and lunch and encourage your friends to do the same. It helps your parents stretch food dollars for dinner, and school meals keep you healthy and ready to learn.

3

If you are involved in a group like 4-H, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, a sports team, a church youth group, or other organized activity, you can join together to volunteer as a group. Talk to a local anti-hunger organization to see what your group can do to help. It may be telling others about hungry children, fundraising, a food drive, or some other creative project. Think of your own project, or search for one on Serve.gov. To find volunteer opportunities with local food banks, [click here](#).

4

Plant a school garden. School gardens can be a fun way to learn about how healthy food is produced and making healthy food choices. Talk to your teachers about planting a fruit, vegetable, or herb garden or working with gardening groups. For more information about starting a school garden, [click here](#).

5

Organize a food drive at your school. If you want to collect food to donate to local organizations, it is important that you work with your local food bank. To find a local food bank to find out more about organizing a food drive, [click here](#).



What can the **general public** do to End Childhood Hunger?

1 Volunteer and help recruit volunteers at your chosen anti-hunger organization. There are many programs, including Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) screening and application assistance centers, Summer Food Service Program sites, food banks, and other anti-hunger organizations, that can use your help to make sure that all eligible people have access to nutrition assistance and anti hunger programs. To find opportunities in your community, visit Serve.gov. To find volunteer opportunities with local food banks, [click here](#).

2 Donate money to anti-hunger causes. Every dollar helps keep anti-hunger organizations working to end childhood hunger in the United States.

3 Use your professional skills in a volunteer capacity. Think about what you do every day for work. Your skills may be of use to a nonprofit organization. If you are a teacher, consider volunteering to provide educational activities at a summer food site -- think fun science experiments and brain teasers. If you are a writer, consider volunteering to write content for a Web site, letters to the editor about your favorite anti-hunger organization, help with press releases, or tell the personal stories of others who have struggled with hunger. The options are limitless, and the experience of donating your time and skills will be rewarding.

4 Organize a food drive. If you want to collect food to donate to local organizations, it is important that you work with your local food bank. To find a local food bank to find out more about organizing a food drive, [click here](#).