

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.

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 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.

