

# 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.