



## Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week Toolkit

### Context:

No one should have to worry about whether they will have food on their plate or a roof over their head. But the reality is that hunger and homelessness are widespread problems that affect far too many people.

Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week is an annual program where people come together across the country to draw attention to the problems of hunger and homelessness.

Participating groups spend the week holding a series of educational, service, fundraising, and advocacy events.

### In the U.S.

Many people in the United States are living on the edge, forced to choose between basic necessities like purchasing food, paying rent, or going to the doctor. According to [No Kid Hungry](#) and the [2022 HUD Annual Homelessness Assessment Report \(AHAR\)](#), and [Feeding America](#)

- 1 in 8 children are at risk of hunger in the United States.
- 12.1 million families with children in the United States are food insecure.
- In 2022, on a single night approximately 582,500 people were identified as homeless.
- In 2022 more than 49 million people in the United States turned to food banks and community organizations to feed themselves:
  - 9 million children are at risk of hunger.
  - 1 in 4 senior citizens face hunger.
  - 34 million people are food insecure in the United States
  - 100 percent of counties in the United States are food insecure.

## **On Campus**

Poverty isn't exclusive to any one community. Even college campuses are not immune. Many assume that all college students are "traditional" students, who came straight from high school, take full course loads, live on campus, and don't have jobs on top of their studies. However, college student demographics have changed. Over 4.3 million students are parents, and many college students live lives that could not be more different from the "college student" stereotype.

According to the [U.S. Census](#), the increase in college enrollment from 2021-2022 to 75.2 million students, indicates 4.3 million college students are employed full time. The last decade shows student food insecurity becoming a topic of growing concern on campuses. Around the country, colleges and universities have opened food pantries to help ease student hunger. The [Colleges & Universities Food Bank Alliance](#) Swipe Out Hunger 2023 Impact Report shared that in 2022

- Over 2,059,000 meals were served from Swipe Out Hunger and campus pantries.
- 29,000 college students were referred to SNAP for food benefits.
- 256,000 students were served by campus pantries.

## **National Goals:**

This year our chapters will do the following:

- Educate 100,000 students through panel discussions, emails, and social media
- Engage 500 volunteers to do direct advocacy, host events, run fundraisers, and more
- Fundraise \$5,000 for local shelters and food pantries

## **National Week of Action:**

### **Day #1: Resource Monday**

- Example Events
  - Social Media block
    - Post graphics that spotlight of on-campus/campus adjacent food pantries, financial support offices and other resources on campus
    - Repost Basic Needs graphics and our blog
  - Host a Fundraiser for local organizations
    - Virtual Benefit Concert
      - Host a concert with local bands or artists and to donate the ticket sales to charity. Make sure to recruit bands that are popular on campus and already have a following, since this will make recruitment for the concert much easier.
    - Virtual Phone-a-thon
      - Host a phone-a-thon where students and campus community members can call family and friends and ask them to donate
    - Email Fundraising campaign

- Have students, faculty, administrators and the campus community email their family and friends asking them to donate to the fundraiser
- Virtual Remote Fun Run/Walk
  - Organize a virtual socially distant 5K fun run, walk, or bike ride. Set a registration fee or ask participants to collect a minimum amount in donations from sponsors. Have participants post on social media throughout the day to highlight their run!

### **Day #2: Testimonial Tuesday**

- Example Events
  - Host a photo petition event
    - Student write their testimonials of hunger/homelessness or some of the statistics nationally, or campus statistics and take a photo petition and post to social media
  - Get testimonials/ quotes from the community to post online
    - Students can reach out to admin/find local statistics
  - Get quotes and videos from the local shelters, campus administrators who spearhead offices that deal with student need on campus and post to social media.
  - YouTube video campaign of college students making low-cost meals

### **Day #3: Take Action Wednesday**

- Example Events
  - Work with the student government to pass legislation and resolutions in support of zero hunger on campus
  - Schedule meetings with college presidents/provosts to discuss zero hunger on campus
  - Host a LTE day of action for campus papers and local papers highlighting the local need
  - Host a Petition Event to sign in support

### **Day #4: Federal Advocacy Day**

- Example Events
  - Social Media Blitz: Have volunteers tag your representatives on social media asking them to support current hunger relief bills.
  - Phone Calls to Legislators Block: volunteers call their representatives and ask them to support the hunger relief bills and then call their friends/family to do the same.
  - Organize local lobby days where appropriate

### **Day #5: Education Day**

- Schedule a Webinar Panels

- On- campus resources: Invite student government, administrators, the financial aid office to explain what resources are available to students on campus and how students can apply for SNAP benefits
- Off campus need: Invite local pantries workers, local elected officials, and other community members to talk about the local problem and ways students can get involved
- Faces of homelessness panel: Host a panel discussion where current or formerly homeless individuals speak about their experiences and answer questions from the audience.

### **Resources:**

[Hunger and Homelessness Project Packet](#)

[Bring America Home Now Campaign \(BAHN\)](#)

[BAHN Student Involvement Invitation Letter](#)

### **Hunger and Homelessness Digital Organizing toolkit**

[Social Media Graphics](#)

[Calling legislators phone script](#)

[HH week website](#)

[Zero Hunger Model Resolution](#)

[Sample tweets day by day](#)

[Federal advocacy sample tweets](#)

[Petition to Congress](#)

[Sample Oregon Stream-a-thon Materials](#)

For Faces of Homelessness Panel contact the Speakers' Bureau at the National Coalition for the Homeless at [www.nationalhomeless.org](http://www.nationalhomeless.org) to complete a Request A Speaker form.