

# Flood the Food Banks: Mental Health Impacts

Changes to SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits have disproportionately impacted families already facing systemic barriers to food access. Discover ways to take action locally by supporting inclusive, community-centered hunger relief efforts.

## Why Participate?

As more young people share experiences of anxiety and depression, engaging in service and mutual aid can offer meaningful opportunities for connection and empowerment. Studies show that caring for others can support emotional well-being, increase confidence, and nurture a sense of belonging. Helping strengthen our communities can create shared purpose and positively support mental health.

Questions? Contact [info@gsnorcal.org](mailto:info@gsnorcal.org).

## How to Talk About Hunger

Help reduce stigma around food access by fostering respectful, compassionate conversations with your troop, family, or friends. Check out some of the resources below to learn how you can support thoughtful activities and conversation starters.

## Want to Learn More?



Mental Wellness Activities (GSUSA)



Feeding America's Toolkit - "Talk about Hunger"



How Volunteering Can Improve Mental Health

# Reflection Activity: How to Talk About Hunger

## Warm-Up Questions

Discuss the following questions as a group:

- What does it feel like to be hungry?
  - How did your body feel?
  - What emotions did you notice?
- How might hunger impact our moods or concentration?

Everyone feels hunger sometimes, and it can make us feel tired, anxious, or even grumpy! However, some families feel hungry more often than others.

## Activity

Give participants a piece of paper and a writing utensil. Ask them to respond to one or more of the following prompts (drawings, words, or both):

- Why do you think communities have food banks?
- What are some reasons someone might need extra help getting food?
  - Steer responses toward situations, not judgments (eg job changes, rent increases, emergencies, illness, etc.)
- How might someone feel if they don't always have the food they need?
- How can helping others (like volunteering or collecting food) make a positive difference?
- How do you feel when you help someone else?
  - Guide Girl Scouts toward connections between giving, belonging, and positive mental health.

Encourage creativity and reassure kids that there are no right or wrong answers. Invite anyone who wants to share part of their drawing or reflection.

## Closing

Acts of service, both big and small, help people feel valued and supported. Helping others can also make us feel proud, connected, and happier. When Girl Scouts support food banks, lead food drives, or learn about hunger, we are living our Promise and Law. Caring for others strengthens our communities and strengthens our own confidence and mental well-being. When Girl Scouts take action together, we can make a positive and lasting impact.