



**Holiday hunger: campaign pack**

# Introduction

End Hunger aims to create a country where no one goes to bed hungry at night. We bring people working on the front line to reduce hunger together with policy experts, think tanks, decision-makers and politicians.

End Hunger has a nine-point 'menu for change' listing the things that would help to tackle the systemic causes of hunger. One of these aims is to **ensure children have access to nutritious food 365 days a year.**

We believe children deserve the best start in life and that childhood hunger shouldn't be allowed to have a damaging impact on their health, attainment and opportunity. Lack of adequate nutrition impacts children's development and ability to take part in education. End Hunger campaigns for government to support increased uptake of Healthy Start vouchers for new mothers and calls for them to be uprated with inflation. We also campaign on the issue of **holiday hunger.**

## Holiday hunger

Holiday hunger pushes many families into food poverty and insecurity. While many children from low-income families are entitled to free school meals during term time, there is currently no such provision during holidays. Local voluntary sector organisations 'fill the gap' in some places but this is far from universal.

A recent report by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Hunger found that children were returning to school in a worse educational, health and developmental state than that in which they had left in the summer. That report found that as many as three million children face the risk of food insecurity this summer.

In Wales, the Assembly Government has taken action to ensure that all local authorities make provision for those at risk of food poverty as part of a national 'Food and Fun' programme. Similarly in London, the Mayor's Fund (a charitable organisation directed by the Mayor of London) has launched a 'Kitchen Social' project this year which helps children during the holidays who would be entitled to free school meals.

We believe that the Westminster government needs to follow where devolved governments have led. We believe the government should take responsibility for ensuring that children have access to nutritious food on the 170 days a year when they are not in school, particularly over long holiday periods.

**In the coming Parliament, Frank Field MP will be bringing forward a bill to tackle holiday hunger. We need as many MPs as possible to support this bill.**

## CONTENTS

This pack includes an introduction to holiday hunger, and template letters for you to send to your MP and local media

# Speak Out About Holiday Hunger

## For groups and projects

If we are to see long-lasting change on holiday hunger, it is imperative that people in power take the issue seriously. One of the aims of End Hunger is that policy-makers and opinion-formers hear the real voices of those who are impacted by hunger, or who work on the front line to tackle it.

**If you are running a project that tackles holiday hunger in your area, please invite your local MP to visit so that they know what the problem is. You could use the template letter on page 4 to make the invitation. (You can also download the template as a Word document at [www.endhungeruk.org/holidayhunger](http://www.endhungeruk.org/holidayhunger).)**

The organisers of End Hunger UK are also keen to hear first-hand accounts of holiday hunger and its effects. If you have a story to share, then please email [gavin@church-poverty.org.uk](mailto:gavin@church-poverty.org.uk) or phone 0161 872 9294. No personal details will be published or shared without your consent.

Finally, it would be great if you could respond to this online survey about holiday hunger, being carried out by Northumbria University on behalf of the APPG on Hunger: [https://nupsych.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_5ztsLA72ldcALbL](https://nupsych.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5ztsLA72ldcALbL)

### TIP:

The summer might be a good time to get your local MPs along so they can see the impact of holiday hunger first-hand

### TIP:

We recommend you write an individual letter to your MP rather than emailing a standard message

## For individuals

This autumn, Frank Field MP is bringing forward a backbench bill to tackle holiday hunger. If the bill is passed, the government will have to work with local authorities and charities to provide food and activities during the school holidays.

You can help by raising awareness of holiday hunger, so that MPs see why it's so important that something is done to target hunger in their constituencies.

**Please get in touch with your MP and local newspapers. Make sure people know that families are being hit by hunger simply because it is the summer holidays.**

You can write your own letters if you find it easy, or find ideas in our template letters on page 5 and page 6. (You can also download the templates as Word documents at [www.endhungeruk.org/holidayhunger](http://www.endhungeruk.org/holidayhunger).) You can find your MP's contact details at [www.writetothem.com](http://www.writetothem.com).

# Template Letter For Projects To Send to MPs

[ORGANISATION ADDRESS]

[MP ADDRESS]

Dear [MP NAME]

## **Re: Holiday hunger, invitation to visit a project in [CONSTITUENCY NAME]**

We are getting in touch to raise the issue of holiday hunger – that is, families who would be entitled to free school meals not receiving this food during school holidays.

In [NAME OF CHURCH, YOUTH CLUB OR TOWN] we have a project to help children in the school holidays. We would like to invite you to visit our project, so you can see first-hand the impact of holiday hunger on your constituents and the work we do to address the problem locally.

As an organisation, we support the aims of the End Hunger campaign. End Hunger UK is a coalition of charities and people who work on the front line tackling hunger, who seek to create a country in which no one has to go to bed hungry at night and where the government takes action on the structural causes of hunger.

End Hunger point out that holiday hunger affects children throughout the UK, and that government should step up to the plate and take action on it. A report released by UNICEF this year found that 1 in 10 children in the UK are in households suffering from

‘severe food insecurity’. This is the highest level in the EU. A recent report by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Hunger pointed out that as many as three million children in the UK who are entitled to free school meals have no such provision on the 170 days a year in which they are not in school. Whilst the devolved governments in Wales and London have launched initiatives to reach the most vulnerable children, there is no such provision in the rest of the UK.

We would be grateful if you would let us know if you are able to attend our project between [TIME] and [TIME] on any appropriate day of the week between [HOLIDAY DATES].

As well as replying to our invitation, we would also be grateful if you would let us know whether you can support us in any of these other ways:

- Could you ask local head teachers whether they have experienced students returning to school developmentally disadvantaged, as a result of not receiving adequate nutrition or support during the holidays?

- It is likely that in the coming parliamentary session, Frank Field MP (chair of the APPG on Hunger) will be bringing forward a presentation bill on holiday hunger. Would you commit to supporting his efforts to get this bill through the House of Commons?
- Will you write to Robert Halfon, chair of the education select committee, asking his committee to investigate holiday hunger?
- Will you write to [YOUR PARTY'S EDUCATION SPOKESPERSON] asking them to take a stand against holiday hunger?
- Will you table a parliamentary question asking how many families in [CONSTITUENCY] would be entitled to free school meals under the pre-universal free school meals system?

Many thanks. We look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely

[NAME]

[ORGANISATION]

# Template Letter For Individuals To Send to MPs

[YOUR ADDRESS]

[MP ADDRESS]

Dear [MP NAME]

Re: Holiday Hunger in [CONSTITUENCY]

I am writing to you to raise the issue of holiday hunger in the UK, and the campaign by End Hunger to tackle this problem.

End Hunger UK is a coalition of charities and people who work on the front line tackling hunger, who seek to create a country in which no one goes to bed hungry at night and where the government takes action on the structural causes of hunger.

End Hunger point out that holiday hunger affects children throughout the UK, and that government should step up to the plate and take action on it. A report released by UNICEF this year found that 1 in 10 children in the UK are in households suffering from 'severe food insecurity'. This is the highest level in the EU. A recent report by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Hunger pointed out that as many as three million children in the UK who are entitled to free school meals have no such provision on the 170 days a year in which they are not in school. Whilst the devolved governments in Wales and London have launched initiatives to reach the most

vulnerable children, there is no such provision in the rest of the UK.

I would be grateful if you would let me know what you have done to find out about the extent of holiday hunger in our area. I believe it would be useful if you got in touch with local head teachers to find out how many children in local schools have been impacted by holiday hunger.

I would also like to know which of the following steps you will take to tackle holiday hunger locally and nationally:

- It is likely that in the coming parliamentary session, Frank Field MP (chair of the APPG on Hunger) will be bringing forward a presentation bill on holiday hunger. Would you commit to supporting his efforts to get this bill through the House of Commons?
- Will you write to Robert Halfon, chair of the education select committee, asking his committee to investigate holiday hunger?

- Will you write to [YOUR PARTY'S EDUCATION SPOKESPERSON] asking them to take a stand against holiday hunger?
- Will you table a parliamentary question asking how many families in [CONSTITUENCY] would be entitled to free school meals under the pre-universal free school meals system?

Many thanks. I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely

[NAME]

# Template Letters To Send to Local Media

Dear editor

This week, thousands of children across [TOWN] and [REGION] are breaking up for the summer holidays.

They should be looking forward to a fun-filled few weeks. Instead a great many families are facing the anxiety and injustice of holiday hunger, trying to make ends meet.

Successive governments have long recognised that many children should receive free school meals, to help families to overcome poverty. However, children need that guaranteed daily nutrition all year round – not just on the 170 days they are at school.

There are some grassroots projects around the country doing fantastic work to help fill the void, but cover is sporadic and something more comprehensive and sustainable is required. If the Government is to improve the lives, welfare and opportunities of children here in [REGION] and all over the UK, then it must commit to providing a solution now. I hope fellow [NAME OF NEWSPAPER] readers will join me in writing to our local MPs to ask them to back the End Hunger UK campaign, so families can enjoy the school holidays rather than dreading them.

Yours sincerely

[NAME]

Dear editor

Allow me to alert readers to the End Hunger UK campaign, which is working to address the causes and effects of food insecurity across the country.

One of the priorities is to address what has become known as 'holiday hunger' – the crisis that many families encounter outside school term time, when their free school lunches suddenly stop.

Here in [TOWN/CITY/COUNTY] and elsewhere, campaigners are calling on the Government to fund or organise initiatives in every part of the country, so that this needless suffering is averted.

I encourage readers to join me in asking our local MPs to lobby the Government on this issue, or to take action themselves by visiting [endhungeruk.org](http://endhungeruk.org)

Yours sincerely

[NAME]



**Thank you for your support!**

**End Hunger UK is supported by many national organisations, including:**

Child Poverty Action Group | Church Action on Poverty | FareShare | First Steps Nutrition  
Food Ethics Council | Fabian Commission on Food and Poverty | The Food Foundation | Food Matters  
Magic Breakfast | Nourish Scotland | Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming | The Trussell Trust