

Let all who are Hungry Come and Eat:
A Seder Dedicated to Child Nutrition and Hunger Awareness



Do not neglect the children of the poor, for from them will go forth the Law.

-Nedarim 81a

Passover 2009

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SEDER OBJECTIVES:

- Educate the Jewish community and its partners about the prevalence of hunger and malnutrition in the US, its life-long impacts on children, and the solutions to address this growing problem;
- Enable the Jewish community to play a leading role in advocating for a strong Child Nutrition Reauthorization in 2009;
- Create a cadre of informed activists to supply a continuous stream of strong Jewish voices on the issue of domestic hunger. Equip participants with a firm grasp of the necessary vocabulary to be effective anti-hunger advocates;
- Mobilize towards President Obama's national goal of ending childhood hunger by 2015.
- **H**ave each participant leave the Seder with a plan of action for increasing their own involvement in anti-hunger advocacy and activism.

SEDER PARTICIPANT WILL UNDERSTAND:

- Details about Federal Government's Child Nutrition Programs, which currently serve millions of children across the nation.
- In order for these programs to work most effectively, we need to increase access and participation, and improve nutritional quality of meals offered in the programs. Specifically, we ask the government to allocate a minimum of \$20 billion to be put toward Child Nutrition Programs over 5 years.
- You (the individual) have the power to influence the government. Vote and advocate.
- This is a Jewish value. It is our responsibility to influence elected leaders to address hunger, specifically as it pertains to children. Only humans can heal our fractured world, only engaged citizens can end hunger.



The mission of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA) is to serve as the representative voice of the organized American Jewish community in addressing the principal mandate of the Jewish community relations field, expressed in three interrelated goals:

1. To safeguard the rights of Jews here and around the world;
2. To dedicate ourselves to the safety and security of the state of Israel;
3. To protect, preserve and promote a just American society, one that is democratic and pluralistic, one that furthers harmonious interreligious, inter ethnic, interracial and other intergroup relations.

These goals are informed by Jewish values. History teaches us that Jewish security is linked inexorably to the strength of democratic institutions. Thus the Jewish community has a direct stake and an ethical imperative to assure that America remains a country wedded to the Bill of Rights and committed to the rule of law, a nation whose institutions continue to function as a public trust.

The work of the JCPA, especially in matters relating to democratic pluralism and social justice, reflects the profound Jewish commitment to *tikkun olam*, the repair of the world. It expresses the conviction of the organized Jewish community that it must be active in the effort to build a just society. The JCPA has the responsibility to enhance the capacity of member agencies to effectively pursue the public affairs agenda. This responsibility requires the JCPA to provide coordination, support, and guidance for public affairs initiatives undertaken by national and local member agencies, to advocate on behalf of the public affairs policies of the organized Jewish community, and to respond to those member-identified needs which strengthen their individual and collaborative capacity to advance the communal public affairs agenda.

JCPA's anti-poverty campaign addresses Jewish engagement in anti-poverty service, activism and advocacy. In its first year and a half, the campaign has focused on the goal of putting poverty back at the top of the Jewish communal agenda, galvanizing communities and agencies to engage in combating poverty in America in a deep, sustained, and coordinated way.

In working towards these goals, JCPA and its participating member agencies have expanded and strengthened their network of interfaith and civic partnerships. Our national and local leadership on issues of poverty has positioned us to build on our initial objective of engaging Jewish communities, and set our sights on larger-scale, interfaith mobilizations around big-picture policy goals.



Founded in 1985, MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger, is the only national Jewish organization dedicated to ending hunger. MAZON allocates donations from the American Jewish community to nonprofits whose programs prevent and alleviate hunger among people of all faiths and backgrounds.

Each year, MAZON grants over \$4 million to hundreds of carefully screened hunger-relief agencies in America, Israel and developing countries. They include emergency food providers, food banks, multi-service organizations and advocacy groups that seek long-term solutions to the hunger problem.

MAZON (“food” in Hebrew) is committed to providing for those who are hungry today and to addressing the systemic causes of hunger and poverty, both domestically and globally. Although grants are provided to many organizations serving the Jewish poor, in keeping with the best of Jewish tradition MAZON believes it is important to respond to all who are in need.

Nearly 1500 synagogues throughout the United States partner with MAZON on fundraising and hunger awareness projects that inspire and motivate their members to embrace the traditional Jewish commitment to sustain the hungry.

MAZON also enjoys the support of individual donors who incorporate social justice and hunger relief as crucial components of their everyday lives. MAZON’s supporters make a personal commitment to help provide food for those who don’t know when or whether they will have their next meal. They donate a 3% of the cost of weddings, bar and bat mitzvahs and other joyous and life-cycle events; contribute to MAZON at the High Holy Days, Chanukah and Passover; and make contributions in honor or in memory of friends and loved ones.

MAZON envisions a time when the voices of the American Jewish community will have been raised so loudly on behalf of all those who are hungry, that people who were once helped by MAZON will have sufficient resources to sustain themselves. Until that time, MAZON will increase and expand the scope and impact of their grant-making every year, never satisfied until their vision of a world without hunger is fully realized.

Before the Seder:

Set up in a comfortable room, with space to move around. If you have a large number of participants, decide how you can best set up the room so that everyone can hear what is going on. You might want to have the group break in to smaller groups for certain sections of the Seder.

Supplies (use this table as a check list, cross the item off once it is accounted for):

Elijah's Cup	Matzah for all, ½ sheet per person	Full Seder Plate with appropriate symbols	Empty Seder Plate	Pitcher of water (for hand washing)
Towel (for hand washing)	Small basin/bowl (for hand washing)	Green vegetables/parsley	Bowls of salt water	Wine/grape juice
3 pieces of matzah (separated by <u>two</u> napkins, <u>and</u> covered by <u>third</u> napkin)	Pitchers of water (for drinking)	Cups, <u>plates and</u> napkins for all participants	Bitter herbs (horse radish)	Charoset (apple, nut and wine mixture)
Hard copies of the Hagaddah <u>and/or</u> <u>projection equipment for PowerPoint version</u>	Paper plates or paper and pens/markers (for letter writing)	Hard copies of 4 th Cup prompt sheet (See Hagaddah Addendum)	Hard copies of the Child Nutrition Statement of Principles (See Hagaddah Addendum)	Hard copies of the JCPA sample letter to Congress (See Hagaddah Addendum)

Optional supplies: additional food, stamps and envelopes (to send letters); 2 copies of op-ed or letter to the editor (if one was published before the Seder); 2 print info about local anti-hunger organizations; 2 hard copies of Interfaith Child Nutrition Letter; 2 print information about the JCRC and partner organizations; hardcopy handouts of specific readings for those using the PowerPoint projection version of Haggadah.

To Do:

- Hand out pre-assigned parts to participants or alternate readers. The idea is not to have one reader, but to use the role of the reader to engage multiple participants.
- Contact the appropriate media and elected officials and invite them to the Seder

Using this Hagaddah in your home: If you don't want to run a Seder that is entirely focused on the Child Nutrition Reauthorization, multiple pieces of this Hagaddah can be inserted in to your family's Seder.

We recommend using the following elements: the 10 Plagues, the Passover Reflection from MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger, the 4 Questions, and the Symbols on the Seder plate. Please make sure to let the JCPA know if you are hosting a Child Nutrition Seder in your home by writing to beisen@thejcpa.org

Optional Donations: Each individual community can plan to ask for a donation for Seder attendance or offer it for free. Another option is to ask all participants to bring a can of food as an entry fee, and then to donate that food to the local food bank at the end of the Seder.

Seder means 'Order'

(READER) The holiday of Passover tells the ancient story of the Jewish people's liberation from slavery in Egypt. This Passover, we will tell the modern-day story of liberating American children from the hardship of hunger. We will tell this story in a specific order, following the traditional Jewish format of a 'Seder'.

Candle Lighting

(READER) The Jewish community's tradition of *tzedakah* is rooted in helping people who live in poverty meet their basic needs. It is also our obligation as Jews to help people at risk of hunger confront their challenges and move toward self-sufficiency. The essence of the Passover story is the message that achieving freedom from hardship requires confronting and overcoming great challenges. — MAZON



(READER) Everyone must know that within them burns a candle
And no one's candle is identical with the candle of another.
It is our obligation to work hard to reveal the light of our candle,
And to make of it a real torch to enlighten the whole world.

— Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaCohen Kook

The Candle Lighting Blessings

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להדליק נר של יום טוב

Baruch ata Adonai elohenu, melech ha'olam, asher kideshanu be'mitzvotav ve'tzivanu lehadlik ner shel yom tov

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, ruler of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to kindle the Festival light.

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם שהחינו וקימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה

Baruch ata Adonai elohenu, melech ha'olam, she'hecheyanu ve'kiyemanu ve'higianu le'zman ha'zeh

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, ruler of the universe, who has granted us life, and sustained us, and enabled us to reach this season.

Kadesh – First cup of wine and Kiddush

(READER) The Talmud connects the four cups of wine at the Seder to God's Four Promises to Israel: "Tell the children of Israel: I am Adonai! I will **take** them out... I will **rescue** them... I will **redeem** them... and I will **take them as my people** and I will be their God (Exodus 6:6-7, JT Pesachim 10:1).

(READER) Today, we dedicate these four cups of wine to four steps of effective activism which we will pledge to take in our commitment to eradicate Hunger.

(ALL RECITE THE FOUR CUPS OF WINE)

1. Education and Awareness... 2. Making it Personal... 3. Advocacy... 4. Organizing...

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Fill your neighbor's cup with wine.



The First Cup: The Cup of Awareness

(READER) At this ceremony of awareness, we look into the eyes of our fellow human being and strive to help one another.

(ALL) Let our consciousness awaken to the fact that 1 in 8 Americans—including 12 million children—suffer from hunger. As a society, we have failed to meet this most basic need of all citizens. May this cup of wine open our eyes to the reality of domestic hunger. We commit ourselves to engage in education and full awareness, and to work for the day when hunger in our world will be eliminated.

The Blessing over the wine

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי הגפן

Baruch ata Adonai elohenu, melech ha'olam, borei pri hagafen

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Urchatz - Handwashing

Have a participant pour water over the hands of the leader.

(READER) Before they began their service in the Temple in Jerusalem, the priests were commanded to wash their hands and feet. At this Seder, the leader is washing his hands on behalf of all those who are present to remind ourselves that we too are a “kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Exodus 19:8) and our actions are in the service of God.



Karpas - Green Vegetable

(READER) Karpas is from the Greek word *Karpos*, which means ‘fruit of the soil’. When spring comes we note with pleasure the bounty of vegetables and fruits in the market. Yet in many parts of our country instead of the seasonal bounty, there exists a **grocery gap**, meaning a disparity in access to healthy food.

(READER) One important reason many poor families have poor diets, particularly in urban and rural areas, is because they lack access to places that sell decent quality, nutritious foods at affordable prices. Families in these communities are forced to make difficult choices about their food purchases because of this “grocery gap,” along with income and time constraints that result from poverty. In many low-income urban neighborhoods and rural communities, families who need to stretch limited food dollars find that it is cheaper to purchase unhealthy packaged foods than to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables. Even if the individual generates enough income to purchase food for his/her family without participation in SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – formerly known as the Food Stamp Program) or other food aid programs, families are often left to choose only from foods high in fat, calories and sugar that are available to them at convenience stores and fast food restaurants.



Increasing access to affordable, good quality, healthy food is one strategy to address the obesity epidemic and related conditions, like diabetes and heart disease, which disproportionately affect low-income people of color.¹

Distribute Green vegetable, dipped in salt water, then recite blessing over Karpas
(ALL)

The Blessing over the Karpas

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי האדמה

Baruch ata Adonai elohenu, melech ha'olam, borei pri ha'adama

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, ruler of the universe, creator of the fruits of the earth. May the blessings of Your bountiful harvests be enjoyed by all of humankind.

Yachatz - Breaking the Middle Matza

(READER) We break the middle matzah for two reasons: 1) In a full Seder with a meal, the bigger piece would be hidden as the *afikomen* (literally, dessert), and then eaten as the last taste of food at the Seder. 2) The smaller piece will be eaten with the top matzah when we say “the motzi” at the beginning of the ritual meal.

(READER –*holding up the broken piece*) This broken matzah reminds us of the brokenness in our world. We recall those who are poor, who put aside the “broken half” for later use in the face of uncertainty. We are shaken out of our complacency as we recall God’s words: “Remember that you were slaves in the land of Egypt.” Let us not be arrogant or insensitive to those not born of the wealth of our generation.

Ha Lachmah Anya: The Bread of Poverty

(This lengthy section is meant to be read by multiple persons. We suggest assigning each paragraph to a different reader.)

(READER) **Ha Lachmah Anya:** This is the bread of poverty/affliction which our ancestors ate in Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat. All who are needy, come celebrate Passover with us.

(READER) “Let all who are hungry come and eat” are words that have resonated at Passover *Seders* for generations. We symbolically summon people who suffer with hunger, with malnutrition or food insecurity to receive nourishment and to be comforted by the companionship of others at the table. The “symbolic guests” are welcomed with compassion, understanding and empathy for their struggle to achieve the freedom from hunger for which they yearn.

(READER) Even before the current economic crisis, many people needed to turn to community nutrition programs to survive. Due to the economic crisis, increased need is resulting in unparalleled demand on the resources of food assistance programs. As their resources diminish, more organizations are turning to MAZON for funding.

¹ <http://www.policylink.org/EDTK/HealthyFoodRetailing/>

(READER) Who is MAZON? Since 1985, MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger has been the Jewish community's trusted partner in fulfilling our tradition's obligation to end hunger. In addition to funding hundreds of hunger relief programs, through education and advocacy MAZON mobilizes the American Jewish community to take action to end hunger.

(READER) The concept of freedom is not only central to the Passover message, it is at the heart of MAZON's mission. In that spirit, we offer two new hunger awareness elements to incorporate into your Passover *Seders* for years to come: the MAZON Reflection and the Donation for the Symbolic Guest. We offer them in the hope that they will deepen the meaning of the Passover story for participants on both a personal and a communal level.

A MAZON Passover Reflection



ALL read together



One day, God, may it be Your will that we live in a world perfected, in which food comes to the hungry as from heaven, and water will flow to the thirsty as a stream.

But in the meantime, while the world is filled with hunger, empower us to stand on Your behalf and fulfill the words of Your prophet: "to all who are thirsty bring water," and "greet those who wander with food."

This Passover, bless us that we should sustain the hungry.

- Rabbi Scott Perlo

(READER) During his campaign for the presidency, Barack Obama made a promise to the American people to end childhood hunger by 2015. This is **achievable!** We have the tools, what we need is the will to use those tools properly so that no child goes hungry.

(PARTICIPANTS) Next year and in the years to come may we not experience hunger. Now we are slaves to hunger, by 2015 may we be free.

(READER, *point to the empty plate*) With this empty plate, we remember all those who are hungry. They are even less fortunate than the Israelites, who had lechem oni, the bread of poverty. Using the MAZON donation envelopes that we have provided, let us now "fill the plate" with pledges. Please consider donating the amount that would have been spent on food for one additional *Seder* guest—the "symbolic guest," or some other amount that is meaningful for you. MAZON has pledged to grant all of the money collected at this Seder to one or more organizations in your immediate community that do valuable anti-hunger work. If you can't make a donation today, consider making a donation online at www.mazon.org or contact Leslie Friedman at lfriedman@mazon.org for more details.

Note to leader: how you use this part is up to the people running the Seder. We recommend collecting monetary pledges from Seder participants for MAZON. However, you may want the filling of the plate to be more figurative—in this case give every participant a piece of paper and pen and ask them to write a personal pledge (financial or otherwise) of what they will do in the coming months to fill the empty plates of those who live in poverty.

Maggid: We Tell the Story of Those Who Go Hungry

Four Questions

(READER) The Four Questions set the tone for the rest of the Seder. Asking and answering questions means that all who are present will be active participants.

(ALL) When we ask questions and learn from the answers, we create both meaning and memory.

(ALL) Ma-Nishtanah? Why is it different? During a regular Seder we start all of our questions with this phrase. What different questions should we ask today?

*OPTION 1: Break **into** smaller groups to read and answer questions. Have a leader for each group ask group members to share/discuss their own answer to the question before reading the answer provided out loud.*

OPTION 2: Stay in the larger group. Have all participants ask the question, and one person read the answers.

(READER) As free people, we are able to notice the world around us, and ask questions, searching for distinctions and meaning. The person who is enslaved has no reason to ask questions, as they possess no power to make changes, and understanding is meaningless.

1. **Q: What does it mean to be hungry in America and what is the main cause of hunger?**
 - a. Malnutrition, lack of access to food, not knowing where your next meal is coming from. All of these things are what it means to be hungry in America. Hunger in America is a political condition. It is not a lack of food, but a lack of action and will that perpetuates hunger in our country.
2. **Q: How does the United States currently address issues of hunger?**
 - a. The Federal government has developed a number of effective programs that work together to create a net that should prevent any child from experiencing hunger. These programs include the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), Community Food and Nutrition Program (CFNP).
3. **Q: What will it take to end childhood hunger in America?**
 - a. To begin with, Congress must provide a substantial investment of new funding for child nutrition programs in the FY 2010 budget. The President has proposed \$1 billion a year in new funding. However, many anti-hunger experts agree that we will need \$4 billion a year in new funds to take significant strides towards ending childhood hunger by 2015. A \$20 billion investment of new funds over five years would enable authorizing committees to make critical improvements in these programs.
4. **Q: What can I do to end childhood hunger in America?**
 - a. You have already taken the first step by participating in this Seder. Remember the four steps of effective anti-hunger activism: educate yourself, make the issue personal and volunteer with local anti-hunger organizations, advocate on behalf of the hungry to your legislators, and organize your friends and community to take action with you.

Avadim Hayinu: We Were Slaves

(READER) *Avadim Hayinu l'Pharoah b'Mitzrayim*

This Seder is different from all other Seders. Once we were slaves to Pharoah in Egypt, but the Holy One redeemed us with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. If God had not brought our ancestors out of Egypt, then we, and our children, and our children's children would still be slaves. Even though we know the story well and have told it many times, the more we tell it in great detail, the more we are to be praised. Today we tell the story of the Child Nutrition Reauthorization in the hopes that the importance of these programs will be committed to memory and repeated for generations to come.

The Story of the Child Nutrition Reauthorization Bill

(READER) The Child Nutrition Bill is a piece of legislation that encompasses many of the federal programs that this country offers to feed hungry children. All but one of the Child Nutrition Programs is what is known as an *entitlement program*. That means that any person who is eligible for the program can automatically receive the benefits of the program. However, just because a child is eligible for a program, does not mean that she/he can access it or that her/his family knows that they are eligible to participate. That is why we need to improve the Child Nutrition Programs in this year's Reauthorization.

(ALL) What is a Reauthorization?

(READER) Approximately every five years, Congress examines ongoing programs in what is known as a "*Reauthorization*." A Reauthorization is Congress's opportunity to review these programs based on new knowledge and current circumstances so that laws stay up to date.

(ALL) What will Congress be looking at in the Child Nutrition Reauthorization?

(READER) In the case of Childhood Nutrition Programs, Congress will be looking at: who is eligible to receive which benefits, the nutritional quality of the food provided, and other measures we can take to improve access to and participation in these programs.

(ALL) Avadim Hayinu: Just as we were slaves to Pharaoh, there are children and families who are now enslaved to the taskmaster of hunger. Just as we were freed from slavery, so too can those who experience hunger be freed. Let us pray that by 2015 this form of slavery is eradicated in America.

Four Children, Four Faces of Childhood Hunger

(READER) We teach our children about Passover. The four children of the Hagaddah suggest four different ways children might react to the events of the Seder. Today we read about four children, each of whom has had a different experience with hunger and with a government nutrition program.

Each of the children is a role to be played by a child/teen participant in the Seder. Assign the role of narrator to another participant.

1. The child who receives free school lunch

- a. *Child*: I am enrolled in the *School Lunch Program*. Last year I wasn't enrolled because my parents didn't know that we qualified for the program. Sometimes I only had a bag of chips to eat for lunch and my stomach grumbled all afternoon. I got headaches in my afternoon classes and sometimes got in trouble with the teacher for falling asleep or arguing with other

kids during class. Then when we qualified for *Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)* they told us that I and my brother also qualified to free school lunches. Now I get a hot lunch every day from the cafeteria at my school. Now I don't fall asleep in math class anymore and I'm not angry at the other kids.

b. Narrator: The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) makes it possible for all school children in the United States to receive a nutritious lunch each and every school day for free, for reduced prices or for a low cost. All schools may participate and all children attending those schools may participate in the program. Properly nourished children more actively participate in the education experience, which benefits them, their fellow students, and the entire school community.

2. The child who receives free school breakfast

a. Child: I am in 10th grade at Edward Winslow High School. I do OK in school, my favorite subject is biology and I like pottery class. I am enrolled in the School Breakfast and School Lunch Program. I go to school early so I can get breakfast. The food tastes fine, but sometimes I don't go if I know that there is going to be a meeting of one of the clubs before school because I don't want them to know that I am the poor kid who needs to get a free breakfast. Then I'm hungry till lunch time.

*b. Narrator: Many children do not have the opportunity to eat a nutritious breakfast in the morning due to tight household budgets and parent work schedules. On a typical day during the 2006-07 school year, 9.9 million children participated in the School Breakfast Program. Less than half of the children who received free-or reduced price school lunch also received free or reduced price school breakfast. Availability and stigma are the largest reasons why less children participate in the School Breakfast Program than do in the School Lunch Program. **Many eligible students are not enrolled in or do not participate in the School Breakfast program because of the stigma associated with being poor and eating breakfast at school—**unlike the School Lunch Program in which there are many paying participants, 81% of children participating in the School Breakfast Program receive free or reduced price meals. Research shows that universal school breakfast programs (schools that offer breakfast at no charge to all students, regardless of income) dramatically increase student participation.*

3. The child who should be able to participate in a summer feeding program

a. Child: I get free lunch and breakfast at school. I like Tuna Melt Day the best, but the other food is OK too. Most of the other kids in my class are happy on the last day of school in June because they like the summer. But because I don't go to school in the summer, sometimes I don't get to eat lunch. Sometimes I do get to eat lunch, but it's just bread and margarine. And I get bored too, because there is nothing to do in the apartment, but my mom says that I can't leave when she is at work because it's dangerous.

b. Narrator: The Child & Adult Care Food Program and the Summer Feeding Program offer meals and snacks, combined with enriching recreational and educational out-of-school time activities, to preschoolers and to school-aged children after school and in the summer. The CACF Program provides essential nutrition and monitoring of care for young children in child care centers and family child care homes. However, current area eligibility guidelines for family child care homes and afterschool and summer programs are inconsistent with other federal

programs and leave many low-income families without access to the nutrition supports, especially in rural areas. If eligibility guidelines and the reimbursement structure were broadened to serve more children, this child would not go hungry when school is not in session. Reauthorization should also include strategies and resources to provide more nutrition assistance for children vulnerable to hunger on weekends and when schools are not in session.

4. The mother and her child who participate in WIC

*a. Mother: Last year when I found out was pregnant I was shocked. We were barely making ends meet and I was not sure how I and my husband would be able to support a child. Luckily, my doctor told me about the *Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program* and I enrolled immediately. They provided me with prenatal vitamins, breast feeding and nutrition counseling and training sessions, access to healthcare and coupons that I use to get nutritious foods and fresh fruits and vegetables from the local farmers market. Now that I've had my beautiful baby, I still receive those coupons and get the foods I need to ensure that we both eat well.*

b. Narrator: WIC is a preventive program providing low-income pregnant women, new mothers, infants and children with nutritious foods, nutrition education, and improved access to health care in order to prevent nutrition-related health problems in pregnancy, infancy and early childhood. Today, WIC serves over 8.5 million women, infants and children. 1 in every 2 babies born in the United States benefits from the WIC program. The results of studies conducted by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service and other non-government entities prove that WIC is one of the nation's most successful and cost-effective nutrition intervention programs. Because WIC is not an entitlement program (in an entitlement program, any person who qualifies for the program can receive the benefits) it is highly important that enough funding be allocated for the program during the appropriations process every single year, or some people will be left out!

Ten Plagues

(READER) The Torah teaches of ten plagues that were unleashed against the Egyptians. As we read them aloud, we dip a finger into the wine and shake a drop of wine on to a plate for each plague mentioned. This custom is to remind us that our cup of happiness cannot be full to overflowing if our freedom means the suffering of others, even our enemies. When the angels rejoiced in the drowning of the Egyptians, God rebuked them, saying, "Are these not my people also, and the work of my hands?" We grieve for the suffering of the Egyptians and the suffering of all those children of God throughout the ages.

(ALL) We dip our finger into the wine for the plague of hunger, which is centuries old but exists in our time and has become our responsibility. Each drop of wine represents how our humanity is diminished by the presence of hunger.

Dip your finger in your glass and place a drop of wine on the plate for each plague.

1. The single mother who gives the last bits of food in the house to her child, while she goes hungry
2. The senior citizen (someone like my grandpa) who must choose between paying for medicine and paying for his lunch
3. The neighbor who never invites you over, because she cannot offer you food
4. The college student who must choose between books and groceries
5. The friend who feels alienated because he cannot join in on social events at restaurants
6. The woman who brings plastic bags to the Shabbat oneg to take home food for the rest of the week
7. The father who does not apply for food stamps for his family because he cannot understand the application system
8. The tons of edible food that remains in warehouses or is thrown away every day
9. The young couple in whose urban neighborhood there is no full –service grocery store, only fast food and convenience stores
10. Apathy – the biggest plague of all is the failure to make ending hunger a national priority. If we have the will to solve the problems of hunger in America, then we can solve it.

(READER) For all those who live with hunger, every day is Egypt. By telling the story of hunger, we bring awareness to the plight of our fellow citizens, as we seek to find and implement solutions.

Participants fill wine cups for one another

LIFT THE SECOND CUP OF WINE (DO NOT DRINK) AND SAY:

(ALL) From all of these plagues in our world, we seek repair and redemption.

Dayenu

(READER) Dayenu is about thanking God for all the miracles that God has performed. God has shown our people so many acts of kindness. For each one, we say ‘dayenu’, which means ‘that alone would have been enough, for that alone we are grateful’.

Have one person read/sing each line, and then ALL participants should say ‘Dayenu.’

We are grateful for living in a democracy in which we are able to influence our government’s priorities

Dayenu

We are grateful for this opportunity to direct national attention to the issue of hunger

Dayenu

We are grateful to those who use their hands to stock a food bank, use their feet to march to Capitol Hill and who use their voices to demand justice

Dayenu

We are grateful that we have made the time to be present for this Seder to educate ourselves and be inspired to act

Dayenu

The Symbols of Passover

(READER) Rabbi Gamliel taught that when we tell the story of the Exodus, we must also explain the meaning of the three most important symbols.

Pesach

(READER, pointing to the shank bone on the Seder plate) Pesach The Passover Sacrifice, a roasted shank bone (*zeroah*) is a reminder that during the tenth plague, God “passed over” the homes of the Israelites, sparing their firstborn. When we were slaves in Egypt G-d told us to put lambs blood on our door to escape the slaying of the first born. Today, there is no lamb’s blood that can insulate members of any tribe, race, ethnicity or religion from hunger. Hunger is not a one time event, it is a continuous state of being that requires more than a single action to address its causes.

(ALL, pointing to the empty Seder plate) God led the Israelites out of Egypt with a *Zeroah Nituyah*, with a strong arm. In order for us to help feed the hungry, may we contribute our strong arms of support, on whom others can lean.

Matzah

(Leader holds up a piece of Matzah, ALL point to the full Seder plate)

(READER) Matzah We eat this matzah to remind us of how our ancestors had to leave Egypt in haste, so the dough for their bread did not have time to rise.

(ALL, pointing to the empty Seder plate) This Matzah is a symbol not of being ‘ready,’ but of having to do something anyway. The Israelites were not yet ready for their redemption, yet they followed Moses and God to the promised land. Ending hunger is an urgent priority. Those who suffer cannot wait.



Maror

(Leader lifts up the bitter herbs, ALL point to the full Seder plate)

(READER) The children of Israel called Pharaoh ‘maror’ because he embittered their lives. In eating these bitter herbs, we partake of the bitterness of servitude.

(ALL, pointing to the empty Seder plate) It is our duty as Jews, as descendents of slaves to do all we can to lighten the load of those less fortunate and have sympathy for all living creatures enslaved by virtue of their environment. May this maror awaken us to the bitterness of hunger suffered by others.

B’chol Dor Va Dor: In Every Generation...

(ALL) Rabbi Nachman of Bratzlav taught: The Exodus from Egypt occurs in every human being, in every era, in every year and on every day. On this day, we act as if we ourselves went out from Egypt, as if we ourselves are experiencing hunger.

The Second Cup: Make It Personal (Get involved!)

(READER) When you are asked in the world to come, “What was your work?” and you answer, “I fed the hungry,” you will be told, “This is the gate of the Lord, enter into it, you who have fed the hungry.”

(READER) This cup is about making hunger personal. We can make hunger personal by sharing our own stories and listening to the stories of our friends and neighbors about their experience with hunger. As individuals we can get involved with local organizations that help those who are hungry. This includes getting involved with your local Jewish Community Relations Council, who helped to host this Seder.

OPTIONAL: Have volunteer information about local anti-hunger organizations available for people to consider, sign up for, or take with them. Include information about JCRC, sponsoring organizations and MAZON. CRC Director or lay leader can speak for a minute about the work of the CRC and how individuals can get involved.

The Blessing over the wine

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי הגפן

Baruch ata Adonai elohenu, melech ha'olam, borei pri hagafen

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine. With this cup, we taste the fruits of our labor.

Motzi Matzah

ALL recite the blessings over matzah and eat

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם המוציא לחם מן הארץ

Baruch ata Adonai elohenu, melech ha'olam, ha'motzi lechem min ha'aretz

We praise You, Adonai our God, who brings forth bread from the earth.

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו על אכילת מצה

Baruch ata Adonai elohenu, melech ha'olam, asher kideshanu be'mitzvotav ve'tzivanu al achilat matzah

We praise you, Adonai our God, who has sanctified us by commanding us to eat matzah. With this matzah, we experience the bread of poverty, the hunger in our midst.

Maror

ALL recite the blessing over maror and eat

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו על אכילת מרור

Baruch ata Adonai elohenu, melech ha'olam, asher kideshanu be'mitzvotav ve'tzivanu al achilat maror

We praise you, Adonai our God, who has sanctified us by commanding us to eat bitter herbs.

May the maror be sweetened by the haroset the way that our actions today may sweeten the lives of those who are hungry. (Eat the maror and haroset together.)

Korech: Hillel Sandwich

A small portion of maror and haroset is placed between two pieces of matzah

(READER) We combine the matzah, maror and haroset into a sandwich. As we eat, we are reminded that life combines suffering (maror) and relief (matzah/haroset), enslavement and freedom, hunger and satiety.

(ALL) May all those who suffer from hunger in our country experience a sweet relief in the near future.

Eat Hillel Sandwich

If you are serving a meal, this is when you should break for the meal

Barech: Invitation to Gratitude

(READER) After we've eaten, we bless God for the good land that God has given us. We bless You, Adonai, for the land, for food. God has provided enough food for all the people in this country to eat. It is our responsibility to make sure that this food is distributed such that every person gets the nutrition he/she needs to thrive.

To eat and drink is as miraculous as crossing the Red Sea. We don't always see this because we live in a land of plenty. The route that bread travels from the earth to our mouth is perilous. It is to cross the Red Sea.

ברוך אתה יי הון את הכל

Baruch ata Adonai, hazan et hakol

We bless You, God, who provides food for all.

The Third Cup: The Cup of Advocacy

(READER) The stories we have learned must be told to our leaders and legislators. [Through the Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA), MAZON, and our local organizations,] we pledge to make our voices heard on behalf of those who suffer.

Fill your neighbor's cup with wine.

The Blessing over the wine

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי הגפן

Baruch ata Adonai elohenu, melech ha'olam, borei pri haqafen

We praise You, Adonai our God, who creates the fruit of the vine. As we drink this second cup, we understand our responsibility for the ultimate redemption of humanity. When hunger is eradicated, the world will be one step closer to wholeness.

Pass out Sample Letter on Child Nutrition, paper plates and marker.

(READER) The letter that we have just passed out was created by the JCPA to give you the tools to effectively communicate with your member of Congress. Please take a few minutes to read it over.

Give participants a few minutes to read over letter.

(READER) We are going to send a copy of this letter to our legislators, urging them to support a strong Child Nutrition Reauthorization. We would like you to write your own stories and special requests, and to echo the requests of this letter, on the paper plates provided. We will send these paper plates to our Members of Congress along with the letter, so that they can see with their own eyes how much our community cares about ending childhood hunger.



OPTION 1: Have participants write messages, quotes, stories and special requests (esp. the \$20b request) on the plates. Collect plates. If your Member of Congress is present, give the plates to him/her. If not, save them so that they can be sent after the Seder.

OPTION 2: Instead of paper places, hosts can choose to have a large poster board or some other symbolic item that all participants sign.

The Cup of Elijah

Pass around Elijah's cup and have all participants fill the cup with some wine from their own cups

(READER) Together we fill Elijah's cup and prepare to welcome him. Everyone has a role in the redemption of the world. Divine action will occur when there is a corresponding human action.

All rise and face the open door

(READER) When the rabbis could not resolve a dispute with one another over a matter of law, they would proclaim: "Elijah will solve all of the difficult questions and problems." Today we open the door of the future. We first invite those who have experienced hunger first hand to join with us to generate solutions. We then invite Elijah, the prophet of hope.

(ALL) We pray that in the coming year, may we come closer to solving the problem of hunger.

All sing the following words together

Eliyahu ha-navi

Eliyahu ha-Tish-bi

Eliyahu, Eliyahu, Eliyahu ha-Giladi

Bim-hei-ra yavo eleinu

Im mashiach ben David

Eliyahu, Eliyahu, Eliyahu ha-Giladi

Elijah the Prophet, the Tishbite, from Gilead, May you come speedily, in our time, bringing the Messiah, descended from David.

Everyone may be seated

The 4th Cup: Organize

(READER) Traditionally, there are three ways in which a person can go about performing a good deed. One can say, "I will do it soon." This is a poor way. One can say, "I am ready to do it now." This is better. But the one who says, "I am doing it now," that person is praiseworthy. We would like to add a fourth way that we believe is even more praiseworthy, "I am working with my neighbor to do it now."

Fill your neighbor's cup with wine.

(READER) Organizing is based on the notion that ordinary people can and should join together to gain more control over their life conditions. We use this fourth cup to encourage participants to speak about how you can extend this experience (of the Seder) to community action in the future. How can we involve ourselves, our parents and our children in the fight to end childhood hunger?

In small groups around the tables, share commitments to get involved and make plans for future action. Speak of them in the first person as if you are already doing them. Each participant can fill out a provided 'prompt sheet'- prepared sheet with sentence triggers: I am working, I am volunteering, etc). Make sure to discuss concrete steps that members will take to remain involved in the issue. Collect everyone's e-mail address and assign a participant the role of sending out the notes/action steps to the participants so that the conversation can be continued. Or, have each participant put their name and address on an envelope, put their prompt sheet inside, and collect all of the envelopes. Mail them out one month later to remind participants of their plans to take action.

The Blessing over the wine

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי הגפן

Baruch ata Adonai elohenu, melech ha'olam, borei pri haqafen

We praise You, Adonai our God, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Nirtzah: Conclusion

(ALL) Our Seder is now ended. We have performed its rites and rituals. We have learned about the Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act, and we are prepared to be informed advocates and activists in our community.

(READER) The Keter Shem Tov, Chief Rabbi of London in the 20th Century, said the following: The greatest lesson learned from eating matzah – the bread of poverty – on Passover, and from sitting in a sukkah on Sukkot, is that the wealthy will come to understand the mindset of and reality of the poor and will be moved to show them compassion and generosity and to give them aid. As the popular saying says, "Those who are full do not feel the hunger of the poor." But when the privileged themselves eat



the bread of poverty that they are not used to, and when they spend hours in the sukkah on uncomfortable furniture without the benefit of a full roof, their generosity and compassion are aroused. And they truly feel, and believe, the sufferings of the poor.

(ALL) L'shana Haba'ah b Y'rushalyim. Let us end this Seder with faith and hope that next year, we will be in a Jerusalem, a world closer to wholeness. May we be blessed to inhabit a world in which every human being is nourished to fulfillment.

Addendum: Useful Websites

1. **The Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA) Homepage:**

<http://www.jewishpublicaffairs.org/>

2. **MAZON: The Jewish Response to Hunger Homepage:**

<http://www.mazon.org/>

3. **A Blueprint to End Hunger, 2008:**

<http://www.alliancetoendhunger.org/resources/blueprint/documents/BlueprinttoEndHunger.pdf>

4. **Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) Homepage:**

<http://www.frac.org/>

5. **USDA Food and Nutrition Service School Meals Page:**

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/CND/>

6. **Share Our Strength Child Nutrition Page:**

http://www.strength.org/childhood_hunger/

7. **USDA, Food and Nutrition Service:**

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/>

8. **Community Food Security Coalition:**

<http://www.foodsecurity.org/>

9. **Coalition on Human Needs Child Nutrition Page:**

<http://www.chn.org/issues/childnutrition/>

10. **Feeding America (formerly America's 2nd Harvest):**

<http://www.hungeractioncenter.org/issues.aspx>

11. **Center on Budget and Policy Priorities Food Assistance Page:**

<http://www.cbpp.org/pubs/fa.htm>

Addendum: Index of CNRA Programs

http://frac.org/pdf/frac101_child_wic_actprimer.pdf

The **National School Lunch Program** guarantees that millions of low-income children receive a healthy lunch during their school day. All children can participate in the program, but low income children qualify for free or reduced price meals. Children who qualify for free or reduced price lunch also qualify for the School Breakfast Program.

The **School Breakfast Program** ensures that children across the country can get a healthy breakfast at school. As with the case of school lunches, children are eligible for free, reduced price or paid breakfasts based on their families' incomes.

The **Child and Adult Care Food Program** reimburses child care centers, Head Start Programs, family child care homes, homeless shelters and afterschool programs for snacks and meals served to children. Generally, children under the age of 12, as well as certain disabled adults can participate, but homeless shelters and afterschool programs can serve children 18 and under.

The **Summer Food Service Program** ensures that children (18 and under) who depend on school lunch and breakfast during the school year still have access to free, nutritious meals and snacks during the summer when school is out. It provides reimbursements to schools, local government agencies and private nonprofit organizations that serve free meals and snacks to children at sites located in low-income areas or that serve primarily low-income children.

The **Afterschool Snack and Meal Program** bridges the hunger gap between lunch and dinner for children who participate in afterschool programs. It provides federal funds to private nonprofit and public organizations (including schools) so they can serve nutritious snacks and, in eight states, meals as part of afterschool programs.

The **Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)** provides nutritious foods, nutrition education, and access to health care to low-income pregnant women, new mothers, infants and children up to age 5. The monthly WIC food package is a combination of foods that improve nutrition for pregnant women, new mothers, and children.

The **WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program** issues coupons to WIC recipients that can be used to purchase fresh, locally-grown fruits and vegetables at participating local farmers' markets.

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program provides fresh fruit and vegetable snacks to children during the school day. Only elementary schools in which at least 50 percent of the students are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals can apply to participate in the program.

The **Special Milk Program** supports serving milk to children in schools and child care institutions that do not participate in other nutrition programs.

Addendum: Prompt Sheet for 4TH Cup

After this Seder, I will _____

I am working to _____

I am calling _____

Next week I will _____

Next month I will _____

I will ask _____, _____, and _____ to _____

_____ with me.

Other: _____

Addendum: JCPA Sample Letter to Congress
To be written and distributed by March 19th ...

Addendum: Child Nutrition Faith Statement of Principles

“When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap all the way to the edges ... you shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger.” (Leviticus 23:22)

Our shared scriptures teach us that we have a moral responsibility to feed the hungry; science tells us that access to adequate and nutritious food is necessary for all people to reach their God-given potential. Yet millions in the United States live on the brink of hunger. One in six children lives in a household that struggles to put food on the table.

The number of hungry children is likely to increase as a result of the recession. Important provisions included in the economic recovery package will provide critical, immediate relief to families struggling against hunger. However, those provisions are temporary and are intended to address the rise in need resulting from higher unemployment and the weak economy. Long-term progress against hunger requires a long-term investment in nutrition programs.

While hunger is a problem that affects people of all ages, it is particularly devastating for the more than 12 million children in its grasp. Childhood hunger and malnutrition impair proper physical development, generate behavioral issues like aggression and absenteeism, and cause emotional problems like anxiety and depression. Often overlooked are the effects of hunger on cognitive development, including decreased attention and lower test scores. The consequences of child hunger are broad and long-lasting and ultimately limit educational achievement and workforce productivity. Thus, there is both a moral and an economic imperative to address this problem.

We have the tools to end child hunger in America. Our failure to do so up to this point stems only from a lack of political will. Fortunately, President Obama has made two interlocking promises: to eliminate child hunger by 2015 and to halve poverty in 10 years. Child nutrition programs are the fastest, most direct way to reduce child hunger, and a strong Child Nutrition Reauthorization in 2009 is the critical first step toward achieving the 2015 goal.

Child nutrition programs safeguard the well-being of America’s children by reducing hunger and increasing access to high-quality, nutritious foods. Programs like the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), school breakfast and lunch programs, and preschool, summer and afterschool meal programs are vital in providing children the food they need for healthy development.

Unfortunately, these programs do not reach all children in need of food and quality nutrition. Many eligible children do not have access to programs or face other barriers to participation, whether because of unnecessarily burdensome administrative rules, confusing eligibility provisions that lack coordination with other agencies, or inadequate implementation in many states.

Child nutrition programs are only effective when they reach the children who need help. That is why our top priority for reauthorization is to improve access to and increase participation in these vital programs. A significant investment of new resources in these proven programs would help remove barriers to access and participation so all children in need can be served.

As communities of faith, we have a long history of working to fight hunger. We feed the hungry in our neighborhoods through food pantries, soup kitchens, and community outreach programs. While we will continue to do our part to feed our neighbors, we cannot match the role of government in assisting and supporting hungry people and addressing the root causes of hunger.

The undersigned members of the faith community therefore lay out the following priorities for a strong Child Nutrition Reauthorization in 2009:

Invest in Children: Congress must provide a substantial investment of new funding for child nutrition programs in the FY 2010 budget. A \$20 billion investment of new funds (or an additional \$4 billion per year) would enable authorizing committees to make critical improvements in these programs. Additionally, Congress must continue to fully fund WIC during the annual appropriations process to allow the program to serve all eligible women, infants, and children.

Improve Access: Many families are unable to access benefits for which their children are eligible because not all programs operate in every community. We must improve access by increasing the number of breakfast, summer, and afterschool meal programs in operation and exploring alternative models to link children with the food they need when they are out of school:

- Provide outreach, technical assistance, and start-up funding to increase the number of breakfast, afterschool, and summer program sites.
- Fund a pilot to explore alternative summer food models to reach children in school districts with limited or no access to summer food sites, such as providing eligible students with a summer EBT card or increasing children's SNAP benefits in the summer.
- Expand the supper pilot in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) nationwide.
- Provide transportation assistance to help children access out-of-school meal programs.
- Make it more appealing for sponsors to start or operate a program by simplifying administration and increasing reimbursement rates.

Increase Participation. Not all children who qualify for assistance enroll in the programs, often because of burdensome application procedures, social stigma, or other barriers to participation. We must simplify the eligibility determination and application process to make it easier for families to enroll children in these programs:

- Expand direct certification to include Medicaid and encourage states to maximize the use of direct certification to more seamlessly enroll children from families receiving SNAP, TANF, or Medicaid.
- Reward states for increasing participation and program sites and reducing child hunger rates.
- Expand universal breakfast and eliminate the reduced-price category, particularly in high poverty areas.
- Streamline the eligibility and application process, such as using alternative data collection systems for determining eligibility in low-income areas and promoting the use of electronic applications.
- Increase the certification period for children in the WIC program to one year.
- Improve outreach so eligible families are aware of what programs and benefits are available to them.

Improve Benefit Adequacy. Our first priority is ensuring that children have enough to eat, but more expensive nutritious foods like whole grains and fresh produce are essential to give children a healthy start. We must provide children not just with enough food, but the right food:

- Base nutrition standards for WIC food packages and school meals on scientific data from the Institute of Medicine and USDA’s Dietary Guidelines.
- Provide funding to implement the full IOM recommendations for the WIC food package.
- Increase reimbursement rates to more accurately reflect the cost of a nutritious diet.
- Ensure that benefits keep better pace with inflation, especially in years when food prices rise quickly.

A strong Child Nutrition Reauthorization in 2009 can enhance the lives of millions of children by promoting healthy development and improving educational outcomes. Critical new investments in these programs will put us on track to ending child hunger by 2015. We urge you to advocate for these and other policy provisions that would increase access to and participation in child nutrition programs so that all of America’s children have the food they need.

Bread for the World

Catholic Charities USA

The Episcopal Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The Jewish Council for Public Affairs

Mennonite Central Committee, Washington Office

National Council of Churches USA

National Council of Jewish Women

NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Washington Office

Union for Reform Judaism

United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries

The United Methodist Church General Board of Church and Society