

## HUNGER ACTION MONTH: Reading list



Visit your local library (most of these are available within the Monroe County Library System) or book store and pick up a tome to learn more about hunger, economic disparity, and how you – and the kids in your life – can help affect change.

### **FOR ADULTS**

#### **“Big Hunger” by Andrew Fisher**

Food banks and food pantries have proliferated in response to an economic emergency. The loss of manufacturing jobs combined with the recession of the early 1980s and Reagan administration cutbacks in federal programs led to an explosion in the growth of food charity. This was meant to be a stopgap measure, but the jobs never came back, and the "emergency food system" became an industry. In *Big Hunger*, Andrew Fisher takes a critical look at the business of hunger and offers a new vision for the anti-hunger movement.

#### **“All You Can Eat” by Joel Berg**

With the biting wit of *Supersize Me* and the passion of a lifelong activist, Joel Berg has his eye on the growing number of people who are forced to wait on lines at food pantries across the nation—the modern breadline. *All You Can Eat* reveals that hunger is a problem as American as apple pie, and shows what it is like when your income is not enough to cover rising housing and living costs and put food on the table. Berg takes to task politicians who remain inactive; the media, which ignores hunger except during holidays and hurricanes; and the food industry, which makes fattening, artery-clogging fast food more accessible to the nation's poor than healthy fare. A spirited call to action, *All You Can Eat* shows how practical solutions for hungry Americans will ultimately benefit America's economy and all of its citizens.

#### **“American Wasteland” by Jonathan Bloom**

Grocery prices and the forsaken foods at the back of your fridge seem to increase weekly. After reading *American Wasteland*, you will never look at your shopping list, refrigerator, plate, or wallet the same way again. Jonathan Bloom wades into the garbage heap to unearth what our squandered food says about us, why it matters, and how you can make a difference starting in your own kitchen—reducing waste and saving money. Interviews with experts such

as chef Alice Waters and food psychologist Brian Wansink, among others, uncover not only how and why we waste, but, most importantly, what we can do about it.

### **“Closing the Food Gap” by Mark Winne**

In *Closing the Food Gap*, food activist and journalist Mark Winne poses questions too often overlooked in our current conversations around food: What about those people who are not financially able to make conscientious choices about where and how to get food? And in a time of rising rates of both diabetes and obesity, what can we do to make healthier foods available for everyone?

### **“A Place at the Table” by Various**

Forty-nine million people—including one in four children—go hungry in the U.S. every day, despite our having the means to provide nutritious, affordable food for all. Inspired by the acclaimed documentary *A Place at the Table*, this companion book offers powerful insights from those at the front lines of solving hunger in America.

### **“The American Way of Eating” by Tracie McMillan**

Journalist Tracie McMillan sought to answer the question: Why do working Americans eat the way we do? And what can we do to change it? To find out, McMillan went undercover in three jobs that feed America, living and eating off her wages in each. Reporting from California fields, a Walmart produce aisle outside of Detroit, and the kitchen of a New York City Applebee’s, McMillan examines the reality of our country’s food industry.

## **FOR KIDS**

*Please note: Not all of these are strictly about hunger. Many encompass more than one theme. Whether it’s learning about economic disparity, mindfulness of the world and where we fit into it, or a call to action with ways kids of all ages can help, these books all have a great lesson to teach, and steps to help affect change.*

### **“Last Stop on Market Street” by Matt de la Pena**

#### **Ages 3-5**

Every Sunday after church, CJ and his grandma ride the bus across town. But today, CJ wonders why they don’t own a car like his friend Colby. Why doesn’t he have an iPod like the boys on the bus? How come they always have to get off in the dirty part of town? Each question is met with an encouraging answer from grandma, who helps him see the beauty—and fun—in their routine and the world around them.

### **“Maddi’s Fridge” by Lois Brandt**

#### **Ages 4-8**

Best friends Sofia and Maddi live in the same neighborhood, go to the same school, and play in the same park, but while Sofia’s fridge at home is full of nutritious food, the fridge at Maddi’s house is empty. Sofia learns that Maddi’s family doesn’t have enough money to fill their fridge and promises Maddi she’ll keep this discovery a secret. But because Sofia wants to help her friend, she’s faced with a difficult decision: to keep her promise or tell her parents about Maddi’s empty fridge. Filled with colorful artwork, this storybook addresses issues of poverty with honesty and sensitivity while instilling important lessons in friendship, empathy,

trust, and helping others. A call to action section, with six effective ways for children to help fight hunger and information on antihunger groups, is also included.

### **“The Peace Book” by Todd Parr**

#### **Ages 4-8**

*Peace is making new friends. Peace is helping your neighbor. Peace is growing a garden. Peace is being who you are.* *The Peace Book* delivers positive and hopeful messages of peace in an accessible, child-friendly format featuring Todd Parr's trademark bold, bright colors and silly scenes. Perfect for the youngest readers, this book delivers a timely and timeless message about the importance of friendship, caring, and acceptance.

### **“The Good Garden” by Katie Smith Milway**

#### **Ages 8-12**

From the best-selling author of *One Hen* comes the inspiring story of one struggling farming family in Honduras and their journey to growing enough food to meet their needs. Based on the real story of farm transformation underway in Honduras and many other countries, this book offers children ways they can be part of the movement to grow "good gardens" and foster food security.

### **“If the World Were a Village” by David J. Smith**

#### **Ages 8-12**

First published to wide acclaim in 2002, this eye-opening book has since become a classic, promoting world-mindedness by imagining the world's population - all 6.8 billion of us—as a village of just 100 people. Now, *If the World Were a Village* has been newly revised with updated statistics, several new activities and completely new material on food security, energy and health. By exploring the lives of the 100 villagers, children will discover that life in other nations is often very different from their own.

### **“Kids Against Hunger” by Jon Mikkelsen**

#### **Ages 10-14**

Part of the “We Are Heroes” series. Greg seems to skip soccer practice at least once a week. But everyone else has to go—or else! One day, Caleb and Ian decide to figure out where Greg goes when he's not at practice. They follow him straight to a creepy old warehouse. What's inside? And what is Greg's big secret?

### **“A Kid’s Guide to Hunger and Homelessness” by Cathryn Berger Kaye**

#### **Ages 10+**

This book, part of the “How to Take Action” series, helps kids explore what others in the world (including young people) have done and are doing to address the issues of hunger and homelessness, find out what their community needs, and develop a service project. The workbook includes facts, quotations, real-life examples, write-on pages, resources, a note to adults—and a lot of inspiration to get out there and make a difference in the world.