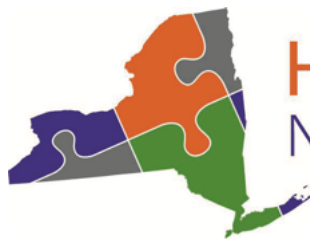




Offering Free School Meals to All: What's Next?

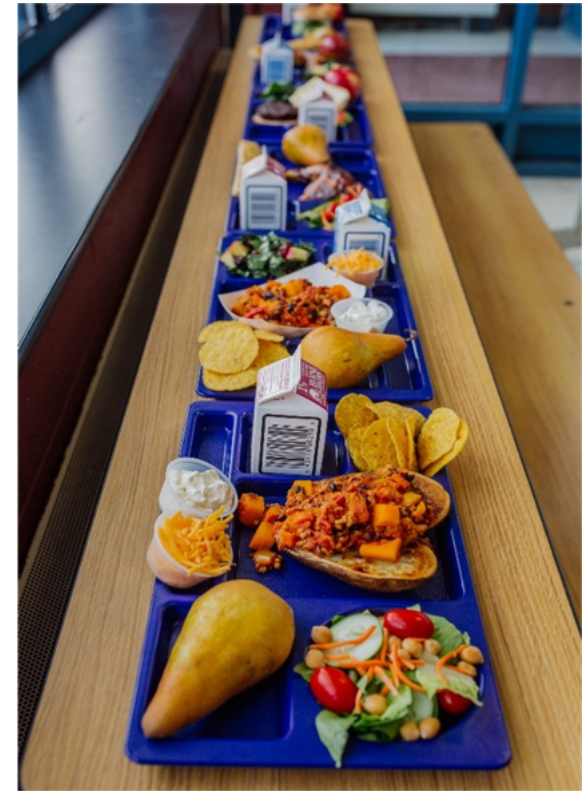
Thursday, June 12 2025



HUNGER SOLUTIONS
NEW YORK UNITING POLICIES AND
PROGRAMS TO END HUNGER

Agenda

1. Schools as Partners Against Hunger
2. Preparing for Statewide Universal Meals
3. Spotlight on Syracuse City School District
4. Strategies to Reach More Kids with:
 - Afterschool Meals
 - Summer Nutrition
 - School Breakfast
 - SNAP Outreach
5. Open Discussion



Hunger Solutions New York is a statewide anti-hunger organization.



We increase **awareness** of, **support** for, and **participation** in federal nutrition assistance programs.

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- National School Lunch Program (NSLP) & School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)
- Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
- Summer EBT

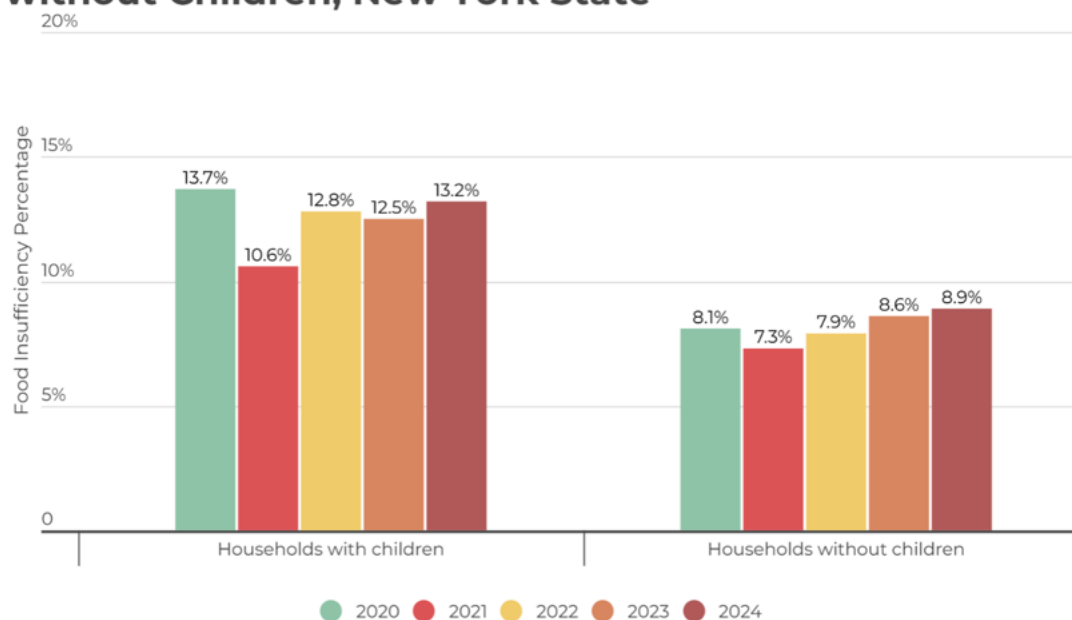
Federal Nutrition Programs Safeguard Food Security

In 2024: Hunger in NY at **highest point in 5 years.**

Hunger is 1.5x higher in NY households with children vs those without.

The **federal nutrition programs** are increasingly vital to safeguard families from hunger.

Annual Food Insufficiency Among Households with and without Children, New York State



Source: [New York Health Foundation, 2025](#)

Why Schools as Partners Against Hunger?



- Schools are **trusted messengers**.
- Schools have taken on **wider responsibilities** to help families.
- Schools are **frontline workers** as federal meal program operators:
 - School meals, summer meals, afterschool meals & snacks etc!
- Increasing participation in FNP is **mutually beneficial** to schools & families.

Photo: North Colonie CSD

Preparing for Statewide Universal Free Meals

What's in New York's new Universal School Meals law (Section 915a)?

- Begins in SY 2025-2026.
- Schools offering the federal school meal programs are required to provide meals at no cost to all students.
- Schools will receive “free rate” reimbursement for all meals served.

New requirements for schools:

- Maximize federal reimbursements.
- Maximize children eligible for free meals
- SNAP promotion (guidance coming soon)



Statewide Universal Meals: Action Steps for Schools



Featured NYSED Resources:

- [Implementation Memo](#)
- [Implementation Webinar](#) (link coming soon)

Add all programs and buildings to NSLP and/or SBP by July 31.

Evaluate and maximize CEP: all eligible schools must participate.

- **Current CEP schools** must reapply if cycle is ending or if April 1, 2025 enrollment results in higher ISP.
- ***Deadline Extended: Apply by August 31, 2025.***

All schools not eligible for CEP must apply for [Provision 2](#).

Spotlight on Syracuse City School District

Guest Speaker: Rachel Murphy-Viens, RD, CDN
Director Food & Nutrition Services
Syracuse City School District

Moderator: Kayla Snyder, MA
CACFP Outreach and Engagement Specialist
Hunger Solutions New York



Photo: Syracuse CSD

Afterschool Meals



Photo: Sandy Creek
CSD

CACFP - Afterschool Meals

The At-Risk Afterschool Snack/Supper component of CACFP:

- Administered by the **NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH)**
- **Reimburses for healthy food** served to kids and teens in eligible afterschool programs.
- **Is underutilized in NY:** In October 2023, **5 children participated in a supper program per 100 children participating in free or reduced-price school lunch.***

Source: Food Research & Action Center. (2024). [Afterschool Suppers: A Snapshot of Participation](#).



Benefits of Afterschool Meals

Afterschool meals through CACFP can help:

Reduce food insecurity.

Improve learning outcomes.

Increase attendance in enrichment programs.

Supports families.

Provide **sustainable revenue** and improve financial viability of your program. Serving a complete meal offers **4x the reimbursement** of NSLP snacks alone.



Eligibility

To qualify, programs **must**:

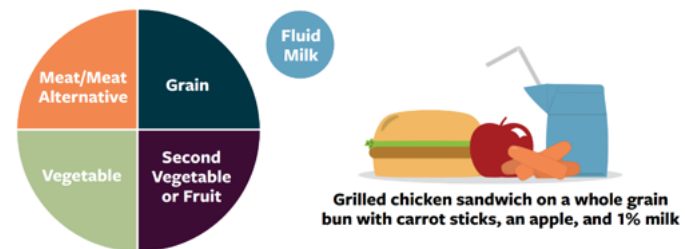
- Provide non-residential care for children **after school** during the regular school year.
- Provide at least one **educational or enrichment activity**.
- Be **public or non-profit**.
- Be located in an eligible low-income area where **50% or more of the students qualify for free or reduced-price school meals**.



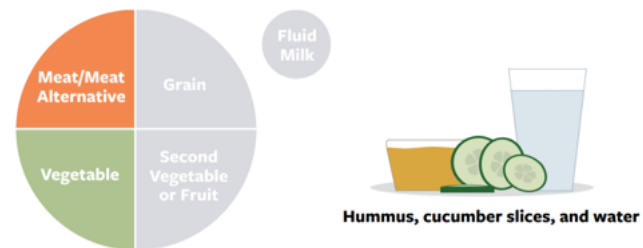
Meal Pattern

- Menus must follow CACFP meal pattern guidelines.
- Whole grain requirement for bread/grains each day.
- Sample menus and more available on our [webpage](#).
- *NSLP meal pattern may be utilized for afterschool programs operated by school food service.

Meals = 5 components



Snacks = 2 components



Afterschool Meals

Meals may be served:

- on weekends, breaks and holidays.
- in a central location or at program locations.
- hot or cold, hybrid menus also acceptable.
- to students in athletic programming.

Programs receive a per-meal/snack reimbursement, **\$4.43/meal and \$1.21/snack.**



Photo: Sandy Creek CSD

Next Steps

1. Unsure if CACFP Afterschool Meals are the right fit?:

- Visit AfterschoolMealsNY.org or [reach out!](#) We're happy to talk one-on-one.
- Connect with who runs your afterschool programming and discuss adding afterschool meals. **Note: who will need to apply for CACFP will depend on how your school's program is structured.**

1. Apply to become a CACFP Site: Start the process by emailing cacfp@health.ny.gov (use subject: "Outreach Coordinator") or call 518-402-7400

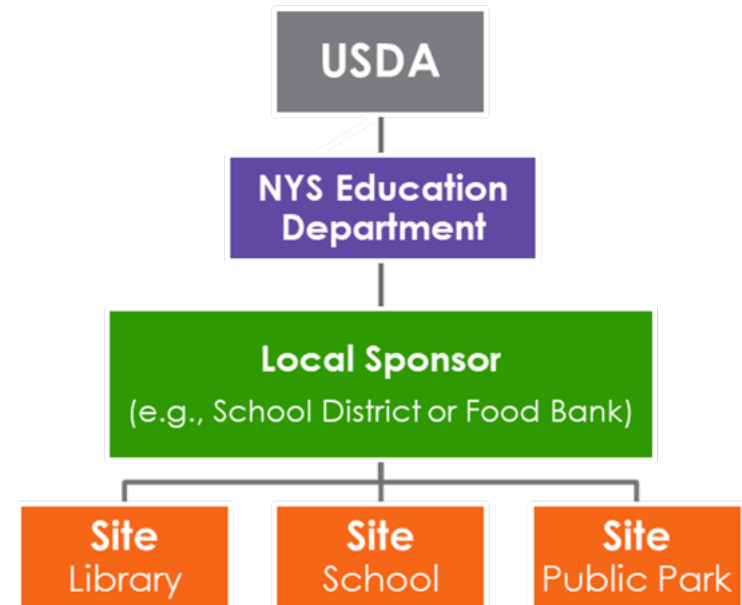
- You can **apply at any time of year.**
- **Vending CACFP meals to programs** that operate in your building or community may also be an option.

Summer Nutrition



Summer Meals: Basics

- The Summer Food Service Program provides healthy meals & snacks for kids and teens when school is out.
- Locally, summer meals operate through:
 - **Sponsors**, manage the program and provide meals.
 - **Sites**, where kids get meals.
- **At “open” sites, any child or teen 18 and under can drop by for a meal at no cost.**



Site Requirements + Eligibility

- **Be located in an eligible low-income area** (for open sites), meaning $\geq 50\%$ of the area's children qualify for F/RP school meals
 - Can be determined based on [local school](#) and/or [Census data](#). We can help!
 - CEP schools must have **ISP of 31.25%** to qualify
- **Attend required trainings & fulfill other requirements** in their sponsor agreement (e.g., tracking meal counts)
- **Serve meals** (provided by the sponsor) to kids 18 and under, in safe and sanitary conditions
- **Ensure children eat all meals on site**, unless approved for non-congregate meals in rural areas



Growing Summer Meals

- Summer meals are critical for alleviating hunger and summer learning loss, yet in summer 2023, less than **1 in 4** low-income NY kids ate summer meals.¹
- In many **rural areas**, even fewer kids have access to summer meals.
- **New options** and proven **best practices** can help reach more kids this summer.



¹Food Research and Action Center, [Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation: 2024 Summer Nutrition Status Report](#), August 2024.

Rural Non-Congregate Meals

- Permanent flexibility
- Includes **grab-and-go** and **home delivered meals**
- Must be in **rural areas** when and where in-person meal service isn't available
- **NYSED approval is required** to operate as rural non-congregate



Summer EBT: Program Basics

- Families receive a one-time benefit of \$120 for each eligible child on an electronic benefit card to purchase food.
- Most eligible children will receive benefits automatically, but some will need to [apply](#).
- Children can use BOTH [summer meals](#) and [Summer EBT](#).



Summer EBT Food Benefits

Learn how New York's Summer EBT program can help feed kids this summer!

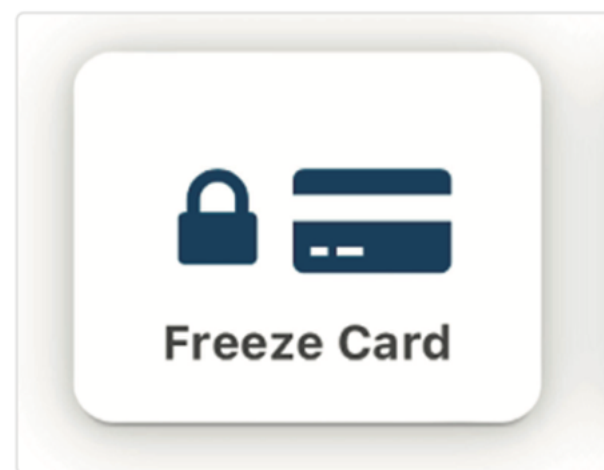
Resources from NYS OTDA

- [2025 OTDA Webinar Recording](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Summer EBT: Card Basics

- Each child will receive Summer EBT benefits on their own card. Benefits will not be issued on SNAP cards.
- Benefits should be used as soon as possible as they expire 122 days after being issued.
- Families should keep their cards from year to year.

New EBT Card Security Feature!



New freeze card feature helps secure EBT cards and protect benefits from scam-related theft.

Summer Nutrition Action Steps

- **Spread the word!**
 - NYS OTDA Summer EBT [Outreach Materials](#)
 - NYSED Summer Meals [Sponsor Order Form](#)
 - Hunger Solutions New York [Blended Materials](#)
- **Help families find** summer meal sites
- **Co-promote** Summer EBT & summer meals



Summer Meals and Summer EBT are two ways to help your family with food over the summer!

Summer Meals

All kids ages 18 and under can get **free** meals this summer at fun places nearby. No sign up needed—just drop by when meals are served! To find a spot near you, visit SummerMealsNY.org or call 211 or 866-3-HUNGRY.

Summer EBT

Summer EBT helps families with school-age kids buy food during the summer. Most kids who qualify will automatically get Summer EBT. But some families may need to apply.



Learn more at
SummerMealsNY.org



HungerSolutionsNY.org May 2025. Funded by NYSOTDA, Share Our Strength, Mother Cabrini Health Foundation, and New York Health Foundation. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

School Breakfast



Photo: North Colonie
CSD



HUNGER SOLUTIONS
NEW YORK

UNITING POLICIES AND
PROGRAMS TO END HUNGER

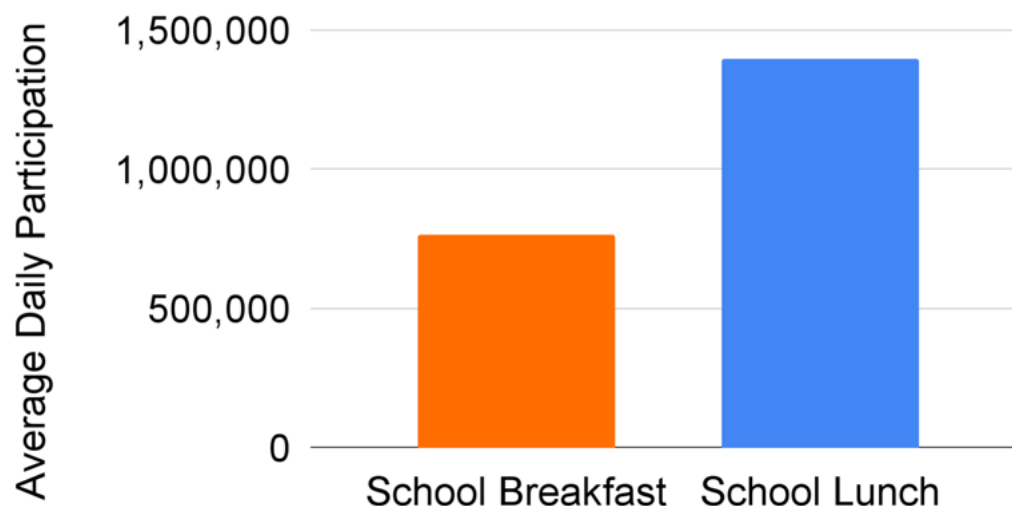
Renewed Momentum to Close NY's Breakfast Gap

Only half of NY students receiving free/reduced-price (F/RP) school lunch, also receive F/RP breakfast.

Missed opportunity to connect students with nutrition.

Without a designated period for breakfast, students are harder to reach.

F/RP School Breakfast vs Lunch ADP in NYS
SY 2023-2024



[Source: FRAC, School Meals Report \(2025\)](#)

Breakfast After the Bell Service Options

In the Classroom*



North Colonie CSD

Grab and Go Carts



Huntington UFSD

Second Chance



Middletown CSD

Action Steps for School Breakfast

What everyone can do:

- Spread the word about school breakfast availability and benefits for students.

What schools can do:

- Make breakfast more accessible with Breakfast After the Bell.
- Consider piloting.

We can help connect you with:

- Peers using Breakfast After the Bell.
- Strategies and resources to boost access.



Featured Resource:
[Webinar: Breakfast in the Classroom Q&A with NYSED.](#)



SNAP & School Meals **work together for families.**

Why SNAP Outreach in Schools?

Simplifies how school meal programs run:

- More students automatically designated eligible for free school meals.
- Less paperwork and administrative burdens for schools.

Strengthens financial viability:

- Helps schools operate and sustain CEP.
- Supports long-term sustainability of universal school meals.



Action Step: Promote SNAP to Families Now!



Families may be eligible for SNAP, but not participating. Schools are best positioned to know which families could benefit from a referral.

Promote SNAP now and into the summer months to set yourself up for success in the upcoming school year!

Families can apply:

- Online: [MyBenefits.ny.gov](https://mybenefits.ny.gov)
- Paper application: Local Department of Social Services
- Application assistance: SNAPHelpNY.org

Statewide SNAP Outreach Toolkit for Schools

Toolkit Goals:

- Provide information about SNAP
- Refer families to HSNY's online SNAP pre-screening eligibility tool: SNAPHelpNY.org
- Refer families to the online SNAP application for NY
- Connect families to local SNAP outreach and education organization

How Can Schools Use This Toolkit?

Share about SNAP with families via existing:

- Existing communication channels
- Back-to-school and end of school year processes
- Leverage school and community events
- Staff who communicate with families



Featured toolkit resources:

- Graphics
- Sample language for social media, school communications
- Flyer for families
- Available in English & Spanish

Statewide SNAP Outreach Toolkit for Schools



SNAP
Outreach Toolkit
for Schools



Or visit bit.ly/SNAPandSchools

**SNAP helps
families buy food.**

SNAP increases access to nutritious food, helping students succeed in and out of the classroom. It also benefits schools.

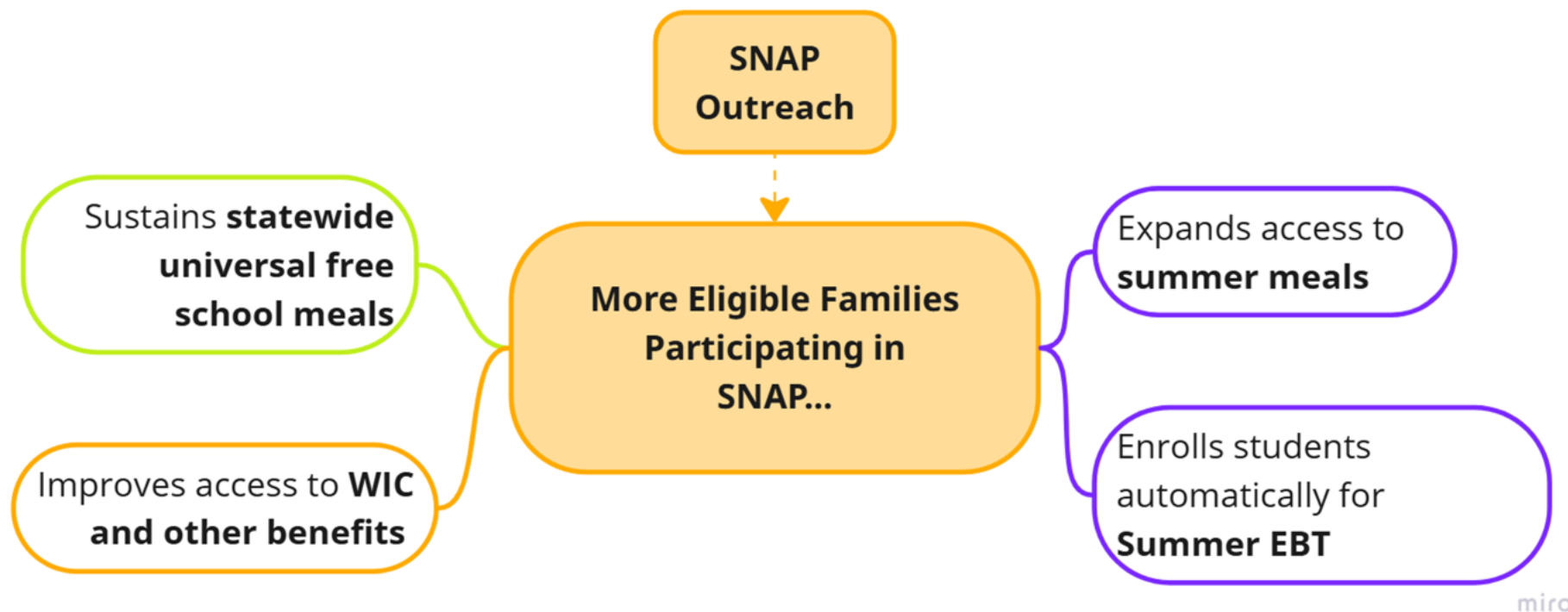
Find flyers, social media graphics, sample language, and resources to help you connect families with SNAP.



*Funded by NYSOTDA and USDA/FNS.
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*

Scan the QR code
to **learn more**
about our toolkit.

Big Picture: SNAP Participation + Child Nutrition



Open Discussion

Feel free to enter questions or comments in the chat or unmute yourself.

Thank you!



Photo: Clyde-Savannah CSD

We Are Here to Help!

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Additional Resources:

HungerSolutionsNY.org

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