



Lovin' Spoonfuls'

# #StrikeFoodWaste Primer FOR PARENTS & EDUCATORS

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This primer was developed with parents and educators in mind. It provides context around the issue of wasted food and lays out some fun and simple ways to engage young people in taking action. We want to hear from you! What steps are *you* taking as a family, school community, or youth group? Tag us on social media (@lovinspoonfuls on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) and @lovinfoodrescue on [Twitter](#)), use #StrikeFoodWaste, or [e-mail us](#) to share what you're up to!

## Wasted food hurts people and the planet.

For many, perhaps this was never so clear as at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, when grocery shelves were emptied of things like milk, bread, baking supplies, and meats. Food was dumped en route to stores, and shoppers stocked up on more than what they needed to feed themselves and their families. Good food - lots of it - was going to waste even as food insecurity in Massachusetts was on the rise.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, around 9% of the population of Massachusetts was considered food insecure. (They didn't know where their next meal was coming from.) At the end of June 2020, that number was around 17% - higher for families with kids.<sup>1</sup>

Across the country, 52 million tons of food are sent to the landfill each year. An additional 10 million tons are left discarded or unharvested on farms.<sup>2</sup> When food rots, it produces harmful greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change. In fact, if food waste were a country, it would come in third place after China and the United States for greenhouse gas emissions!<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.projectbread.org/news-and-events/news/heres-what-we-know-about.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.refed.com/?sort=emissions-reduced>

<sup>3</sup> <https://yaleclimateconnections.org/2019/05/food-waste-has-crucial-climate-impacts/>

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## Food rescue helps.

In the United States, food insecurity isn't a problem of supply (there's plenty of food to go around)! It's a problem of distribution (getting that *good* food from where it is to people who need it before it goes to waste). That's what food rescue is all about. You can see an actual picture of the contents of a recently-rescued box of food below.

And the fact is, if we could rescue just 30% of the food we wasted in the U.S., we'd feed 50 million Americans.<sup>4</sup> We'd also cut greenhouse gas emissions and conserve important natural resources, like water.

## About Lovin' Spoonfuls.

Lovin' Spoonfuls is a Massachusetts-based food rescue. We're focused on perishable food that would otherwise be discarded from food retailers, wholesalers, farms and farmers markets. We pick up and distribute, same-day, to a network of non-profit organizations like pantries, meal programs, and shelters across the Commonwealth that collectively serve over 30,000 people each week. Since our founding in 2010, we've rescued over 17 million lbs. of food: the equivalent of 13,600,000 meals!



**There are lots of ways to curb food waste and support food rescue in your community.**

Children and teens can be involved in raising awareness about the issue of wasted food and growing support for food rescue.

On the following page, we've set out some simple actions you can take as a family, school community, or youth group.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.feedingamerica.org/our-work/our-approach/reduce-food-waste>

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Action	How To	Recommended For
Develop good habits; take steps to waste less at home	Work together to plan what you'll eat for the week starting with the items in your fridge and pantry. Make a grocery list to prevent overbuying at the store. Help wrap and freeze foods carefully to prevent them from spoiling. Compost what can't be saved!	Families - all ages and stages!
Encourage action on wasted food at school	Ask what happens to extra food in the cafeteria: the stuff that doesn't make its way onto someone's lunch tray. This kick starts a conversation about alternatives. Can the school cafeteria purchase less? Compost more? Distribute excess produce to kids on their way out the door at the end of the day?	Middle-schoolers +, their families and teachers.
Learn more about wasted food	As a place to start, follow Spoonfuls' social media. Or <a href="#">read our blog</a> .	Anybody and everybody who cares about the issue.
Teach others what you know	Sponsor a schoolwide campaign on the issue of wasted food. Provide facts and simple action steps to encourage less waste. Or raise awareness online.	This one is especially great for schools and youth groups, middle-schoolers+.
Crowdfunding	Launch a birthday (or any day) online fundraiser. Ask friends and family to contribute what they can. <a href="#">Start here</a> . <b>Remember that every \$1 Spoonfuls receives allows us to feed a neighbor for the day!</b>	Anybody and everybody - individuals, families, classes, schools, youth groups!
Monetize your talents	The sky's the limit here! Sell	Anybody and everybody!

	<p>friendship bracelets. Auction off original artwork. Teach an online cooking class. Something else. It's up to you. Donate the proceeds.</p>	
Family/Class fundraiser for Spoonfuls	<p>Challenge the other members of your household to see who can raise the most money in support of food rescue. Or, as a class or school, raffle off a fun prize. Donate the proceeds to Spoonfuls.</p>	<p>Again, anybody and everybody!</p>
Participate in the #StrikeFoodWaste (Virtual) Art Show	<p>Check out out the next page for everything you need to know.</p>	<p>All ages and stages can participate - but only those 18 and under qualify for prizes.</p>
Participate in the Lovin' Pantry Challenge	<p>Make a creative meal of what you have in your fridge or pantry right now - before it goes to waste. Take a picture of it (or take a picture of yourself or your family eating what you've made) and share it on social. Tag Lovin' Spoonfuls. Use #StrikeFoodWaste. We might feature <i>your</i> meal masterpiece on our social media!</p>	<p>Families - all ages and stages!</p>
Ride for Food	<p>Join or support Spoonfuls' team in the Ride for Food, which is fully virtual this year and can involve any physical activity you like. <a href="#">More here.</a></p>	<p>Anybody and everybody who likes physical activity. It's great for families!</p>



## **Introducing... the #StrikeFoodWaste (Virtual) Art Show!**

Calling all young (and young at heart) creatives to picture what happens when food is rescued rather than wasted! We organized this activity with parents, teachers, counselors, youth leaders, and kids and teens themselves in mind.

**Deadline for submissions: September 30, 2020.**

*Details:*

- 1) Check out the themes on the next page. Pick one.
- 2) Create an original work of art based on your chosen theme. You can draw, paint, sculpt or something else. It's up to you.
- 3) Take a picture of your creation. Share to social media. Tag Lovin' Spoonfuls (@lovinspoonfuls on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) and @lovinfoodrescue on [Twitter](#)) and use #StrikeFoodWaste.
- 4) When you post, please include at least the artist's first name, age, city/town, and theme.
- 5) We'll snag and share contributions on our social media this fall. A lucky three young people (18 and under) will be chosen to have their art featured as our cover images on social media this upcoming holiday season and will each receive a fun prize.  
IMPORTANT: Please like/follow Lovin' Spoonfuls on social so we can easily reach out to winners!
- 6) Questions? [Contact us.](#)

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*Themes:*

*Waste hurts.* Show us how food waste impacts people and planet!

*Food rescue helps.* Show us how the world is a better place when we rescue, rather than waste, food.

*So fresh!* At Spoonfuls', we believe that healthy food is a basic human right. That's why we're focused on rescuing fresh, healthy, perishable food. Picture that fresh food.

*Food lessons.* What has the pandemic taught you and/or your family about food?

*Things to keep in mind:*

- Kids/teens: Get a parent or guardian's permission before participating.
- Get creative.
- Get colorful.
- Be original. No borrowing from other artists, please!
- By participating, you're helping drive an important conversation about the impact of wasted food and the importance of food rescue. By participating, you're telling us that you're ok with our using your (or your child's) artwork for this purpose.