

Finding food during the pandemic

Food insecurity in the autism community is worsening due to the pandemic, particularly in minority communities. If you or someone you know needs food, there are places near you that can help.



Call your child's school.

The USDA, which runs the free and reduced-price meals program at public schools, made changes during the pandemic so that children can take meals home. Some states also let parents pick up their children's meals. Call your child's school to find out what is available to you. You can also visit the [Meals 4 Kids](#) site to find food sources near you for your children.



Find your local food bank, food pantry or other food program.

Feeding America lets you search by zip code to find food banks near you. Visit feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank.

No Kid Hungry has a **Free Meals Finder**. They worked with states and the USDA to develop a map to help families easily find free meals for their kids. Just enter your zip code, and we'll show you the school meals sites, food banks and more serving food near you.

Your area likely has a **Community Action Agency (CAA)** which offers various programs for community support. These agencies coordinate utilities and rental assistance, and some may offer financial assistance and emergency funding. Search for your region's CAA here: <https://communityactionpartnership.com/find-a-cap/>



Apply for food assistance programs.

SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) provides money on an electronic benefit card to use like a debit card at grocery stores and other retailers. Visit fns.usda.gov/snap/state-directory to choose your state, find out if you are eligible and apply for benefits.

Child Nutrition Programs Your local food bank can help you find a site for free healthy meals and snacks for children while they are not in school, such as weekends, holidays and summer breaks.

WIC (Women and Infant Children) is like SNAP but for people with low incomes and who are pregnant or have children under age 5. Visit this [website](#) to find your state WIC agency's contact information. You can then call to find out if you are eligible and apply for benefits.



Ask your healthcare providers for help.

Your family doctor or pediatrician may be able to help you find local food resources and social programs that can help.



Contact a house of worship in your area.

Many houses of worship run food-assistance programs or can connect you to local food resources. Even if you are not a member of the congregation, these programs are typically available to anyone in the community.