

“Hunger Is Stressful” Campaign: MAZON Action Table at Purim Carnivals

Why:

As Purim approaches, we reflect on the powerful story of Esther, who advocated to change the fate of those who were marginalized. In her spirit, call out the injustice of hunger this Purim by adding some learning and advocacy opportunities to your Purim carnival.

What:

We are working toward a world free from hunger, but first we must create a world where people who find themselves in need are able to freely access benefits to help them feed their families with dignity. Where they do not feel shame that deters them from seeking out those benefits. Where they do not incur shame for using them. Where they are met by generously funded programs where the only metric for eligibility is need, provided by a nation, legislators, and an electorate that understand that lifting up the most vulnerable among us lifts up us all – quite literally, as a boon to our economy, let alone the benefit to individuals’ health, productivity, and well-being.

MAZON has identified a unique relationship between stigma and policy change – the reduction of stigma towards people in poverty and the programs that benefit them leads to policy change, and similarly, policy change leads to the reduction of stigma. It is in this relationship that our education work lives, and where we need help from passionate community representatives across our nation.

We can change peoples’ minds about those who need and use programs like SNAP – and indeed, about how we can best address their needs – by challenging common assumptions, and we certainly can’t do that unless we have the opportunity. From there, we developed our MAZON Action Table program, a tool to bring your knowledge and passion out into the community. The hook is simple – encourage people to engage with you by participating in MAZON’s meal plan activity, taking an advocacy action, or making a donation, and you can give them a MAZON stress ball in return. MAZON created these fruit-shaped stress balls which read “Hunger is Stressful,” a keepsake to remember what they learned in their interaction with you. In the Purim spirit, these fruit stress balls can also serve as a social justice element of a traditional Mishloach Manot fruit gift.

How:

If you're interested in this campaign, please get in touch with Director of Outreach Liz Braun-Lilenfeld at lbraun@mazon.org. We'll arrange to send you your materials, give you a MAZON and hunger 101 to ensure you feel prepared to table, and hone-in on an appropriate advocacy action. We ask for a \$180 donation to ship 100 stress balls. If this presents a barrier for your community, don't hesitate to reach out.

MAZON can provide:

- Digital (to be printed by volunteer):
 - Hunger in America Flyer
 - MAZON Strategic Initiative Flyers, potentially including:
 - Military and/or Veterans
 - LGBTQ Seniors
 - Israel
 - Indian Country
 - Puerto Rico
 - [A Closer Look at Who Benefits from SNAP Fact Sheets](#)
 - [SNAP Community Characteristics by Congressional District](#)
- Mailed by MAZON*
 - MAZON Fruit Stress Balls
 - SNAP Café Advocacy postcards
 - SNAP Placemats
 - This Is Hunger Story cards
 - Brochures

**Please tell us at least a week in advance; we're only in the office Mondays and Thursdays.*

Volunteer provides:

- Cash box and petty cash (for donations)
- Pens
- Table
- Computer/tablet (if offering digital actions or access to SNAP Cafe)
- Chairs
- Sign
- Energy and passion