

The Empty Bowls Project

The Empty Bowls Project is a great activity for youth and adult groups! The Empty Bowl symbolizes those across the world and even in our own backyard who are going hungry. Through promotion, volunteers and donations, you can raise money for those who need it the most.

The Empty Bowl Project is great for any type of group or organization such as school pottery and art classes, church youth groups and key clubs, scout groups and corporations looking to give back to the community.

1. Create the Bowls

Begin by creating the bowls that will serve as the centerpiece of your event. These can be made from paint-your-own pottery, clay, wood, or other materials. You may also choose a theme to unify the designs and make the display more impactful.



2. Plan Your Fundraising Approach

Decide how you would like to use the bowls to raise funds at your event. A few common options include:

- Admission + Bowl – Charge admission, which includes one of the bowls.
- Admission + Auction – Charge admission to the event, then auction the bowls separately.
- Free Admission + Bowl Sales – Offer free admission, but invite guests to donate by purchasing a bowl, either through an auction or by choosing one directly from a display table.

3. Host the Meal

Serve a simple lunch or dinner to guests, either using the bowls they have purchased or using other bowls to symbolically reinforce the idea of an “empty bowl.”

4. Share the Mission

During the meal, share the purpose behind the event. Talk to guests about hunger, food insecurity, and the impact their support will have. You may also invite a speaker from the Interfaith Food Pantry Network, to provide a personal perspective.

Tips:

- If you are unable to create the bowls, try to have them donated for the event.
- When it comes to the food served at the event, try to get the ingredients donated or even getting a chef or restaurant to donate their time and/or ingredients.
- All proceeds from the event, including admission and the purchase of the bowls, should go directly to fighting food insecurity.
- It is a good idea to plan this event well in advance in order to promote and publicize the event as well as gather all the materials you will need.