

Uncle Willie and the Soup Kitchen: A Lesson on Food Insecurity and Community Support

Goals:

1. To develop awareness of food insecurity and how it affects people in different ways.
 2. To increase children's understanding of the causes of food insecurity and how communities respond.
 3. To foster empathy, kindness, and the importance of helping others.
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Materials:

Uncle Willie and the Soup Kitchen by Dyanne DiSalvo-Ryan

Reading and Discussion:

1. **Read aloud and discuss *Uncle Willie and the Soup Kitchen*.**
 2. **Use guiding questions:**
 - What happens in this book?
 - What do we learn from this story?
 - How does Uncle Willie help his community?
 - How does this apply to our own community?
 3. **Discussion about food insecurity and community support:**
 - How might it feel to worry that there isn't enough food at home?
 - How does your body feel when it has enough food?
 - Why might some families experience food insecurity? (loss of a job, illness, rising costs, etc.)
 - Who do you think might face food insecurity? (remind students that it can affect anyone, even people they know)
 - Where do people experiencing food insecurity go for help in our community? (IFPN, soup kitchens, community centers, schools)
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Activities:

- **Feelings Art:** Have students draw two pictures — one of what it feels like to have enough food and one of what it might feel like to not have enough.
- **Community Connection:** Make a class list of ways kids can help — food drives, gardening, helping neighbors, writing thank-you notes to community organizations.