



partnering to end hunger

BackPack Program School Heroes Opportunities

Right here in Maine, 1 out of every 4 children are experiencing food insecurity, meaning they don't always know where their next meal will come from, or if it will be enough.

Our teachers and school nurses are finding that in too many instances, Monday morning comes and they are forced to compete against hunger for the attention of their students. More than 80,000 Maine children qualify for free or reduced price meals through the National School Lunch Program. These meals are the fuel they need to get them through the week. What happens to these children when they go home over the weekend?



Good Shepherd Food Bank's BackPack Program provides children who are suffering the effects of chronic hunger with nutritious, easy-to-prepare food to eat during weekends and school vacations when those crucial school meals are unavailable. In 2010, the Food-Bank began the BackPack Program as a pilot, working closely with the Junior League of Greater Portland to ensure its success. By the end of the 2015 - 2016 school year we were working with 46 schools serving over 1,000 students weekly. This year, we are reaching out to community leaders like you for support in expanding this program even further throughout the state.

"The BackPack program has given parents and students the security of knowing they have meals for the weekends when there is no school lunch available. We've found that when these students' basic needs are addressed they are readily available to access their education."

Program Outcomes

Good Shepherd Food Bank's BackPack Program is already a tremendous success in its current schools. Our goal is to provide nutritious food to the state's most vulnerable youth during their most critical period of physical and mental development. To that end, we are careful to provide menu items that are both wholesome AND kid-friendly.

For just \$225 a year per student, we are able to provide at least one source of grain, fruit, vegetable, and protein through a variety of staple meal items, breakfast foods, and healthy snacks. Each week, children receive a discreet, resealable bag with a different variety of items. The list of items cycles as follows.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Week One</u></p> <p>Oatmeal (2 Packets) Applesauce (2 cups) Milk Whole Wheat Pasta Pasta Sauce Canned Chicken Canned Carrots Oatmeal Bars (2 bars)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Week Two</u></p> <p>Oatmeal (2 Packets) Applesauce Fruit Tubes (2 cups) Milk Chicken and Rice Soup (2 packs) Brown Rice Canned Chicken Canned Peas Oatmeal Bars (2 bars)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Week Three</u></p> <p>Oatmeal (2 Packets) Applesauce (2 cups) Milk Pizza Mix Diced Tomatoes Canned Chicken Oatmeal Bars (2)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Week Four</u></p> <p>Oatmeal (2 Packets) Applesauce (2 cups) Milk Pancake Mix Canned Blueberries Green Beans Canned Chicken Oatmeal Bars (2)</p>

Becoming a Backpack Program School Hero

With a sponsorship of \$10,000.00, Good Shepherd Food Bank is able to provide a local school with over 40 Backpacks every Friday for an entire school year. Principals, teachers, school nurses, and cafeteria staff identify children that show chronic signs of hunger and discreetly supply the Backpacks, full of nutritious staples, to help them stave off hunger while school meals are not available. Becoming a Backpack Program School Hero is a significant way to invest in the future of your community – as children with adequate access to food are able to learn and grow into healthier, happier, and more engaged citizens.

In appreciation of your support, we will be proud to provide the following recognition:

- Highlighted as School Hero in a press release announcing the launch of the program in your community
- Your logo on our Backpack Program pages on www.gsfb.org
- Identified as a School Hero in all Good Shepherd Food Bank Backpack Program communications
- Opportunity to engage your staff/members in Backpack Packing Sessions for your school
- Acknowledgement in letter sent home with participating students

Current Backpack Program School Heroes include Walmart Foundation, Shaw's, Hudson Foundation, and Unum.

For more information on Good Shepherd Food Bank's Backpack Program please contact Shannon Coffin, Program Manager, at 207.782.3554 ext 1163 or at scoffin@gsfb.org. In these times, more than ever, it truly takes a whole community to care for our most vulnerable children. We appreciate your interest in getting involved!