

Help Hungry Kids



Your faith community can respond to the hunger needs of children by partnering with local schools.

How Helping Hungry Kids Works

Helping Hungry Kids is a program that provides nutritious, kid friendly food items to children who don't have enough to eat on the weekends. By partnering with local schools, your faith community can have a tangible impact on fighting hunger in your community.

Guidance counselors, teachers, and other school staff identify children who may not be getting enough to eat on weekends. Based on the number of children that are identified and the resources availability within your faith community, food bags are provided to children weekly or monthly.

Collecting the food bags can be done in two ways: monthly collections and/or packaging events. The food bags are delivered to the school on a weekly or monthly basis and are distributed to the children identified before leaving class on Friday.

Here are the suggested kid-friendly contents of a Helping Hungry Kids food bag in a gallon sized Ziploc bag:

- 2 breakfasts (oatmeal, small cereal box, granola bar, etc.)
- 2 lunches (cheese/crackers, cup of soup, peanut butter crackers, etc.)
- 2 dinners (easy mac n cheese, microwavable beef ravioli, tuna, etc.)
- 2 – 3 snacks (applesauce, pudding, fruit cup, fruit snacks, etc.)
- 1 juice box

Getting Started

Your organization must develop a relationship with a local school that has indicated an interest in securing food resources for children. For faith communities in Fairfax County, a list of interested schools is attached.

Once your faith community and the school have made contact:

- Identify contact persons for the school and the faith community. There should be a primary contact and an alternate in case the primary contact is not available.
- Discuss the needs of the students and the resources of your faith community. The design of the program you develop should respond to the needs of the students while being mindful of the resources your faith community is prepared to offer in support of the program. If you find that your faith community cannot support the school alone, this may be an opportunity for your faith community to partner with another organization.
- School staff members identify children who may benefit from the program and secure parents' consent.

- School staff members and your organization agree upon the number of families to be served and the frequency with which the food will be distributed. School breaks may be considered as well as weekends. Your faith community should commit to supporting the school for an entire school year.
- According to the agreed upon frequency, your faith community provides non-perishable food packaged in a clear gallon-size plastic bag that can be placed in students' backpacks prior to dismissal.
- School staff members develop and implement a process for distributing food to participating students in a manner that maintains confidentiality for the student. Ex: students receiving the supplemental food package may be dismissed with an earlier bell to come to a meeting point to receive the food.

Collecting Bags

You must advertise the opportunity within your organization to garner sufficient interest. This can be done through email, bulletin announcements, or by word of mouth.

While your faith community may develop its own way to collect food bags, here are two simple and effective ways:

Monthly Collection- set a regular date, such as the First Sunday of each month, for members of your faith community to drop off prepared food bags.

Packaging Events- whether you are packaging 100 meals or 1000 meals, bringing people together to package the food bags is great way to publicize the program and get members of your faith community involved in a service activity. Items can be purchased by your faith community or members can be asked to bring in specific items.

For More Information

If you have questions about how a faith community has implemented this program or how to organize a packaging event, contact Jake McGlothlin at Floris United Methodist Church: Jmcglothlin@florisUMC.org.

If you have questions about how a school has implemented this program, contact Renee Levendis at Hutchison Elementary School: Renee.levendis@fcps.edu.

If you are interested in partnering with one of the schools mentioned on the attached list, contact Sarah Newman at Helping Children Worldwide: sarahnewman@helpingchildrenworldwide.org