

[Backpack Buddy](#)

**Backpack
Buddy teams
with A Recipe
To End
Hunger:
Empowering Students**

at Risk of Hunger to Feed themselves on Weekends

***Together we can
improve the lives
of young people in
our community***

Throughout our community, there are thousands of children filled with potential who are being held back by a lack of healthy food. Distracted at school by hunger and low energy, diverted by health problems and isolated by the stigma of being the kid always asking for food, children from food-insecure homes have a hard time getting ahead. And sadly, food insecurity is prevalent in our community. In fact, *one in four children in our area is at risk of hunger.*

How the Program Works

Children are signed up for Backpack Buddy based on recommendations from their teachers. Each week, Dare to Care assembles packs filled with nutritious, easy-to-prepare foods selected by our staff dietician. We deliver the packs to our 36 partner schools each Friday and the schools distribute the packs to participating students (approximately 50 per school) in a discreet manner.

The packs contain healthy foods the children can feed themselves to supplement often limited food available at their homes. Examples of food items in the backpacks include: fresh fruit, instant oatmeal, cereal, ready-to-eat entrees, shelf-stable milk, 100% fruit juice, sunflower seeds and fruit cups.



Teachers who participate in Backpack Buddy have reported the following outcomes:

- Participants have become more responsible in other aspects of life, including homework
- Participants have increased attendance on Fridays
- Participants are more alert on Mondays
- Participants have a greater sense of confidence

Geographic Scope

Through Backpack Buddy, we serve elementary school-aged

children at risk of hunger who attend schools in our 13-county service area of Kentuckiana. Specifically, we serve children at schools in the following counties in Kentucky: Jefferson, Bullitt, Spencer, Shelby, Henry, Oldham, Trimble and Carroll; and the following counties in Southern Indiana: Floyd, Clark, Harrison, Crawford and Washington. Your gift will serve children in a Louisville-area school.

Evaluation

Success of our program is defined by our ability to fulfill the program objectives stated above. We measure our success by distributing surveys at the end of each school year to teachers and parents/guardians. The feedback is used to measure our effectiveness and to make changes to the program as necessary. These results will also help guide our decisions as we grow the program to additional schools in the future.



Additionally, we use a self-evaluation tool based on the following goals:

- Did we sustain the program with existing partner schools?

- Did we partner with schools that protect the anonymity of our participants?
- Did we exceed expectations of participants, teachers and parents?
- Based on feedback from teachers and parents, is our program making an impact on participants' lives including attendance, behavior, grades and attention in class?
- Were we able to provide only food items with high nutritional value?
- Were we able to distribute at least one piece of fresh fruit per backpack each week?
- Were we able to provide other hygiene items as available?



Costs

We are committed to keeping costs low while maintaining a high standard of nutrition and consistency for each of the children we serve. We do this by utilizing trained volunteers to do much of the labor involved with preparing and distributing the packs each week, as well as by supplementing purchased wholesale goods such as fresh fruit, with high-quality donated goods.

The following is a description of our Backpack Buddy budget for each of our 36 participating schools. Amounts are based on serving an average of 50 students per school.

Food items, including fresh produce:	\$4,400
Program Management:	\$750
Warehousing and delivery:	\$800
Supplies:	\$50
Total per school:	\$6,000

Long-Term Funding Strategies

Long term, we will continue to seek community partners to sponsor our work in individual schools, as well as our overall Backpack Buddy program. Should we at some point fail to obtain sufficient designated funding, we will allocate general operating funds to ensure Backpack Buddy continues to operate without interruption. On the other hand, should we reduce our expenses through new efficiencies or donations, we will apply donated funds to support our work in additional schools.

Summary

One in four children in our community is at risk of hunger. This risk is especially real over the weekends when they do not have access to the nutritious meals provided by school and afterschool programs.

Children who are hungry suffer physically, socially and emotionally, and the families suffer financially – exacerbating the entire problem. This may decrease their chances of long-term success in school and life, as well as in breaking the cycle of need.



The good news is that Dare to Care's Backpack Buddy program is making a real difference in the lives of 2,270 of these children. Every Friday of the school year, Backpack Buddy participants receive a backpack full of nutritious, tasty foods the kids can prepare themselves. The students' teachers report that participants have increases in energy, participation, confidence, school attendance and more.

However, Dare to Care cannot deliver Backpack Buddy alone. To make the program work, we rely on the caring, discreet cooperation of administrators and teachers at our 36 partner schools, more than 2,000 volunteers who prepare and distribute the packs to the schools each week, and caring partners like the The ABC Foundation, whose financial support provides the nutritious food and resources that make the effort possible.

We appreciate your commitment to the welfare of children in our area and hope you will agree that Dare to Care's Backpack Buddy program offers an excellent opportunity to create a very real, lasting difference for those children at risk of hunger. For only \$120 per year per child, your gift has the power to not only sustain, but transform their lives.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this opportunity.