Backpack Buddies

1 in 7 South Carolina students go to school hungry.

These same students would be hungry on the weekend without the help of Backpack Buddies.

Getting Started

- Work with the school guidance counselor or social worker. They will determine the number of food bags needed at the school.

- Consider partnering with other churches in your community if there is a great need. Each participating church could choose one week each month to provide food bags.

- Determine how you will meet the need. You have three options:
  1) Partner with your local food bank to purchase the food items or pre-packaged bags of food.
  2) Purchase food and package each week.
  3) Supplement your purchased food with planned monthly collections from the church.

- Plan on shopping in bulk and putting food in gallon Zip-lock bags. Involve church ministry groups in packing the bags.

- Pray over the bags and deliver them to the school so that they can be discreetly put in students' backpacks.

- Minister to the families receiving the bags at Thanksgiving or Christmas. To learn more about what churches are doing, contact angelamcneal@scbaptist.org.

What to Include

Each bag typically includes 12 - 14 items that could be eaten for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Snacks are also included.

Breakfast: Individual packages of oatmeal, grits, muffins or cereal; shelf stable milk.

Lunch & Dinner: Individual pasta (Ravioli and Spaghetti O's); individually packaged cans of vegetables (green beans, carrots, peas) and fruits (applesauce, peaches, fruit cocktail); individually packaged pasta dinners with sauce; macaroni and cheese; Vienna Sausages; canned meats; soups, Pork & Beans.

Snack Items: Fruit roll up/fruit snacks; crackers; granola bars/cereal bars; dried fruit (raisins); beef jerky/sticks; individual juice boxes.

Cost

Harvest Hope Food Bank provides bags with 5 meals for $6.

Churches who purchase food spend between $5 - 8 per bag.

The cost can be much lower with monthly food donations from church members.

This SCBC resource is made possible through the Cooperative Program giving of South Carolina Baptist churches.