

Weekend Meals for Kids

Tips and Current Practices of Foodshare Partner Programs

Thank you to Windsor Food and Fuel Weekend Wheels, Gifts of Love, Hebron Interfaith Human Services, Hands on Hartford, and Fern Street Community Backpack Program, for sharing their best Weekend Meals tips and practices

Topics:

- Identifying the need in your community**
- Working with the school system**
- Sources for funding**
- Tips for sourcing bags or backpacks**
- Clever nonfood items**
- Getting weekend food to kids over the summer**



Identifying the need in your community

Is there a weekend meals program currently in your area?

Are children arriving to school hungry on Monday?

Are children taking extra food from lunch for the weekend?

Research the number of students that are food insecure in your community

[Edsight](#) provides a profile and performance report for each Connecticut School District including the number of students eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Meals

Connect with the school

Look for an ally in the school: Reach out to Social Workers, School Nurses, School Administration, Board of Education, Food Service, Family Resource Coordinators, parent organizations

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Working with the School System

Connect with Social Workers, School Nurses, School Administration, Family Resource Coordinators and any other potential resources to make a plan

Determine how children will be enrolled in the program

- Parents sign up with the School Social Worker or School Nurse

- Parents sign up at the local Social Services office

- Parents sign up at the sponsoring agency

Determine how the meals will be distributed at school

- Picked up in the nurse's office or main office

- Delivered to each classroom

- Social workers put the bags in the childrens' lockers

Determine how your program will be advertised to the parents

- Provide flyers to the social workers and nurses

- Reach out to the Parent Teacher Association

Determine the best way to collect backpacks from the families if using reusable bags

- Child brings the bag back during the week

- Families bring the bag back to your agency

- Create incentives to give the bag back such as a raffle or prize

Maintain the connection with the schools

- Staff turn-over can cause disruption in communication

- Listen to any concerns and ideas

- Continuously provide updated information



Photo provided by Windsor Food and Fuel Weekend Wheels

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Sources for Funding

Seek assistance from the community

Reach out to businesses, religious institutions and civic groups in your community to tell them about the program. Request their support through donations, both monetary and food and for volunteers to work the program.

Create fun interactive fundraisers

Grants: United Way, Banks, local organizations,

Foodshare Matching Funds Grants

Tips for sourcing bags or back packs

The bags or backpacks used for your program must be sturdy to ensure food is making it home

[Good360](#) sells items to non-profits for a discounted rate

Reach out to a local department store for a discounted rate.

Promotional Logo Companies often sell bags in bulk

Some schools prefer food is delivered in a plastic bag which can be easily added to their backpack.



Hebron Interfaith Human Services

Weekend Meals over the Summer

Pick up the bag or box at your agency

Some agencies distribution every two weeks.

Ability to add refrigerated or frozen items to the bag

Pick up at the library

Bags are distributed to families who sign up.

Bags are managed by librarians and distributed during operating hours.



Hebron Interfaith Human Services
Weekend Summer Lunch Box

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Consider adding Non-Food Items

Simple Recipes: UCONN and SNAP are great resources

Food Resources: local pantries, soup kitchens, Mobile Foodshare, etc

Items for kids

Physical activity or game: Jump rope, sidewalk chalk, etc

Paired Item with Information

Information on the importance of hydration paired with a reusable water bottle.

Sprouts for Kids: provide materials for kids to grow and cook

Gift cards: Local movie theatre or frozen yogurt

School supplies: not only at the beginning of the school year

Can opener in the beginning of the school year

Partner with local dentist and ask for toothbrush donations

Partner with local fire department or the Red Cross for donated fire detectors.

Seasonal items

Kleenex in the winter

Sunscreen in the spring



Gifts of Love Backpacks

Weekend Meals Connections in the Foodshare Network

These experienced Coordinators are willing to answer your questions if you are considering a Weekend Meals Program in your Community.

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