

THE IDAHO FOODBANK KICKS OFF BACK-TO-SCHOOL CAMPAIGN

Opportunity to Join One of the Most Crucial Campaigns of the Year

Pocatello, ID – The Idaho Foodbank launches its Back-to-School fundraising campaign as a statewide effort to support kids throughout Idaho who are experiencing hunger. The campaign spotlights The Idaho Foodbank's Backpack and School Pantry programs and highlights numerous ways folks can support the youngest members of our communities.

According to Feeding America's most recent Map the Meal Gap report, 14.5 percent of Idaho children, more than 67,000 kids, struggle with food insecurity. This means they are not getting enough nutrition to support a healthy and active. The effects of insufficient nutrition extend well beyond hunger pains. Children experiencing food insecurity are at higher risk of falling behind in school, exhibiting lower test scores, behavior issues and are susceptible to conditions including asthma, development delays, iron deficiency anemia, and mental health problems (Food Resource Action Center).

To help children have better success in school and life, The Idaho Foodbank Back-to-School campaign supports the Backpack and School Pantry Programs. These focus on feeding kids who need additional food when they are outside the classroom.

"Our Backpack and School Pantry programs support some of our most vulnerable Idahoans," said Randy, President and CEO of The Idaho Foodbank. "With the help of these programs, we can relieve some of the pressure on the families and provide a better chance for these young students."

The Idaho Foodbank's state-wide Backpack program ensures that students who are chronically hungry have access to adequate food over the weekend. Nutritious, child-friendly food is provided every Friday during the school year. Meals consist of items that are easy to prepare and meet a child's needs for Saturday and Sunday. Last year, The Foodbank provided over 64,000 bags of food to students in 165 schools.

The need only begins with the start of school. For just \$300, anyone can become a Backpack Buddy and support a child with a Backpack every week during the school year.

The Idaho Foodbank's state-wide School Pantry program helps provide families with food through a pantry set up inside the school, where access is convenient for students and their families. The Idaho Foodbank selects nutritious and non-perishable items to help stock school pantry shelves. Last year, the School Pantry program distributed 380,000 pounds of food to nearly 19,000 households.

The Idaho Foodbank thanks the Bayer Fund and [ICCU](#) for supporting these programs.

To learn more about Back-to-School activities and to support the programs, please visit <https://idahofoodbank.org/our-impact/children/>

If you or someone you know needs food assistance, please visit The Idaho Foodbank's Food Assistance Locator: idahofoodbank.org/getfood

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About The Idaho Foodbank

The Idaho Foodbank is an independent, donor-supported, nonprofit organization. It is the largest statewide distributor of free food assistance in Idaho. The Idaho Foodbank was established in 1984 and since that time has distributed millions of pounds of nutritious food through its facilities in Lewiston, Meridian, and Pocatello. In the last fiscal year, The Foodbank provided food for more than 21.8 million meals to Idahoans living with food insecurity. The Foodbank distributes food through a network of more than 400 partners including schools, food pantries, senior centers, feeding sites, shelters, mobile pantries, and churches. Recognizing the crucial connection between hunger and health, The Idaho Foodbank focuses on providing nutritious food and collaborates with community organizations to promote nutrition education, wellness resources, and healthy living. Visit idahofoodbank.org for more information. You can also find us on your favorite social media platform.