



Backpack Fact Sheet

THE BACKPACKS FOR KIDS PROGRAM WAS CREATED BY FEEDING AMERICA – THE NATION’S FOOD BANK NETWORK. 110 MEMBER FOODBANKS ACROSS THE COUNTRY PARTICIPATE IN THEIR OWN COMMUNITIES. THE GREATER CLEVELAND FOOD BANK BEGAN THE PROGRAM IN 2006.

BackPack Program

Each week, Food Bank volunteers pack six child friendly meals per student into plastic bags and then cases, which are delivered to our partner sites. The bags include various items such as milk, pasta, tuna, peanut butter, vegetables, cereal, fruit and snack items. These bags of food are delivered to partner sites where staff or volunteers at the sites distribute the bags to the students. The children take the food home over the weekend in an unmarked, nondescript backpack provided to them by the Foodbank. The program is operated with respect for the children’s confidentiality where applicable.

Greater Cleveland Backpack for Kids Objectives/Requirements

Through the Backpacks for Kids program, the Cleveland Foodbank provides food for low-income children each weekend when they do not have access to the free and reduced price school lunches available to them during the week.

- Backpacks are to only be distributed to needy children that receive free and/or reduced lunches or as determined by site staff
- The Backpack sites must report weekly statistics to the Foodbank
- The Backpack sites cannot charge a fee for the meals or backpacks
- The Backpack sites must participate in an end of year survey for the site staff, children and parents involved
- The backpacks must be distributed in a safe space by trustworthy adults. When necessitated by children’s need, the backpacks must be distributed in a confidential way
- In September of every year, all Backpack sites will be required to re-enroll for the following program year
- All sites that choose to participate in the Cleveland Foodbank’s Backpack for Kids Program will enter into an official partnership with the Foodbank by submitting the following:
 - Completed Backpack application
 - Signed membership application, acknowledging the organization’s intent to comply with all Cleveland Foodbank standards of service, best practices, and reporting guidelines.

For more information about opening a Backpack for Kids at your agency, please contact:

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**Greater Cleveland
Food Bank**