

# Feeding Our Kids

## BackPack Program Manual

### 2019-2020 Academic Year



Our mission is to provide nourishing food to food insecure school children in Champaign County on weekends and school holidays throughout the school year. Our vision that by helping food insecure children in Champaign County break down one barrier toward success, it will enable them to learn and accomplish great things as they grow up.

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## Program and Guide Overview

The mission of Feeding Our Kids (FOK) BackPack program is to provide nourishing food to food insecure school children in Champaign County on weekends and school holidays throughout the school year. Our vision is by helping food insecure children in Champaign County to break down one barrier toward success, this will help enable them to learn and accomplish great things as they grow up. This program is currently only available during the school year.

Feeding Our Kids was started in 2013 with 18 children participating in 2 Champaign County schools and has since grown to providing food bags to over 800 children in 33 schools in Champaign County and Tuscola.

This guide defines the roles, responsibilities, and processes of the program. The information is summarized in a high-level outline format at the beginning, but schools are expected to understand all the information contained within this guide.

# 2019-2020 Calendar

Month	Activity
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Solicit parental consent</li> <li>● Complete School Enrollment Questionnaire and submit to Feeding Our Kids within two weeks of school start</li> <li>● Food Delivery (dependent on school start date): 8/1, 8/15, 8/29</li> </ul>
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Food Delivery: 9/12, 9/26</li> </ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Quarterly updates due by 10/25</li> <li>● Food Delivery: 10/10, 10/22&amp;24</li> </ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Food Delivery: 11/7, 11/21</li> </ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Food Delivery: 12/5, 12/17</li> </ul>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Quarterly updates due by 1/10/20</li> <li>● Food Delivery: 1/9, 1/16, 1/30</li> </ul>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Food Delivery: 2/13, 2/27</li> </ul>
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Food Delivery: 3/10, 3/26</li> </ul>
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Quarterly updates due by 4/9/20</li> <li>● Food Delivery: 4/7, 4/23</li> </ul>
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Renewal application for next school year due by 5/15/19</li> <li>● Food Delivery: 5/7, 5/19</li> </ul>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● End of Year Distribution - scheduled as needed</li> <li>● Complete end of year survey</li> </ul>

# Program Guide Summary

1. Important dates are listed in the calendar. Any conflicts with or changes to school calendars need to be coordinated with Feeding Our Kids as far in advance as possible.
2. There shall be one School Program Coordinator that is main Point of Contact for Feeding Our Kids and oversees the implementation of the program at the school site.
3. Student participation
  - a. Student selection for program is at the discretion of the School Program Coordinator, who should utilize the provided guidelines. Students should be selected based on demonstrating signs of chronic hunger and food insecurity. This may be independent of receiving free/reduced lunches.
  - b. Parental consent can be verbal or written, but it is required for participation and must be recorded by the School Program Coordinator.
  - c. Confidentiality of the student and their family is paramount.
4. Logistical information of food bin deliveries
  - a. Food bins will be delivered every other week.
  - b. School personnel may need to help volunteers unload food bins.
  - c. Food bins need to be stored in a location that is ventilated, secure, clean, and pest-free.
    - i. Food is shelf-stable and does not need refrigeration.
  - d. Upon receipt, confirm that all food bins have arrived and are in good condition.
  - e. Per latest FDA information, dates on food packaging are “Best if Used By” and do not impact food safety. FOK will make every effort to deliver food prior to listed dates, however some food items may be past the listed date. Such food will still be safe, and this will be determined in concert with the Eastern Illinois Foodbank and FDA guidelines.
5. Food bag distribution process is to be determined by the School Program Coordinator in whatever manner works best for the school site, so long as confidentiality and anonymity is maintained.
6. After distribution, food bins should be ready for pick-up by volunteers the week of the next delivery.
7. School Program Coordinators are expected to keep all records related to the program readily available, especially up-to-date student numbers and parental consent.
8. Updated information, such as student numbers, will be provided to Feeding Our Kids on a quarterly basis, at a minimum.
9. To assist with Feeding Our Kids donor outreach, there will be some expectations for participating schools, including:
  - a. Providing FOK an opportunity to speak to parent groups.
  - b. Sending a school representative to the Adopt-a-School Donor Thank-You Event.
  - c. Providing testimonials as to the impact of the program.
  - d. Displaying a small poster that acknowledges the school’s participation in FOK program.
  - e. Potentially allowing donor visits, coordinated between the school and FOK.

# Student Participation

What is food insecurity? If a child does not get enough food outside of school, he/she is considered “food insecure”. The U.S. Department of Agriculture defines food insecurity as households that are uncertain of having, or unable to acquire, enough food to meet basic needs of all their members because of insufficient money or other resources. Examples of food insecurity:

- A chronically hungry child is anxious for a meal to be served, sometimes showing up early for meals
- Extreme hunger on Monday morning
- Eating all the food served and /or not being picky about food served
- Lingered around for second helpings or constantly asking for more

**While Feeding Our Kids provides the above guidelines, it is ultimately up to the school program coordinator’s discretion to develop student roster and obtain parental consent for program participation.**

# Parental Consent Policy

FOK requires schools to inform parents and acquire parental consent. Protecting the identity of each student is important to Feeding Our Kids. In order for this to be effective, the program is reliant on each school’s program coordinator to maintain parental consent by keeping documentation of communication with parents / guardians of each participating student. This ensures the responsible adult acknowledges participation in the program.

Parental Consent can be accepted in the following manner:

1. Obtain a completed and signed permission form. A copy has been attached in Section 9. One form is accepted for the entire academic school calendar. However, if a student withdraws and re-enrolls, a new signed permission form is required. Spanish forms available upon request.
2. Verbal consent is acceptable if a signed permission form is not possible. If verbal consent is received, the program coordinator must document the guardian’s name that provided consent and consent date.

Only parents whose children have been referred by a teacher or staff member should be contacted. **Please do not send home information to every family at your school. Many children will likely enroll in the program who are not food insecure and do not need the program. This could ultimately lead to chronically hungry children in Champaign County not receiving the help they need.**

# Food Allergies

When communicating with parents, be sure to discuss any food allergies. Use school records to identify children with food allergies (peanuts, milk, etc.).

Inform FOK of any dietary restrictions. Depending on the specifics, one of two options will be used to address dietary restrictions:

- 1) If the school has a large number of nut-free students, separate nut-free bags will be packed and delivered in a bin with a bright yellow label.
- 2) If the school has only a few students that are nut-free, or have other dietary restrictions, substitute items will be provided to the school program coordinator. The school program coordinator can use these items to replace any food in the bags that a particular student cannot have.

## Student Roster Policy: Adding or Removing Children from the Program

This policy will help FOK balance being flexible to meet changing school populations while maintaining high confidence student rosters, to inform timely decision making and budget feasibility for both existing school changes and new school additions.

Student roster submissions: An *estimated* student count will be submitted by each school as part of the application and renewal process. At the start of the school year, a *second* submission is requested to finalize the count for the school year.

The school program coordinator may use discretion and add or withdraw a student from the program as needed, pending approval by Feeding Our Kids if numbers increase. If a student's situation changes or if the student misuses the program, please remove the child from the program and inform the parent and child.

Whenever the number of participating children changes, the school program coordinator must fill out the online Bag Number Change Request Form at the Feeding Our Kids website. Additionally, please email the Feeding Our Kids Executive Director to ensure that the change request was received.

If the change is an increase of more than 5 bags or 20% of the current number (whichever is greater), or if more than 2 increases are requested within a quarter, the Feeding Our Kids Board of Directors will need to review the request before approval.

Additionally, Feeding Our Kids budgets for a certain number of kids that can be supported by the organization. When the current number of food bags being packed reaches that number, no more

children can be added to the program until (1) other schools reduce their number or (2) the Board of Directors votes to increase the total number of children that can be supported.

## School Program Coordinator

The school program coordinator is the individual at your school who will act as the main contact between the school and FOK. This position includes multiple responsibilities, which are described below. **A committed and enthusiastic school program coordinator is crucial to the success of the program.**

### School Program Coordinator Responsibilities:

1. *Student Selection & Continual Eligibility Assessment*
  - ✓ Submit initial student numbers for school year
  - ✓ Inform FOK of any student withdraws or additions
2. *Record Keeping*
  - ✓ Maintain all necessary signed parental consent forms
  - ✓ Submit and maintain all required program materials (school calendars, student rosters, etc.)
3. *Monitoring*
  - ✓ Distribution: make certain food bags are only given out to students with permission to be in the program and by staff/volunteers.
  - ✓ Food: count food when delivered to assure nothing is missing and that the food bags are properly stored.
4. *Student Protection*
  - ✓ Develop distribution process to ensure the confidentiality of students is protected
  - ✓ Remove foods to which students have allergies to or if food is damaged
5. *Communication/Coordination*
  - ✓ Communicate Backpack Program information to the participants
  - ✓ Be the primary communication link with Feeding Our Kids
  - ✓ Notify FOK of any problems with food, delivery or service.
  - ✓ Provide feedback to FOK on suggestions, issues, etc.



# Program Logistics

**Quantity Received:** Quantity received is based on the number of students in the program and the total number of weeks the program is in session. Typically, schools will receive the first distribution during 2<sup>nd</sup> week of school starting, and the program will run until school year ends.

- **Delivery Day:** A schedule is provided to each school.
- **Assisting the Delivery Volunteer:** Please ensure that your school has sufficient help from volunteers, staff or custodians to help unload the food bags and place them in their designated location.
- **Check the Delivery:** The School Program Coordinator (or designee/volunteers) must check the food bag delivery each time. Notify FOK within 1 day of receipt if anything is incorrect for example: not the correct number of bags, extreme damage, etc.
- **Bad Weather/Unforeseen Circumstances:** In the case of inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstance, FOK will coordinate with School Program Coordinators. The safety of participants and volunteer drivers will be the primary concern in decision-making. Coordination may include early deliveries to avoid forecasted events if possible, or delayed or postponed deliveries. In such cases, the coordinator can distribute the food bags immediately upon receipt.
- **Holidays/School Breaks:** It is the school coordinator's responsibility to check the delivery schedule and ensure that their school is open on that delivery day. If your school is closed for any delivery dates, please contact Feeding Our Kids to coordinate.
- **Holiday and Break:** For certain breaks (e.g. Winter and Spring breaks), FOK will provide extra items in each food bag.

## Food Safety & Storage Guidelines

Although the Backpack Program food is shelf-stable and does not need to be refrigerated, the food should be stored in a place that is ventilated, secure, clean, and pest free.

- **Secure:** food should be stored in a secure location. It should be in a place where it cannot be used or compromised by children, faculty or staff, or other people who use the building.
- **Clean:** the storage area should be clean, dry and organized.
- **Pest-free:** food must be stored at least 6" off the ground for pest control purposes.

## Dates on Food

It is important to note that dates on packaged food, except for infant formula, do not refer to food safety, but rather peak quality of the food. On May 23, 2019, the FDA sent a letter to the Food Industry asking for all parties to adopt the phrase "Best if Used by" to clarify that the dates refer to peak quality rather than safety.

The food that Feeding Our Kids receives from the Eastern Illinois Foodbank may often be near the dates listed on the packaging. Feeding Our Kids tries to rotate inventory to ensure food is delivered prior to the listed dates, however this is not always possible.

If you receive comments or complaints about foods being past the printed date, please inform that person that the food is still safe to eat, and that Feeding Our Kids works under the guidelines of the Eastern Illinois Foodbank to ensure food safety for all participants.

## Record Keeping

It is the responsibility of the school program coordinator to become familiar with required documentation and complete relevant paperwork. Documents required during program participation include:

### Documentation Submitted to Feeding Our Kids:

- **Annual Application:** All schools must annually formalize participation in the program through a “FOK BackPack Program Application” signed by the school program coordinator and Principal. Failure to turn in application may impact program participation.
- **School Student Roster:** School program coordinators must submit updated student numbers quarterly via the online form on the FOK website.
- **School Calendar:** FOK must receive a copy of each school’s calendar for the school year. It must include any days the facility will be closed or inaccessible and any weeks the school will not distribute food bags.
- **Program Surveys:** FOK may distribute surveys periodically to evaluate program performance and opportunities.
- **Testimonials / Thank You’s:** FOK may request from time to time throughout program to provide to sponsors.

### Documentation Retained for Record Keeping:

- **Parental Consent:** the signed parental consent forms are to be kept at the school for the entire school year. New parental consent forms must be signed each school year.
  - NOTE: These are NOT to be sent to Feeding Our Kids.
- **Year End Close Out:** submit next school year’s program application; notify FOK of any staffing changes for next school year

**All surveys/forms will be provided. The school may make additional copies if needed.**

## Annual Site Visit

A Feeding Our Kids representative will visit each participating school at least once a year, ideally early in the year. The main purpose of the visit is to ensure program guidelines are understood and being followed, learn more about the specific school and its needs, and to solicit feedback directly from the school program coordinator.

## Site Visit Expectations

- A review of the storage area to ensure that the locations safety and sanitation standards are maintained.
- An opportunity to brainstorm, answer questions and address concerns regarding the FOK BackPack Program.
- Review of receiving inventory and distribution process and related record-keeping system.

## Food Menu

Food items will vary depending on what FOK is able to purchase. We try our best to include a variety of nutritious and kid-friendly meals and snacks. Food bags *may* include:

Breakfast Item	Fruit
Milk or Juice	Minimal Preparation Items (soup, spaghetti, etc.)
Snacks (granola bar, crackers, etc.)	Protein (canned meat, beans, peanut butter, etc.)

## Food Bag Distribution

The BackPack Program is flexible enough to accommodate a variety of ways of distributing food bags. Each school is free to develop its own plan.

Develop a clear plan that will cut down on the time spent distributing the food bags and reduce the likelihood of mistakes and confusion. An example of what we have seen successfully work in the past is for staff to put directly into students backpacks during recess in order to preserve confidentiality.

- **Absences**
  - ✓ In the event a student is absent for any reason on the primary distribution day, they should receive the food from the program on their first day back to school.
  - ✓ If a student is absent for an extended period, the food bag can be sent back with bins for next food delivery.
- **Snow days**
  - ✓ If food bins have been delivered, but a snow day prevents distribution to the students, food bags should be distributed the next day school is in session.
- **Confidentiality:** Food bags should be given out as confidentially and discreetly as possible. In order to achieve this:
  - ✓ Avoid making public announcements that refer to children receiving the food
  - ✓ Do not hand food to children in the midst of their peers who are not receiving the food

# Program Support

FOK BackPack Program is supported by private foundations, individual donors, civic groups, the community, and local businesses. Each year, Feeding Our Kids solicits multiple donors for funds to keep the program going. With the new Adopt-a-School fundraising campaign, some of these donations may be specific to a school. Additionally, many parents are unaware of the problem of food insecurity in their children's schools and the work that Feeding Our Kids does.

As such, schools participating in the program agree to assist Feeding Our Kids with awareness and donor networking in the following manner:

- If the school has a Parent Teacher Association (or similar), invite Feeding Our Kids to present to this group, ideally early in the school year.
- Display a small poster, provided by Feeding Our Kids, in a location where it will be easily seen by school visitors (i.e. the main entrance or front office).
- Provide testimonials that can be passed along to current and potential donors. These testimonials may be anonymously submitted from children or families; or they may be about the impact witnessed by school staff and / or volunteers.
- Send at least one school representative to the Adopt-a-School Thank-You Social Event to meet with donors / sponsors. Additional details about the event to be provided by FOK at a later date.
- Potentially allow large Adopt-a-School sponsors to visit for a photo opportunity.

## Marketing & Media

Schools and community partners should notify FOK of all media requests and media coverage for the Feeding Our Kids Program.

# Forms and Documentation

This section includes:

- Parental Consent Form
  - o English
  - o Spanish
- School Enrollment Questionnaire for the Beginning of the Year

Other forms and documents will likely be requested throughout the year and will be sent separately.

# Feeding Our Kids

## Parental Consent Form



Dear Parents/Guardians,

*Feeding Our Kids*, in partnership with local businesses and volunteers, is pleased to inform you that we will be offering a weekly Friday food program. The *Feeding Our Kids* program provides a small bag of easily prepared, nutritious snack foods for your child to enjoy throughout the weekend at no cost to you. Your child will receive a small bag of food in his/her backpack at the end of each school week. This food is to remain in the backpack until your child arrives home. Please complete the form below if you are interested in having your child participate in the *Feeding Our Kids* program. If your child has allergies that limit his/her ability to eat a variety of foods, there may be some restrictions. If you have any questions, please contact the social worker at your child's school.

.....  
My child \_\_\_\_\_ has my permission to participate in the *Feeding Our Kids* program.

The program has the following dietary alternative options. Please circle if your child requires the following:

Pork free

Nut free

Other allergies: \_\_\_\_\_

By signing this form, I agree to

- speak with my child regarding the requirements of all food remaining in his/her backpack until arriving home
- assume any and all risks regarding the consumption of food including adverse reactions and release *Feeding Our Kids*, the school district, and district personnel from any liability associated with participation in the program including any and all adverse reactions my child may have to foods consumed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# Feeding Our Kids

## Consentimiento de Padres de Familia



Queridos Padres/Tutores,

*Feeding Our Kids*, en asociación con grupos locales y voluntarios, se complace en informarle que ofreceremos un programa semanal de alimentos los viernes. El programa de *Feeding Our Kids* provee una pequeña bolsa de bocadillos nutritivos y fáciles de preparar para que su hijo disfrute durante todo el fin de semana sin costo alguno para usted. Su hijo recibirá una pequeña bolsa de comida en su mochila al final de cada semana escolar. Esta comida debe permanecer en la mochila hasta que su hijo llegue a casa. Por favor, complete el siguiente formulario si usted está interesado en que su hijo participe en el programa de *Feeding Our Kids*. Si su hijo tiene alergias que limitan su capacidad de comer algunos alimentos, puede haber algunas restricciones. Si tiene alguna pregunta, comuníquese con el trabajador social de la escuela de su hijo.

.....

Mi hijo \_\_\_\_\_ tiene mi permiso para participar en el programa de *Feeding Our Kids*.

El programa tiene las siguientes opciones alternativas dietéticas. Por favor dibuje un círculo si su hijo requiere lo siguiente:

No cerdo

No nueces

Otras alergias: \_\_\_\_\_

Al firmar este formulario, acepto que:

- Hablaré con mi hijo sobre los requisitos de todos los alimentos que quedan en su mochila hasta llegar a casa.
- Asumo todos los riesgos relacionados con el consumo de alimentos, incluidas las reacciones adversas, y libero a *Feeding Our Kids*, el distrito escolar y el personal del distrito de cualquier responsabilidad asociada con la participación en el programa, incluidas todas y cada una de las reacciones adversas que mi hijo pueda tener a los alimentos consumidos.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Firma del Padre/Tutor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Fecha

## School Enrollment Questionnaire for Beginning of Year

Please Complete and send to Feeding Our Kids at [applications@feedingourkids.org](mailto:applications@feedingourkids.org)

### SECTION ONE: GENERAL INFORMATION

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School Program Coordinator Name & E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
(primary contact for Feeding Our Kids)

School Administrator Name & E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
Include Administrator on Feeding Our Kids emails?  YES  NO

PTA/PTO President or Contact Name & Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### SECTION TWO: STUDENT ROSTER

An estimated roster count was provided to Feeding Our Kids (FOK) in May. Please submit an updated number of children requested to participate in the program. This will be considered the final student roster count for the first quarter of the year. Changes to numbers will then be handled quarterly as described in the program manual. *(NOTE: significant increases in student numbers will require Feeding Our Kids to review and evaluate ability to support the higher number.)*

# Students Participating in Program with No Restrictions: \_\_\_\_\_

# Students Participating in Program with Dietary Restrictions: \_\_\_\_\_

Restriction Details: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Number of students requested: \_\_\_\_\_

### SECTION THREE: PARENTAL CONSENT

In order for each child to participate in the program, parental consent is required. In order to maintain anonymity, Feeding Our Kids relies on the school to gain consent and maintain records. Please review manual for details.

Please confirm parental consent has been received for all students participating in the Feeding Our Kids program.

(Please circle) YES NO

School Program Coordinator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### SECTION FOUR: VOLUNTEER LIST

Volunteers are a vital part of the success of the Feeding Our Kids program. In order to ensure children receive the food after each food sort activity, the program is reliant on volunteer commitment to pick up the food, deliver food to the school's program coordinator, and bring back empty bins for next food sort. Primary and back-up volunteers are necessary to ensure timely delivery of food and bins.

Have volunteers been identified to transport food bins to / from pick-up location and school?

(Please circle) YES NO



**SECTION FOUR: VOLUNTEER LIST (Continued)**

If yes, please submit list of potential volunteers and contact info.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone & Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone & Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone & Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION FIVE: SPONSORSHIP**

**Feeding Our Kids is dependent on donations to purchase food for all children participating in the program. On average each child that participates in the program costs \$150 per school year. To ensure sustainable funding for each school, Feeding Our Kids program seeks partners for our Adopt-a-School fundraising program.**

**Please identify potential sponsors that may support your school. Feeding Our Kids will then contact them directly.**

Organization/Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone / Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone / Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION SIX: SIGNATURES**

**Please read this carefully before signing:**

By signing below, you attest to the truthfulness of all information listed on this application. You agree to let our program confirm all information listed.

I have read and understood the program's rules and responsibilities of the participating school administration. If selected, our school will follow the rules of the program. I agree to the commitment that Feeding Our Kids requires of all participating schools.

School Administrator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

FOK Program Coordinator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_