



## Kids You're Serving Want You to Know ...

Every Friday during this past school year, the Food Bank of Northwest Indiana delivered weekend BackPacks to nearly 400 grateful school children in need across our region. It wouldn't have been possible without help from so many generous friends like you.

We asked some of the kids to tell us what that food means for them and their families ... here's what they had to say:

***"I love the Backpack because it helps me and my family. They can save the cans and when my mom or dad is sick they open the can and put it in a pot and cook it."***

– Princess, age 8

***"This helps people who are hungry and don't have the money to go out and get the food and eat. It eases the stress and gives them a little bit of happiness."***

– Christian, age 10

***"I feel happy because the protein in my food it makes me strong. I like the can goods, applesauce, and goldfish. I am a vegetable kid, too."***

– Cody, age 9

***"It is good because me and my family eat the food and you are the best. My dad like the candy and my mom like the beef and the juice is good, and the apple saus is good too."***

– Martina, age 9

Without the help of weekend BackPacks, we know these kids' parents have an even tougher time making ends meet during the summer months.

**Your gift to the Food Bank will help meet the extra summertime need at more than 100 food pantries, soup kitchens, senior centers, and other agencies we serve.** In July, the Food Bank will distribute enough food to serve more than 400,000 meals, but that covers only a portion of the actual need.

Remember that for every dollar you send, the Food Bank can provide three nutritious meals to kids like Princess, Cody, Martina, and Christian and so many more of our neighbors facing hunger this summer.



Illustrations (top to bottom): Princess, age 8; Christian, age 10; Cody, age 9; Martina, age 9.

## Thank you for leading the fight against hunger in Northwest Indiana!

### Joseph S., age 62

Joseph lives in the John B. Nicosia Building in East Chicago, where he receives help through the Commodity Supplemental Food Program and Fresh Produce Box program. Joseph is blind, and his health is fragile. He has many food allergies that make it difficult to get the balance he needs, so he is especially grateful for the nutrient-rich variety.



***"The produce boxes are great for those of us who need it, and the fruits and vegetables are a big plus. It's a good program that helps in many ways, and I really appreciate the support."***

*The Food Bank of Northwest Indiana administers the USDA Commodity Supplemental Food Program in Lake and Porter counties. The Fresh Produce Box program is available thanks to a grant from the Foundation of East Chicago.*

## Hidden Hunger

A friend of mine recently told me about growing up in the Midwest. Mary has six siblings. Her mom stayed home full-time while her dad worked 15-18 hours a day to make ends meet.

"Mom would beat a dozen eggs and add a cup of water before scrambling them," Mary says. "She said it made them fluffier. But now I know she was just trying to have enough to go around for all nine of us. She also added a ton of cracker crumbs to ground beef. The meatloaf that came out of the oven was as much a bread loaf!"

This issue of NewsFeed highlights ways your generosity can help families struggling with not only getting enough food, but with getting enough nutrition. Someone's plate may look full, but they may still leave the table malnourished. Some call this "hidden hunger."

**Your summertime gift to the Food Bank of Northwest Indiana can go farther than ever before to provide more fruits and vegetables, milk and dairy, meats, and other fresh foods that prevent this hidden hunger.**

*We're proud of all you're doing to provide greater health and hope for more kids, adults, and seniors facing hunger and hardship. Thank you again and again!*

**Steve Beekman, Executive Director**

## Nutrition Assistance for Seniors Did you know?



The Northwest Indiana Community Action agency provides seniors and women, infants, and children in need with vouchers to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at participating local farmers' markets.

The Farmers' Market Nutrition Program helps eligible seniors and families who are often unable to afford healthier foods while supporting area farmers who grow and harvest the fresh produce. Local farmers' markets participating in the program include Highland, Valparaiso, and Miller Beach.

**For more information or to find out if you or someone you love qualifies for this assistance, call 1-800-826-7871.**

## Growing concerns about malnutrition

Millions of Americans eat enough calories *but are still malnourished*. How can this be?

**Their daily foods don't contain nearly enough vitamins and minerals for good health.**

## Health and Hunger Connection

# Your Gift Means More and Better Nutrition



Across the country, food banks have come a long way in their efforts to alleviate hunger in our communities. The Food Bank of Northwest Indiana is no exception.

Thanks to continued generosity from so many good friends across the Region, today we are able to provide more food and healthier choices than ever before. Plans also continue to increase our community partnerships to provide programs like nutrition education and healthy meal planning for our neighbors.

### Why Healthier Eating Matters

Feeding America has reported that a majority of people served by its food banks are coping with chronic illness that is affected by a nutrient-poor diet.

When a family member cannot afford enough nutritious food, managing chronic health issues and diseases like diabetes or high blood pressure can become even more challenging. Medical bills tax the household budget, leaving little or no money left over for healthy foods. In turn, an unhealthy diet often aggravates health conditions. A vicious cycle can quickly take hold.

So the Food Bank's efforts to focus on the nutritional needs of individuals struggling with hunger – by providing 50% more fresh fruits and vegetables this year compared with last year, and planning programs like diet education – is a giant step forward in fighting hunger in the Region.

### How Your Generosity Helps

Food banks nationwide have a limited ability to accept donations of fresh foods – mostly due to safety, space, and timing constraints. That's why the Food Bank of Northwest Indiana relies on your financial gifts to **purchase critical, nutrient-rich produce and dairy products** in larger volumes, which can be delivered efficiently and safely to partner pantries and feeding sites.

Your donations also support the Food Bank's ability to increase its **rescue of truckloads of unsold fresh fruits, vegetables, and milk** rejected by retailers for variety of reasons, like the delivery was a mistake, or the oranges were the wrong type, or a few too many apples had a bruise on them. (In 2016, more than 1.5 million meals were served from produce and dairy and other foods turned away by stores and restaurants ... perfectly "good" products that were otherwise headed for the dumpster. Because of you, the Food Bank was able to accept many shipments and redirect the food to schoolchildren and families facing hunger.)

Finally, your generosity will help us **deliver significantly more locally-grown produce** for our neighbors in need. This effort is part of Feeding America's new national initiative to increase food banks' and pantries' space, refrigeration, and processing methods needed to receive more of our area farmers' harvests as donations.

**Thank you for your continuing commitment to fighting hunger and improving the health of individuals living across Northwest Indiana!**



**More than 80%**  
of people facing food  
insecurity reported  
buying inexpensive,  
unhealthy foods to cope.



**4 in 10**  
water down food and  
drinks to help them go  
farther for the family.

[www.foodbanknwi.org](http://www.foodbanknwi.org)



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# THE *soirée*

AN EVENT TO FIGHT HUNGER PRESENTED BY  
*Strack & Van Til*

Thank you to our sponsors, community partners, friends and guests for fighting hunger at The Soirée on Sunday, May 21. Together, we raised more than **\$35,000** for hunger relief programs and services in Northwest Indiana. **THANK YOU!**

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The Food Bank of Northwest Indiana is proud to team up with Northwest Indiana McDonald's Owner/Operators

for the 7th annual Pantry on the Go program.

This weekly mobile food distribution program will serve an estimated 350,000 neighbors in need during 2017 — parents, children, senior citizens, veterans, and others experiencing hunger or threatened by food insecurity. Local McDonald's

managers, supervisors, and crew members serve as volunteers at each location.

"We're grateful for so many generous Food Bank donors and our local McDonald's restaurant volunteers who are ensuring that this critical food assistance reaches those who need it most," says Food Bank Executive Director Steve Beekman. "Without this unique outreach, we know many more folks around Lake and Porter Counties would likely go without enough nutrition. It's a great community effort that's making a real difference in people's lives."

**For information about times and locations of the Pantry stops, call (219) 980-1777 or visit [foodbanknwi.org/POG](http://foodbanknwi.org/POG).**