



## **Backpack Enrollment Process**

St. Mary's Backpack program works with community partners to identify hungry children and provide them with a weekly bag of food to help their families through the weekend.

### **Backpacks:**

- Are filled with nutritious, non-perishable foods, purchased by St. Mary's Food Bank
- Can provide three or more meals to a family of four
- Are available in in four different, rotating menus
- Are distributed in durable, white plastic bags; they weigh about 10lbs and are valued close to \$8

### **Partnership with St. Mary's Food Bank**

In distributing Backpacks, you are considered a Partner Agency to St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance. You will be assigned a Child Nutrition Specialist who will be your primary point of contact, and will schedule your orders and deliveries, maintain your roster, and visit at least once a year.

### **Your Child Nutrition Specialist is:**

**Cinee Davis**

Email: [cdavis@stmarysfoodbank.org](mailto:cdavis@stmarysfoodbank.org)

Direct Phone: (602) 343-3154; Cell Phone: (928) 225 - 7833

Fax: (480) 780 - 3715

At your site: **Identify a Site Supervisor** who will be responsible for communicating with your St. Mary's Child Nutrition Specialist, and will oversee your delivery, storage, and distribution of Backpacks.

Your Child Nutrition Specialist will meet with you in person or via telephone before beginning the program to sign partnership agreements and arrange weekly Backpack delivery and storage.

### **Selecting Children to Receive a Backpack**

1. Using the *Criteria to Identify Backpack Participants* document, or previous knowledge of the families you serve, create a list of students you believe face a lack of food at home most weekends.
2. Provide each of the identified families with a letter informing them that they have been selected to receive a weekly Backpack.
  - a. Your Child Nutrition Specialist will provide this letter in English and Spanish
  - b. As a way of destigmatizing "hungry children", this letter informs parents that their child was selected to receive a Backpack via a lottery system.

When your list of Backpack recipients is complete, please **send it to your St. Mary's Child Nutrition Specialist**. Include the name or initials of each child who will receive a weekly Backpack.



## Backpack Enrollment Process

### Ordering and Receiving Backpacks

Once your roster is approved by your Child Nutrition Specialist you may begin receiving a weekly delivery of Backpacks.

1. Backpack delivery time may vary within a four-hour window arranged with your Child Nutrition Specialist. Staff must be present to receive Backpacks when they are delivered.
  - a. If you receive Kids Cafe meals, your Backpack delivery will be separate.
2. Backpacks must be kept in a secure, dry, and clean environment where access to them can be monitored by your Site Supervisor.
  - a. Backpacks arrive in milk crates. Please keep them 6 inches above the floor for food safety.
  - b. All contents are non-perishable and can be kept at room temperature.
  - c. If any Backpacks are damaged, set them aside and contact your Child Nutrition Specialist.
  - d. Please keep empty crates near the delivery area so that our driver can pick them up on your next delivery day.

### Backpack Distribution and Recordkeeping

Backpacks should be distributed directly to the child on your roster, or to a member of their family, once each week.

1. St. Mary's recommends distributing backpacks at a fixed day, time, and place each week.
  - a. Backpacks may be brought directly to a child's classroom, or the child may come to pick up the Backpack from its storage location. Staff must be present when the child picks up his/her backpack.
2. **Use the roster provided by your Child Nutrition Specialist to track which children have received their Backpack** each week. Place a check mark by the name of each child right as they receive their Backpack.
3. Do not remove or adjust the contents of a Backpack without prior approval from your Child Nutrition Specialist.

If a child is absent at the time Backpacks are distributed:

1. Store the Backpack for at least one day and attempt to distribute it to them when they return to school/site.
2. If contact is not made after one day, this Backpack may be given to another child with high need. Please note this one-time change on your roster.

**At the end of each month, email or fax your Child Nutrition Specialist the roster with check marks representing each Backpack handed out. If you are a rural site, please use the Link2Feed Software to indicate the numbers distributed.**



## Backpack Enrollment Process

### Backpack Reallocation or Rescheduling

After Backpacks are distributed and absences are accounted for each week, there should not be any leftovers.

1. Please **notify your Child Nutrition Specialist as soon as possible if you need to re-schedule or reduce your Backpack order, including for school closures/holidays.** We will make changes to your order and/or delivery as soon as possible.

Quarterly, re-assess the families receiving Backpacks to ensure that they are still experiencing hunger at home. Inform your Child Nutrition Specialist of any changes to participants and the number of bags needed.

1. Maintain a waiting list of children in need of, but not currently receiving, a Backpack.
2. If families move or their situation changes, please replace them with a student on the waiting list. **Inform your Child Nutrition Specialist of these changes,** as well as the new recipient's name.