

Bath Back Pack Program



Sponsored By:

Bath United Methodist Church and
The Good Shepherd Food Bank

Feeding Hungry Children in the Bath Schools

Here in Bath Maine, at least two in four children are experiencing food insecurity, meaning they don't always know where their next meal will come from, or if it will be enough. In the Bath elementary schools that's at least 300 children. Further, of the nearly 600 elementary age children at the Dike-Newell and Fisher-Mitchell Schools, approximately 400 qualify for free or reduced school lunches. That's over 66 percent!

REACHING OUT

The members of the Bath United Methodist Church and some community members with whom we have spoken were astounded by this information. The study committee then decided to learn more about the conditions and circumstances surrounding these daunting figures.

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

We learned that our building principals, teachers and school nurses are finding that too many children on Monday morning are too focused on their hunger to pay attention to teachers and learning! In Bath nearly 400 children qualify for the free or reduced price meals through the National School Lunch Program. These meals are the fuel they need to get them through the week, but we don't know if they even have access to food when they go home for the weekend.



We also learned by visiting the Mid-Coast Hunger Prevention Program in Brunswick, that the Good Shepherd Food Bank's Backpack Program provides children who are suffering the effects of chronic hunger, with nutritious, easy-to-prepare food to eat during weekends and school vacations when those crucial school meals are unavailable. The Brunswick MCHPP has been participating in the Backpack program for two years providing nearly 260 students with nutritious weekend and vacation meals.

WHAT WE CAN DO TOGETHER - A PLAN FOR SUCCESS

Good Shepherd Food Bank's Backpack Program is already reporting great success in several Maine school districts!

Based on their experience, the Bath UMC, a 501(c)3 non-profit, is in the process of establishing a formal relationship with the Good Shepherd Food Bank. The Bath UMC, working with support from Bath community businesses, organizations, and individuals, will begin a Back Pack Program starting with the Dike-Newell School in January of 2015.

Each qualifying child at the Dike-Newell School will receive nutritious snacks and a family meal for each weekend during the year. The GSFB will deliver food to the Bath UMC on a monthly basis. Once the food is received, community and church volunteers will pack the recyclable sealed bags provided by GS, so they can be distributed at the school on a weekly or biweekly basis.

The church's goal is to provide nutritious, kid-friendly menu items, planned by the GSFB nutritionists, to the most vulnerable children during their most critical period of mental and physical development. The Bath community is being asked to help raise the \$11,000 to support the Backpack Program for one school year.

For a donation of just \$225.00 a year per student, working with the GSFB, we will be able to provide one source of grain, fruit, vegetable, and protein through a variety of staple meal items, breakfast foods, and healthy snacks

In these difficult economic times, more than ever, it truly takes the whole community to care for our most vulnerable children. Can you help?

For more information on how you or your organization can participate in the Backpack Program in Bath please contact:

Pastor, Neil Gastonguay at 207-443-4707
Cathy Leonard at 4436541
Myrtle Hicks at 443-7493
Brenda Ouellette at 802-673-2759
Letty Race at 443-6389.

For information about funding opportunities contact:

Irving Ouellette at irvbren@gmail.com or 802-673-2759
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DONATIONS

Please make checks payable to:
Good Shepherd Food Bank
PO Box 1807
Auburn, ME 04211-1807

On Memo Line Write:
Bath, Maine Back Pack Program

Or

Bath Savings Institution
105 Front Street
Bath ME, 04530

Please make checks payable to:
Bath Back Pack Program

