



Child Hunger Initiatives

Childhood Hunger in Louisiana

- Louisiana has the fourth highest rate of children living in poverty with 28% of children living in a household earning less than the poverty level.¹ For a family of four in 2013, this was less than \$23,550.
- **One in five Louisiana children** live in families who struggle with hunger.²
- **School meals are critical for Louisiana's children.** More than 400,000 children rely on free or reduced price school meals. Only 55% of these children get school breakfast.
- Hunger and food insecurity affect children's academic achievement and health adversely throughout their lives.³



Louisiana Food Banks are Partners to End Childhood Hunger

Louisiana's food banks provide resources to help children and families make ends meet so that children have access to nutritious food during out of school times. In 2012 Louisiana's food banks provided more than **720,000 meals** through afterschool and summer meal programs and the Backpack Program providing critical resources for children to continue to learn and grow.

Child Hunger Initiatives:

- **School Pantry Program:** This is a program that works with local schools to offer food pantries on-site for children and families identified by school staff in need of food.
- **Backpack Program:** Backpacks provide children with meals during weekend and out of school times using nutritious and child friendly food.
- **Summer Food Service Program:** School meals are critical for 70% of Louisiana's children, during the summer months food banks work to fill in the meal gap through the Summer Food Service Program.
- **Kid's Café and Afterschool Meals:** With longer school days and afterschool programs helping children through meal times, Food Banks in Louisiana partner with these sites to provide meals and snacks during programs.
- **Nutrition Education and Cooking Classes:** Food banks are on the frontline with partners educating children on healthy nutrition habits and
- **Food Distribution:** The core of food bank operations, provides pantries, shelters, and soup kitchens with food. These programs provide additional food resources for families to help make ends meet.

¹ Food Research and Action Center State Profile, <http://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/la.pdf>

² Feeding America Map the Meal Gap, www.feedingamerica.org/mapthegap

³ Jyoti, Diana, Frongillo, Edward, and Sonya Jones. "Food insecurity affects children's academic performance, weight gain, and social skills." Journal of Nutrition. 135: 2831-2839, 2005.