

OHCE 2021-22 State Project

Reduce Child Hunger

Oklahoma has some of the worst food insecurity statistics in the nation. Food insecurities is defined by the USDA as a household level economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food, 2020 statistics show 1 in 4 children suffer from food insecurities.

Hunger is a Complicated Issue

When children face hunger, they often struggle to concentrate in school, are more likely to have lower reading and math scores, more social and behavior problems, and lower high school graduation rates. Parents have difficulty in meeting other basic needs, such as housing, employment, and healthcare.

- OHCE 2021 State Project focuses on food services to families with school aged children who are or have been impacted by COVID-19.
- At this writing, some schools are closed, and others are open; face-to-face learning or virtual learning; and various school hours are also available options. These options make it difficult to provide consistent food assistance to school age children.

Hunger is Solvable

Sustainable solutions to hunger exist and require public, private partnerships to increase efficiency and help communities address local issues suggests “Feeding America.”

Successful meal programs can be replicated in our various communities, especially during the summer months and/or non-school days. For example, Back Pack Programs and Snack Sacks often include:

- Grab and Go Meals so children can continue social distancing,
- Pre-packed breakfasts and lunches or groceries for multiple days,
- Pick up meals at school meal distributors, and
- Meals delivered to bus stops, public housing or other central locations.

These ideas, hopefully, will give you additional ideas and/or expand current programs. Your creative program ideas are unlimited!

2021- OHCE State Project Goals

Reduce Child Hunger

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it is estimated 1 in 4 children may face food insecurity. This number is up from 1 in 7 before the pandemic. Oklahomans who have never needed assistance before will benefit from unknown entities.

Our proposed goal is to raise awareness and reduce the food insecurity crisis in our own communities.

Here are just a few ideas to start your creative juices.

- Enhance existing programs such as “Back Pack,” “Sack Snack,” etc. by increasing the number of children served and/or identify unserved children in underserved areas during non-scheduled school periods,
- Develop a community collaborative food drive(s) emphasizing child hunger relief. In all media exposures, be sure to include all partners.
- Contribute money and/or supplies to school counselors’ pantries.
- Identify youth hunger needs in rural area(s) and implement assistance.
- Rural Woman Walk the World fund drive to support food pantries and/or groups that provide child hunger relief services.