



More than 20 million children in the United States today are at risk of hunger. In Sturgeon Bay alone, more than 54 percent of our elementary students qualify for the free or reduced meal program. The consequences of hunger go far beyond a growling tummy. It affects a child's ability to learn. Studies show hungry students have shorter attention spans and fewer positive social interactions, making success at school more challenging.

Children are fed at school during the week through federal programs, but the need for food continues through the weekend. To address this need, Feed & Clothe My People funds the Backpack Buddies program. Children who participate have nutritious food placed in their backpacks at school on a Friday to take home to use during the weekend. Our mission for October is to support this program.

Backpack Buddies provides snacks for about 400 elementary children (who qualify for free or reduced lunch) at three Door County school districts. Backpack snacks include ready-to-eat foods like fresh fruit, pudding, juice boxes and granola bars. During 30 weeks of the school year, 5 snack items go home with the child each weekend. The snacks are "mini-meals" to be dispersed as the parent/guardian sees fit.

Carol Krueger spearheads a group of volunteers (including more than 18 SBUMC members) who meet at Feed & Clothe My People to assemble the food bags and distribute them to schools. Volunteers at the schools place the bags directly into student backpacks. Evaluations forms have been sent home stapled to the bags. Comments returned have been overwhelmingly positive; students love the food and families truly appreciate the support.

Let's do our best to support this great program in battling hunger in our community!