

fall 2011

seeds *of hope*



KANSAS
food bank
HELPING THE HUNGRY • SINCE 1984
A Member of **FEEDING AMERICA**

**You're Helping
Children Succeed!**



Brian Walker
PRESIDENT AND CEO

BACK TO SCHOOL AND READY TO LEARN

Dear Friend,

Did you know that an astounding 70 percent of children in Wichita Public Schools qualify for free and reduced-price school meals? That means they're living near or below the poverty line and wouldn't otherwise have consistent access to the food they need.

I don't know about your kids, but mine certainly don't function very well until they've had something to eat. They're lethargic, irritable and can pretty much only think about one thing – food.

Imagine if a child's only dependable meals were breakfast and lunch in the school cafeteria five days a week. What about dinner? Or any meals at all over the weekend? How can a child come to school ready to learn if they're distracted every morning by the gnawing pain of hunger?

The Kansas Food Bank sees these problems clearly, and with your help, we're able to reach out to kids where they are and fill their bellies with good, healthy food.

Thanks to your support, our Food 4 Kids weekend backpack program is now in 351 schools statewide, serving 5,961 of the most at-risk Kansas children. And to help families who struggle to put dinner on the table, our hunger-relief partners are hard at work, ever-increasing their distribution of food to our neighbors in need.

I'm so grateful for your partnership in the ongoing fight against hunger, and there's no better time to increase your involvement than right now! September is Hunger Action Month and we have special events, fundraisers and volunteer opportunities planned all month long. Check out kansasfoodbank.org to find out how to participate.

Thank you again for all you do – especially for the Kansas children who are the future of our great state.

B. Walker

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YOU'VE HELPED EASE PARENTS' BURDENS

Sometimes a fulltime job just isn't enough to provide for one's family, no matter how far a paycheck may stretch.

Though Jennifer's husband works fulltime, his hourly income is barely enough to pay the bills. With two young children to provide for and another one on the way, Jennifer was becoming overwhelmed with worry about how to put food on their table.

“I know at least my kids will have food to eat.”

She knew she had to seek help or risk her children's health – and her own – because they didn't have enough to eat.

That's when she went to the Wellington Food Bank.

In the small community of Wellington, about 40 minutes south of Wichita, the Wellington Food Bank serves nearly one out of every

10 community members.

Families like Jennifer's visit this Kansas Food Bank Hunger-Relief Partner when they've run out of other options. For Jennifer, that means making the trip at the end of the month after her food stamps are gone.

“It helps,” she says. “I know at least my kids will have food to eat.”

Wellington Food Bank Director Susan Musson says the economy really affected their distribution. The number of people they serve more than doubled in just one year. She says her volunteer-run agency wouldn't be able to do nearly as much for Wellington citizens if it weren't for your support of the Food Bank.



Jennifer is so grateful for your help.

And with kids headed back to school, the pantry was even able to provide school supplies to families in need.

For her part, Jennifer is very grateful for the help you have given her family during their difficult time.

“Thank you for being here, and for helping me and my kids,” she says, with a heart full of gratitude.

THANK YOU FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE!



Your gifts provide healthy food for hungry kids.



Thank you for helping feed hungry Kansans, young and old.



Growing families are grateful for your help.



Your gifts mean balanced meals for neighbors in need.



You put smiles on children's faces.

Kansas Food Bank Goes Mobile

This summer your Kansas Food Bank has gone mobile. We made our first-ever mobile pantry distribution in Marion County on June 17th. A mobile pantry is basically a pantry on wheels and not confined by bricks and mortar. We simply load food products onto the truck, drive to our destination, meet our host partners and distribute food. A total of 224 families were served during our first mobile distribution. Our latest

mobile pantry distribution was just deployed in Chanute. Mobile pantries are a quick and easy way to get food out to people in need in counties that are underserved.

Eat Your Veggies

The Kansas Food Bank has made a concerted effort to increase the availability of fresh produce to all of our partner agencies. With more and more focus being placed on nutritional food items, we are doing our part to see that our agencies distribute more healthy choices to the clients

they serve. This summer we have seen a dramatic rise in the pounds of produce we distribute. From apples, to potatoes, to cucumbers, to squash, tomatoes and corn on the cob, the Kansas Food Bank wants to offer good healthy-choice items to our agencies. And produce is something the clients love receiving!



Packing Time



With the start of school also comes one of our busier times of the year. Packing of the Food 4 Kids weekend backpacks is in full swing at the Kansas Food Bank. We will distribute over 6,000 backpacks each and every Friday during the school session. We could not accomplish this great task without the help of our dedicated volunteers. To find out how you can help, please contact Larry Gunkel at 265-3663.

Hunger Action Month



September is Hunger Action Month, when we ask everyone in Kansas to take action to fight hunger in their community, all month long. Hunger Action Month is your opportunity to join a movement that has a real and lasting impact on our effort to feed more Kansans than ever before. Whether it's by advocating and raising awareness, making donations or volunteering, individuals can find the way that's right for them to make a difference

during Hunger Action Month. This year we will once again host an open house/volunteer day at the Kansas Food Bank. Scheduled for Friday September 9th, from 8am to 6pm, the public will be invited for an inside look at the Kansas Food Bank and will join us in a flurry of activities from sorting canned and dry items, to packing food boxes and assembling Food 4 Kids backpacks. To join us on September 9th, contact Debi at 265-3663. We're grateful to Journal Broadcast Group and Sunflower Broadcasting for their roles as official media sponsors of Hunger Action Month.

DILLON STORES: A TRUE COMMUNITY PARTNER

YOU'VE HELPED ONE MOM GIVE BACK WITH GRATITUDE



Dana Knott

Even as one of the largest retail grocery chains in the country, Dillon Stores, a division of the Kroger Company, is a fantastic local partner with the Kansas Food Bank.

This charitably-minded company focuses its philanthropic efforts on hunger-relief and health and wellness initiatives. Their more than 30-year partnership with the Kansas

Food Bank is a natural fit.

In more recent years, Dillons has ramped up its participation by not only donating food through its Perishable Donations Partnership, hosting senior citizen food drives in conjunction with the AARP and asking customers to donate pre-packed Harvest for Hope food bags to the Food Bank

during the holidays, but they've also supported the Food 4 Kids backpack program for several years.

To make sure chronically hungry children have access to food on the weekends when they don't have free school meals to count on, Dillons prepares special Food 4 Kids bags full of all a child needs to keep him full until he gets back to school on Monday morning. Customers can then "buy" these special bags on behalf of the Food Bank.

"To think about all the kids in need and the generosity of our supportive customers, it's amazing," says Dana Knott, director of customer communications for Dillon Stores.

As the Food Bank's most recent volunteer of the quarter, Dillons has proven time and again that its partnership is invaluable. And, Dana says, the company is just as excited about helping hungry Kansans.

“We know that together, we have the resources and abilities to do the most good for our community.”

"We are proud to be a partner with the Kansas Food Bank," she says. "We know that together, we have the resources and abilities to do the most good for our community."

A huge thanks to Dillon Stores for its long-time partnership and innovative involvement in the fight against hunger.

Tabitha knows just what it feels like to need help feeding your kids. As a new employee of the Salvation Army that houses the Reno County Food Bank in Hutchinson, it wasn't long ago that she was on the other side of the distribution line.

She's a single mom raising three elementary-aged children on her own. Despite looking for work constantly, the only source of income she'd sometimes have was from selling her platelets at a blood bank, just so her children could eat.

She's gone from skipping meals so her kids had enough, to now being able to eat with them, and even afford to buy them new school clothes and shoes.

If not for the food pantry, "my kids would've gone hungry," she says, honestly. "It was just that little bit to get by...just to make sure your kids don't go hungry."

Now, she considers it a privilege to help other families going through similar struggles. The compassion and empathy she has for her clients is truly from the heart.

"I've been in their shoes before, so I know how to help," she says.

Things aren't altogether perfect, of course. She still qualifies for a small amount of food stamps, which she's grateful for. But looking back on where she's been in recent years, Tabitha is overjoyed to have come so far. And your support of the Kansas Food Bank, in part, for helping her land on her feet.

"Thank you," she says. "Thank you because it's kept my kids from going hungry a lot of times."

Now with school back in session, Tabitha's children are more prepared than ever for a year full of successes, in and out of the classroom. Your gifts make more of a difference than you know for Kansas families in need.



Tabitha sits behind her desk at her new job.

If you'd like to volunteer at the Kansas Food Bank, contact Larry Gunkel at lgunkel@kansasfoodbank.org.

YOU'RE HELPING KIDS GROW UP STRONG AND HEALTHY



When you hear about a mother who hasn't eaten a real meal in days so that her 4-year-old son can eat, it tends to make an impact. And that's just the real-life story that stands out when Janet Robertson thinks about the struggles that her client families are going through.

As the director of the Pawnee Avenue Day Care, Janet serves up to 80 low-income children from all-day care for babies as young as six weeks to afterschool care for elementary

students. Through a partnership with the Kansas Food Bank, she's able to provide these precious little ones with a full breakfast, a hot lunch and a filling snack in the afternoon.

"A lot of kids come hungry," she says. "I don't think they eat much at home."

And not only is Janet able to feed the children, she says the food is balanced, high-quality and kid-

friendly – meaning kids are filling up on healthy foods rather than ingesting empty calories just to fill their bellies.

And, she says, seconds are always welcome.

"We cook real food," she says. "We prepare food that will stick with kids longer, giving them the energy to help them through the day."

Janet is very aware that the children in her program wouldn't

have access to this good, nourishing food if it wasn't for your support of the Food Bank.

**“Thank you
for all that you do
in this community.”**

"If it wasn't for you, we wouldn't be able to deliver filling, healthy foods to these children," she says with gratitude. "Thank you for all that you do in this community – our children thank you."

Thanks to you, Kansas children like those served by the Pawnee Avenue Day Care, will grow up stronger, healthier and with a better chance for success.



1919 E. Douglas
Wichita, KS 67211

316.265.4421
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