

Pantry Packs FAQ

1. What is Pantry Packs?

There are kids going hungry in our local community, with not enough food in the house to fill their tummies over the weekend.

Pantry Packs was created to help these students and their families. Every week, we fill the Pantry Packs (small backpacks or bags) with kid-friendly food items for the weekend. Kids (identified by local school counselors) take the packs home on Fridays, and return them on Mondays.

As of January 1, 2012, Pantry Packs is providing up to 250 packs per week at 14 schools in LWSD.

Pantry Packs is a 501(c) organization so all donations are tax-deductible and Microsoft matching does apply.

2. Who receives the packs?

Students are identified by their school counselors or, in the case of older students, they ask for help. There are several schools collecting food and a couple of packing sites. Wilder is collecting and packing food for 30 preschool students at the Head Start Preschool at Dickinson Elementary. These preschool families are from the East side of the district.

3. What is the benefit of collecting food at Wilder?

We felt it was a great opportunity for the Wilder community to be involved in a program that supports so many other schools in our district. By collecting the food at Wilder, we are also able to enlist the help of Wilder Students to pack each week. It gives the students an opportunity to do "something" for someone else.

4. Who packs the food?

A group of adult volunteers have been helping groups of kids pack each Tuesday at Wilder during a lunch recess. Our goal is to provide each Wilder student with the opportunity to pack this school year. You can also sign up your family or group to pack at the other site by signing up here: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/packing1>

5. What can you do to help?

We cannot do this without food! It takes a lot of food to fill 30 packs each week.

- Check out the wish list each week in the newsletter to see what we need and pick up a little something extra when you go to Costco or the grocery store. Some weeks there are special requests but we always need: canned tuna/chicken; canned fruits/vegetables; granola bars; oatmeal; Mac-N-Cheese/noodles; soup; kid-friendly snacks.

- Do you have a contact at a company who would be willing to donate or sponsor a special treat one week? Ask them to make a donation.
- Let your kids be involved. Yes, it takes work but kids learn best by doing.
- Sign up to help pack at a different site by contacting: pantrypacks@gmail.com or <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/packing1>
- Support the bigger cause by purchasing items from the Pantry Pack Amazon wish list: http://www.amazon.com/wishlist/1Y3ACHWYCTR3/ref=cm_wl_rlist_go or making a cash donation. Contact information is: Pantry Packs, c/o Shauna Yusko, 21826 NE 92nd Place, Redmond, WA 98053

6. What can your kids do to help?

Let them shop with you! We tell the kids that when they donate food they should choose foods they like to eat. Let your kids pick out something from the pantry or the grocery store.

Want to get them more involved:

- Make a chore list where they earn money to purchase food for Pantry Packs. Show them how to use coupons to make the most of their purchase.
- Bring an extra snack for Two-Snack-Tuesday. A great opportunity to teach kids responsibility and independence.
- Instead of gifts for their birthday ask their guests to bring food.
- Organize a food drive at a local grocery store.
- Organize an effort to raise money to purchase food.
- Create “treat bags” to go into the packs one week. Treat bags can be special snacks with a note or prize.
- If your child is in Scouts or another group, have a food drive at one meeting.
- Sign up to help pack the packs at a different site by contacting: pantrypacks@gmail.com
- Ask us for more ideas!

7. How do I ask for assistance for my family?

Talk to your school counselor. They can provide you with information on how to receive help.