



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

community
FOOD SHARE

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Feeding Children is a Work of Heart

How one school district is working to end childhood hunger

The past two years have been a crash course in crisis response. With unprecedented circumstances came a sweeping effort from our medical community, government institutions, and non-profit sector to keep families and businesses afloat. From this incredible response, one unexpected player emerged holding a particularly powerful role: our schools.

When schools first shut down in the spring of 2020, experts warned that students who relied on free breakfast and lunch could very quickly face hunger. Fortunately, the team at the Boulder Valley School District didn't wait to see if that grim prediction would become reality. The very week after schools closed, the culinary team was back to work implementing the Community Food Distribution Program, which would become Boulder's largest food distribution effort during the pandemic.

Stephen Menyhart, Registered Dietician and Director of the School Food Project, shared that the goal of the Community Food Distribution Program was to reach as many

families as possible with the healthy and nutritious food they've come to expect from BVSD. "Typically, we're providing more than half the nutrient intake for students each school day," Stephen explained. "With supply chain struggles, labor shortages, and a host of other challenges, the part we're most proud of is that through it all, we were able to maintain the essence of our program: providing made-from-scratch, nutritive meals for students."

Community Food Share partnered with the School Food Project throughout the pandemic, providing over 1 million pounds of groceries to help make the program possible. And due to our existing collaboration with the school district, we were able to quickly respond when the next crisis arose: the Marshall Fire.

Working with BVSD, our food bank provided direct support to more than 100 families impacted by the fire at a pop-up food pantry at Douglass Elementary, and donated 369 grocery gift cards to the district to distribute to its students. "We're so grateful for the nimbleness of Community Food Share," said Mary Rochelle, Programs, Grants & Communications at the School Food Project. "It allowed us to move quickly to help our students when they needed it the most."

In addition to paving the way for better collaboration in times of crisis, our work with BVSD throughout the pandemic helped open the door to a new partnership with Crest View Elementary that is helping students by keeping them full and focused throughout the school year. Read more on page four!



The School Food Project distributed more than 2.2 million meals over the course of the pandemic.



A NOTE FROM KIM

Hunger is a reality for one in eight Boulder and Broomfield County's kids.

No matter how many times I recall this statistic, I find myself struck by the reality that it describes: that within every classroom, soccer team, and theater rehearsal, there could be anywhere from one to a dozen kids who are struggling with food insecurity.

In this newsletter, you'll read about how our local school districts are working to prevent childhood hunger. But as summer approaches, students who rely on these free and reduced meals during the school year could be returning to an empty kitchen at home.

To make matters worse, this year's summer break comes as inflation rates are hitting their highest points since our food bank opened its doors more than forty years ago. The cost of food, housing, fuel, utilities, and other goods has increased by 8.5% over last year, adding \$327 worth of monthly expenses to the average household's budget.

Our kids shouldn't have to worry about the complicated factors contributing to inflation. Nor should they need to understand why their parents stay up late at night sorting through bills and receipts while the pantry at home gets emptier each day. And with your help, they won't have to.

Your gift to Community Food Share today will provide fresh, healthy groceries to help fill bellies and fuel the futures of Boulder and Broomfield County's youth. With your support, we can prevent kids in our community from experiencing hunger this summer and let them do what they do best: *just being kids*.



With gratitude,

Kim Da Silva
CEO

Volunteer Spotlight



Ball Corporation

For more than a decade, Ball Corporation has been a true partner in our work — providing donations of food, funds, and hundreds of hours in volunteer support to fight hunger. We are incredibly grateful to Ball's continued investment in our local community and we were thrilled to welcome Ball employees back to our warehouse this year to help sort and package kidney beans in our sorting room. We love having our corporate partners see the impact of their contributions in action! To learn more about volunteering at Community Food Share, visit www.communityfoodshare.org/volunteer.

In the Mountains, Neighbors Helping Neighbors Is a Way of Life

There are countless reasons why people choose to live in the mountains: the abundance of nature, solitude, and recreation are a few that may come to mind. But talk to the folks at the Nederland Food Pantry and you'll learn that the heart of Boulder County's mountain community isn't its geography, but instead, its people.

"In general, we all look out for each other," shared Nicole Cavalino, Executive Director at Nederland Food Pantry. "The isolation that comes from living in the mountains poses challenges," she explained. "We have people who don't have Wi-Fi, access to transportation, or other things people may take for granted. It's a different community altogether, which is beautiful, but it has gaps."

Last year, Community Food Share started to explore how to reach mountain residents who were struggling to meet their food needs. Working with Tim Dillon, board member and community liaison for Nederland Food Pantry, we began co-hosting pop-up food pantries at the WonderVu Café. "That's where the locals go," Tim explained. The Mexican café is more than a place to get a good meal or drink: it's a community hub that, thanks to its central location, is accessible to residents who lack transportation.

Seeing the need, Community Food Share started providing food boxes to the WonderVu Café and The Last Stand, another mountain community restaurant, on a regular basis. The food is available to anyone who may struggle to pay for groceries, whether they are customers, employees, or first-time visitors.



In addition to food, residents can "shop" for clothing at the Nederland Clothing Closet, located along with the pantry in the Nederland Community Center.

I think what Community Food Share does is amazing," shared Jennifer Travers, an employee at WonderVu Café who helps distribute the groceries. "We're happy to play a part in getting this food out to our community."

These new partnerships are meant to eliminate common barriers to accessing food — such as location, awareness, and shame — to help more people get the resources they need. Nicole and Tim explained that in their community, many of their neighbors who help out at the Nederland Food Pantry have also used its services. Because employees and volunteers understand what those visiting the pantry are going through, they can create a safe and welcoming environment for pantry visitors. "When you're somebody in this community who has had to ask for food resources, you know the sensitivity behind it," Nicole shared.

To learn more about Community Food Share's partners, visit www.communityfoodshare.org/partners.



The Nederland Food Pantry's community garden helps residents come together to grow their own fresh, nutritious food.

Feeding Children is a Work of Heart *(Continued)*

"Volunteering in the classroom, you see the impact of a child who can't focus because they are hungry," shared Kelly Herbert, mom and volunteer at Crest View Elementary. When Kelly realized her children's classmates didn't have enough to eat at home, she quickly began researching what she could do to make a difference.

“Once you realize that there are kids who are hungry, there's no way you could not want to help.”

Today, Kelly visits Community Food Share each week to load up her car with groceries and bring them back to Crest View's on-campus pantry. From there, the groceries get packaged and sent home with roughly 50 students each Friday, and any extra food stays behind so that students from low-income households have the same access to snacks and birthday treats as their peers.

Hollene Davis, Crest View Elementary's principal, said since Crest View began their weekend backpack program, she's seen a difference in the students who take home groceries each week. "We have a fifth-grader who has been receiving groceries from us since the third grade," Hollene said. "She used to always

complain to her teachers about being hungry. Not anymore." Community Food Share is grateful to be able to play a part in Crest View's efforts to provide comprehensive support to their students and families!



Kelly (pictured here with her son) visits Community Food Share each week to pick up groceries for Crest View's pantry.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Spring Resource Fair

This family-friendly gathering focuses on community resource sharing, nutrition and healthy eating, and activities to kick off the growing season!



Tee Up! Against Hunger Golf Tournament

Join us for a scramble format tournament at Coal Creek Golf Course in Louisville. Register to play or become a sponsor.

Visit communityfoodshare.org/events for more details.

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