



We have hungry children in Scottsdale. More than 6,470 children in Scottsdale public schools qualify for the federal program that provides free or reduced-price lunch at school. For some of these children, school breakfast and lunch programs provide the only meals they eat regularly. Some have little or no food to eat on weekends.

Healthy Packs - Scottsdale Community Partners' weekend backpack food program - is addressing this need. Our mission is to make sure elementary school students in the Scottsdale Unified School District (SUSD) have enough to eat on the weekends. Our goal is for each child to return to school on Monday morning mentally aware and physically able to concentrate and learn. For more than seven years, we have provided bags of nutritious food for children to take home on Fridays. Each bag contains easy-to-prepare meals and snacks and weighs less than five pounds so it can be carried by a young child.

We need your help. Today we feed more than 400 children in eight SUSD elementary and K-8 schools every weekend during the school year. With your help, we can sustain this commitment – and expand to provide Healthy Packs to middle school students - during the 2018-2019 school year. The cost is \$2,200 per week or nearly \$75,000 for the school year.

Background. The Healthy Packs program was initiated by a Scottsdale reading teacher who noticed that some of her students came to class too hungry to learn. It started in January 2011 at ANLC (now Echo Canyon School), a K-8, Title I school in SUSD and was modeled after similar programs in Mesa, Arizona and across the country. During its first year, Healthy Packs was operated by school volunteers and provided 25-30 children with bags of food each weekend.

In March 2012, Healthy Packs received additional funding from the Scottsdale Leadership Class of 2012 and was “adopted” by Scottsdale Community Partners (then Concerned Citizens for Community Health) allowing it to expand to a second SUSD Title I school, Tonalea. Between 2015-2017, with extraordinary financial support from Scottsdale’s faith community, we were able to expand Healthy Packs to five more Title I elementary schools and an eighth school, Redfield, in north Scottsdale.

How Does It Work? Teachers, counselors, nurses, and other school staff identify the children in need of Healthy Packs. At each school, the program is administered by the community specialist and overseen by the Principal. On Fridays, Healthy Packs are discreetly placed in backpacks by the children’s teachers. Teachers, school administrators, and parents have told us that Healthy Packs are making a big difference for their students!

Since September 2015, Scottsdale Community Partners has purchased the Healthy Packs food bags from Arizona Brainfood, a nonprofit volunteer organization in Mesa that provides weekend food to over 3,000 children in the East Valley. Vista del Camino transports the bags to each school participating in the program. Our volunteers regularly donate their time during Arizona Brainfood’s weekly food packing sessions.

Donations to Healthy Packs are made through Scottsdale Community Partners. Online donations can be made at scpaz.org. Donations from individuals are eligible for the \$400/\$800 Arizona tax credit for contributions to a qualifying charitable organization.