



# The Backpack Program

Champions of Character

In a country with such a surplus of food, it is difficult to comprehend how a child could be hungry on a consistent basis. Unfortunately, many teachers along the Alabama Gulf Coast community report having students come to school not having had anything to eat over the weekend or on evenings after school. To help fill the gap, **Feeding the Gulf Coast** provides bags of food for children to take home on weekends through the Backpack Program.

## How it works:

- Teachers and school counselors work to identify students struggling with chronic hunger who could benefit from the Backpack Program.
- The food bank is given the number of children in need at the school. *The children's identities remain anonymous to the food bank, donors, and their peers.*
- With the help of volunteers, the food bank prepares bags of food for the children.
- Bags are placed discreetly in children's backpacks on Friday afternoons for them to take home over the weekend.

## How you can help:

- Donate food items on Wednesday, May 23 between 9 – 10:30AM at Gulf Shores Welcome Center  
Address: 3459 Gulf Shores Pkwy, Gulf Shores, AL 36542
- Your athletes can help accept the donations and sort the food for the pantries. This will take place on Wednesday, May 23 from 8:45AM – 10:45AM at Gulf Shores Welcome Center.
- Sign up to donate and/or volunteer [HERE](#) (Deadline is Friday, May 18th)
- Teams participating are encouraged to start collecting donation items early in the season.

### CONTACT:

**Sarah Cooper**, Gulf Shores & Orange Beach Sports Commission  
Phone: 251-974-4611 E-mail: [scooper@gulfshores.com](mailto:scooper@gulfshores.com)

*Suggestions from schools that have participated in the past:*

*\*Do an on campus fundraiser, challenge other sports to participate.*

*\*Work with a local company/non profit and see if they can do a donation match with your team.*



visit: [www.feedingthegulfcoast.org](http://www.feedingthegulfcoast.org) | Backpack



## Backpack Donation Items

- Pop-top Meals
  - These can be of any brand or flavor as long as they have the pop-top. The pop-tops can be the store brand.
  - Some examples include:
    - Chef Boyardee's, Beefaroni, or store brand of canned meats and pastas such as beef ravioli, macaroni, chicken alfredo, beef lasagna, - any flavor would be perfect.
    - Campbell's, Progresso, and Chunky soups
  - Easy Mac (single serving packets)
- Snack Items
  - Pudding Cups / Pudding Squeezers
  - Fruit Snacks / fruit gummies
  - Fruit Cups
  - Applesauce
  - Crackers and pretzels (single serving packets)
- Breakfast Items
  - Instant Grits (single serving packets)
  - Breakfast Bars (granola bar, oatmeal bar)

Don't forget to share your donation & collection efforts!

Use **#NAIATrackCares** **#GSOBSports**

\*One Champions of Character Team will win ice cream from Matt's Homemade Ice Cream in Gulf Shores!

