



Northern Illinois Food Bank www.cacfp.org

Food Bank

The Northern Illinois Food Bank has been serving the area since 1983 when they distributed 64,000 pounds of food in their first year. Today, they serve 13 counties and work with 900 food pantries and feeding sites. Last year alone they were able to serve 850,000 snacks and suppers to over 8,000 kids per day. Through the At-Risk Afterschool and Summer Food Service Programs, they also provided more than 330,000 breakfasts, lunches, and snacks to nearly 16,000 kids every day.

“1 in 5 children in our service area are not getting the nutritious food they need. When kids don't have what they need, emotional and learning needs suffer.”

The food bank provides the children with the food they need and expanding nutrition education that will influence their families. Chef Jenn creates recipes that are child friendly with simple preparation. They also have created a Nutrition Education Program comprised of 20 lessons, four for each of the five food groups. The lessons are only fifteen minutes, have information and activities to take home, and the children are involved with the food preparation and hands-on nutritional activities.

CACFP is an indicator of quality child care.

The food bank seeks to find where they are most needed in the area. The last few years they have increased their partnerships with libraries and community centers. They are finding that some of the children are eating one meal at school as early as 10:30 in the morning and then after school they are too hungry to focus. The food bank knows that by providing healthy food, they are able to bring the focus back to school work and enrichment programs.

In order to end chronic hunger, they are constantly trying to find potential sites to serve the community. A key to their success is flexibility and creating programs that specifically fit the need of the area. They know that it only takes one person to make a difference in a person's life and that is what makes their work so important. “We want to make sure no one is hungry. This program can be the difference.”

In Geneva, IL Northern Illinois Food Bank has been a CACFP participant through Illinois State Board of Education since 2005.

