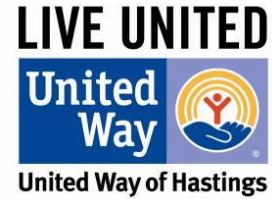


**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** August 10, 2023  
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## **Food4Kids Community Partnerships Highlighted During Stuff the Bus Week August 20-27**

**(HASTINGS, MN)** United Way of Hastings (UWH) announces the Stuff the Bus event will be held August 20-27 at Coborn's, Cub Foods, and Walmart. Buses provided by Hastings Bus Company will be parked outside of the food stores to signify the event. Shopping lists for the selected items needed for Food4Kids food bags will be provided to shoppers at the entrances of participating stores. Shoppers can purchase items from the Food4Kids shopping list and drop off at designated bins before leaving the stores. Coborn's and Cub Food will also have pre-made Food4Kids bags for \$5. The Stuff the Bus event emphasizes the importance of "Stuffing" the Bus with donated food items for Food4Kids weekend food bags for students. Food4Kids is a United Way of Hastings student food initiative in partnership with Coborn's, Hastings Public Schools, and Our Saviour's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

"The Stuff the Bus week is a perfect time to highlight the community partnerships that make Food4Kids possible and roll out the new Food4Kids logo," said UWH Executive Director, Mari Mellick, CAE. "There are many loving hands behind the scenes that ensure that our Hastings students have enough to eat over the weekend so they can arrive to school on Monday mornings nourished and ready to learn." The new Food4Kids logo better represents the initiative by a bookbag of food, encased in a heart, with the partnering organizations listed.



Food4Kids is made up of a core group of volunteers that help the program run smoothly so that approximately 200 bags of food can be delivered each week to Hastings students. The core volunteers are being highlighted throughout the month of August in short videos on UWH's Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/UnitedWayHastings>.



United Way of Hastings student food initiative in partnership with



By partnering with Coborn's, UWH receives food at discounted rates and delivery of purchased food for packing. The Food4Kids storage and packing moved from UWH's downtown office to Our Saviour's Evangelical Lutheran Church. The partnership with Our Saviour's allows for efficient delivery of food and more space for food storage and packing events. Theresa Chatelle, Our Saviour's Community Outreach and Events Coordinator, ensures the correct number of bags are ready for

delivery each week to the school buildings and schedules packing events. “Feeding kids is in my soul and I am so glad that I get to work for an organization that allows me to collaborate with other community partners to ensure this program continues and kids will not go hungry on the weekends,” said Chatelle.

Hastings Public Schools is a key partner because school counselors and social workers at each school building help to identify students and families to receive Food4Kids weekend food bags. Counselors and social workers establish a trusted relationship with families to find the root cause of hunger at home, many times providing additional resources and referrals to other services so that families can get back on their feet. A job loss, an illness, or a combination of a variety of challenges can cause a family to be food insecure. Nourished students have a better chance of being successful with their education than kids that don’t have enough to eat.

“There are many impactful elements to Food4Kids. And let’s be honest, feeding hungry children pulls at your heart strings,” Mellick said. “But it’s important to recognize Food4Kids is not a hand-out. UWH seeks to get to the root cause of hunger at home— school counselors and social workers help to do that.”

Stuff the Bus week is made possible by partnering with Coborn’s, Cub Foods, Walmart and the Hastings Bus Company. Food4Kids needed items:



## Shopping List

- Oatmeal (packets)\*\*
- Peanut Butter (individual cups)\*\*
- Soups\*\*
- Mac & Cheese (cups or packets)\*\*
- Beef Sticks/Jerky (individual packets)\*\*
- Ravioli, Spaghetios, Chili (cans)
- Cereal (individual servings)
- Cereal Bars
- Meat (canned)
- Ramen Noodles (cups or packets)
- Juice Boxes / Hot Chocolate
- Any other "kid-friendly" foods
- Gallon-sized Ziploc bags

**\*\* Especially Needed**

Stuff the Bus volunteers are needed to help greet shoppers at stores and bag groceries.

Volunteers can sign up at:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0844a9ad2ca2ff2-food4kids?fbclid=IwAR32ccMKrGvajCz-qsi-ZDZeW4HkJmMZyeQLZxv32PQXZ-HwjaoJlfaqBs8#/>

If unable to participate in Stuff the Bus week, donors can contribute online at:

<https://www.givemn.org/organization/United-Way-Of-Hastings>.

The UWH is an independent United Way that has been the Heart of Hastings for nearly 60 years serving Hastings and the surrounding rural communities within Independent School District #200. Its mission is to build partnerships to improve the lives of people in our community. Donations are accepted year-round. For more information about the UWH and the agencies it funds, visit [www.unitedwayofhastings.org](http://www.unitedwayofhastings.org).

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