



Food4Thought Weekend Food Packs Volunteer Project Details and Suggestions

Thank you for volunteering to help Britepaths assist our Food4Thought partner schools! Food4Thought supporters donate food and assemble weekend packs for our schools to send home with their students who need food support. This document offers details and information to help your group choose and contact the school they wish to support and purchase/collect the needed food items and complete the project.

About Food4Thought

Did you know? In wealthy Fairfax County, 23 percent of Fairfax County Public School children qualify for free or reduced-price meals — nearly one quarter of the school population.

Britepaths' Food4Thought Program partners with social workers and parent volunteers at select Fairfax County Public Schools, providing support to help them to send home food for the weekend in the backpacks of students who receive food assistance at school during the week and who may potentially go without food over the weekend.

This project requires that you, your family, or the organization you represent provide the food that goes into the packs. Britepaths and the schools that need assistance are not able to provide the food for your group to use to assemble the packs. If your organization does not have the funds to purchase these items, one option is to ask volunteers who are participating to donate the food items, and plan for the number of packs you can create based on the number of donations you receive from group members.

Getting Started

1. Please contact the partner school you would like to help. [CLICK HERE](#) for our list of participating schools. Please copy Britepaths on the email: info@britepaths.org.
2. Please plan to track your donation and fill out this form: ([MS WORD](#)) ([PDF](#)). Email the completed form to us at info@britepaths.org to help us track your group's volunteer hours and the value of your donation. Britepaths will respond with documentation to use for tax purposes. We would also love to receive photos of your project if you wish to share them.

If you have questions about the project, contact info@britepaths.org or 703.273.8829.
[CLICK HERE](#) to Visit Britepaths' Food4Thought page

Details for Preparing to Assemble Food4Thought Packs

1. Each pack you assemble will contain 10 items so students can have two days' worth of breakfast, lunch, dinner, drinks and snacks. Each assembled Food4Thought pack should include: 4 lunch/dinner items, 2 breakfast items, 2 snacks and 2 drinks.

2. All items that are donated or purchased for this project should be non-perishable, individual- sized food items that are not past their expiration dates. Consider that some of the children who will receive this food may be on their own during the weekend while their parents work, so it is important to give them pop-top, ready-to-heat-and-eat containers. They also need to be able to carry it home in their backpacks, so it is best to avoid cans or oversized packages.
3. The food items should be placed in zip-top bags. Gallon-size zip-top bags are the most popular, but if you can use the XL size zip-top bags, they are so much easier to pack and zip.
4. The most expensive items are the most vital ones: shelf-stable milk, individual Chef Boyardee-type meals with meat and/or cheese, and tuna/chicken & cracker snack packs. These items ensure that the kids get some protein each day, so please plan to include them. These packs truly may be the only food the children have that weekend!

Items to Include in Food4Thought Packs

Lunch/Dinner Items

Each pack should include 4 of these items: Chef Boyardee single serve cups with meat and/or cheese (eg. ravioli, beefaroni, spaghetti); tuna or chicken salad snack kit with crackers; Mac & Cheese individual cups; Soup in single serve, easy open cups (eg. chicken noodle)

Breakfast Items

Each pack should include 2 of these items: Breakfast cereal in individual cups or packets (types with less sugar such as Cheerios, Rice Krispies are optimal); Instant oatmeal in cups or packets; Cereal bars

Snack Items

Each pack should include 2 of these items: Single-serve snack items, such as packets of pretzels, popcorn or cheese crackers, granola bars, etc.; fruit cups with fruit packed in 100% juice; unsweetened apple sauce cups.

Drinks

Each pack should include 2 drinks: 1 Shelf-stable milk box (eg. Horizon, Hersheys – no Yoo-Hoo, please); and 1 Juice box or pouch (100% fruit juice)