



EVERY MEAL

WEEKEND FOOD PROGRAM

Reducing Barriers: Enrollment Outreach Best Practices

In addition to using the paper or online enrollment form and promoting the Weekend Food Program in your school's newsletter and on social media platforms, Every Meal recommends the following best practices to help ensure all families are aware of the program and can enroll at any time throughout the school year:

1. Ensure enrollment information and materials are visible and available in the school office.
2. Include information about the Weekend Food Program and an opportunity to enroll when new students register at your school.
3. Ensure enrollment information and materials are available at school events such as open houses, conferences, family events, etc. Make sure all staff have knowledge and understanding of the resources to share with families. Lots of information can be found right here in the toolkit to educate staff about the program!
4. Leverage staff within your school to help spread the word to families about the resource. Are all these team members aware of the Weekend Food Program and do they have easy access to enrollment materials for students and families? Can you think of more?

- School Nurse
- Social Workers
- Classroom Teachers
- Specialists
- ELL Teachers
- Educational Assistants
- Family Liaisons
- Cultural Liaisons
- School Psychologists / Mental Health Support Staff
- Translators
- Office Staff
- Director of Nutrition
- Food Service Staff
- Parent Teacher Organization
- Volunteer Services Coordinator

Sometimes we hear from site partners that it's intimidating to speak with families about the Weekend Food Program, because they do not want to embarrass the parent or guardian. Another way to think about educating families is that **knowledge is power**. If families know about the program, they can access it any time. If we adopt a strategy of telling **everyone** that free food is available, we can begin to break the stigma of food insecurity, which is not always visible.

Here are some lines to help get the conversation started:

- "Have you heard about Every Meal?"
- Every Meal offers a weekend food program.
- Each week, volunteers place bags of nonperishable food right into student's backpacks.
- It's completely free and anyone can sign up."

Every Meal

2723 Patton Road, Roseville, MN 55113 | www.everymeal.org | 612-568-4003