**Talking Points & Fact Sheet**

* Blessings in a Backpack is a 501(c)(3) organization that, through an all-volunteer network, mobilizes communities, individuals, and resources to provide food on the weekends for elementary school children across America who might otherwise go hungry.
* Blessings in a Backpack currently provides more than 3 million hunger-free weekends for 87,300 children in 45 states and the District of Columbia.
* [The National School Lunch Program](http://www.fns.usda.gov/nslp/national-school-lunch-program-nslp) is a federally assisted meal program operating in over 100,000 public and nonprofit private schools and residential childcare institutions. It provides nutritionally balanced, low‐cost or free lunches each school day to more than 31 million students across the country. However, these meals are only provided Monday through Friday, leaving a significant gap for these youth over weekends.
* The U.S. Conference of Mayors passed a proclamation making the third Thursday of every September “Blessings in a Backpack Day” – the event will return this week for its fifth year. This year’sBlessings in a Backpack Day activities will take place the following week – on Thursday, September 27. Mayors nationwide will join local Blessings in a Backpack volunteers to combat childhood hunger in the U.S.
* In 2016, nearly 90 mayors in cities across the country participated in Blessings in a Backpack Day.
* Programs look a little different everywhere. For example, there are…
  + Major corporations, such as Tyson Foods, that have adopted an individual school and have employees dedicating their time to stuffing backpacks of food for students at that school. See story [here](http://blessingsinabackpack.org/making-an-impact-locally/).
  + Kindergarteners in Chicago who spend one morning per week packing bags for their peers at a neighboring school. See story [here](http://blessingsinabackpack.org/kids-helping-kids/).
  + Professional athletes, such as Dale Earnhardt, Jr. or Evan Turner, giving their time and donations to ensure that young students in their local cities are getting the nutrition they need over the weekend. See stories [here](http://blessingsinabackpack.org/food-for-thought-how-to-make-the-perfect-banana-mayo-sandwich/) or [here](https://www.blessingsinabackpack.org/nba-star-evan-turner-visits-students-chicagos-west-side/).

*“No child should have to go hungry. Blessings in a Backpack focuses specifically on a major gap – weekends during the school year. Our programs are administered through an all-volunteer network, people who saw a need in their community and mobilized to start a program and provide food on the weekends for elementary school children across America who might otherwise go hungry. We’re so proud of our volunteers and partners across the country who help us make a difference in the lives of these children.”*

*- Brooke Wiseman, CEO of Blessings in a Backpack*

*For more information about Blessings in a Backpack, please visit* [*www.blessingsinabackpack.org*](http://www.blessingsinabackpack.org)*.*