Approximately 60% of children in the Houston area rely on free and reduced lunch during the school year. Proper nutrition is vital to the growth and development of children. Children without proper nutrition have difficulties concentrating in school, experience tardiness, and are more prone to chronic illness that can hinder their growth and advancement. The Houston Food Bank has a variety of programs that equip children and their families with tools they need to be successful.

Many children rely on school meals for breakfast and lunch during the school week but go home to little or no meals on the weekends. The Backpack Buddy Program works to fill the weekend gap for chronically hungry children by providing nutritious, child-friendly food for school children to take home over the weekend.

This program serves healthy meals to low-income children attending after school enrichment sites; many of these children would otherwise go home to little or no food in the evening. Participation can encourage academic success, health and wellness and physical activity.

The School Market Program alleviates child and teen hunger in our community by providing food to students and their families at middle and high schools. School Markets are located on campus for easy access, with set distribution schedules. As an alternative, mobile markets bring food to campus on a truck with a large refrigerated trailer.

Many children can’t afford the most basic school supplies. Without the proper tools to do the work, children are challenged to achieve academic success. Many compassionate teachers pay for school supplies from their own pockets so their students have a more productive, efficient learning experience. The Teachers Aid program provides the supplies kids need to succeed.

Classes in nutrition, food safety, meal preparation and budgeting are taught in collaboration with Food Bank partner agencies by Houston Food Bank’s team of dietitians and nutritionists.