



Middleton Outreach Ministry

For Immediate Release

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Bare Cupboards can mean Long Hungry days at School: MOM's Snack Bag program helps kids stay nourished and focused

"Make sure you eat something before you go to school!" This familiar lament is uttered daily by parents of school aged children. However, for some kids, it's not a matter of taking the time to stop and eat, it's a matter of the cupboards and refrigerator being empty of food.

Middleton Outreach Ministry (MOM) has been working for more than 30 years to end hunger and prevent homelessness in the Middleton-Cross Plains and West Madison communities. One of their latest efforts is to address the problem of school hunger amongst at-risk students.

According to MCPASD school social workers, the free and reduced meals the students are eligible to receive don't always cover the many circumstances some of them face. Often, students come to school late due to lack of transportation or unstable housing arrangements. They then miss breakfast offered at some school cafeterias. The students end up in the social worker's offices, hungry and lacking energy to get through the school day.

"MOM felt like was an area where we could make a significant impact on hunger in our community as well as directly in a child's life. We stepped in and put together a 'school snack bag program'", said Farha. "Every month, generous donors put together bags of nutritious snacks that we give to the social workers to offer to the students. The response has been overwhelming!"

Farha said that since the program was developed in the spring of 2010, MOM has provided social workers with over 500 snack bags. In addition to the snack bags, MOM has provided food to students to take home on long weekends or breaks, when they don't have school meals to rely on and food may be hard to come by at home.

"One student that has benefited recently is a student who has been in transitional housing for nearly a year and since school started last August, has lived with four different relatives", said Betsy Scallon, MCPASD Social Worker. "I have been able to supplement his own food supply with the snack bags, which he brings home from school in his back pack to eat as he needs it, which works well since he doesn't always know how long he will be living in any particular place."

MOM is continuing all of these programs throughout 2011 thanks to generous donors throughout the community. More information on MOM's work to end hunger in the area can be found at momhelps.org.

About MOM

MOM is a local non-profit organization that leads a community-wide effort to prevent homelessness and end hunger for our neighbors throughout Middleton, West Madison and Cross Plains. Through our business partners, affiliated churches, area schools, community service clubs, and numerous individuals, we provide food, clothing, housing assistance, emergency financial assistance, and special services for seniors. All programs are provided free of charge to neighbors in need. To learn more about the programs and people helped by MOM, log on to www.momhelps.org.

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