

#HackHunger: Hacking the Problem of Childhood Hunger

Background: Every year, 1 in 6 of our 800,000 neighbors in Cook County receives food from one of the Food Depository's member agency grocery or meal programs. Roughly 300,000 or 37.5% of those impacted are children living in poverty. The consequences of childhood hunger are grim as it negatively impacts a child's physical and cognitive development. Specifically, academic performance, healthy weight and social development are all compromised when children go hungry. Of the food kids do receive the quality is inconsistent and does not always include the nutritional balance of fruits, vegetables, dairy and proteins.

It's to some extent a preventable problem because the Federal Government appropriates a limited amount of funding to provide breakfast, lunch and snacks during school, afterschool or throughout the summer. Schools, non-profits, churches and other youth serving organizations leverage these dollars to provide meals to children. The budget available and participating groups aren't enough to fill the need.

Opportunity: Join us for one day of hacking to solve one of the toughest, but preventable problems - childhood hunger. Hackers across Chicago will analyze where kids eat, what they eat and how they access meals whether in school or out of school. Teams will compete to develop the best software and tech based solutions needed to hack away kid hunger.

Focus Area - Boost Awareness & Connect Kids to Existing Meal Programs

- **Insight:** The national school lunch program has been around since 1941 so parents, students and administrators fully support school lunch programs and have come to expect and rely on them. Student lunch participation rates in Cook County are 66% of eligible students. Funding to support breakfast and summer meals for kids is a more recent phenomenon, so participation rates are woefully low. In fact 35% of eligible students participate in breakfast while 17% of eligible students participate in summer meal programs.¹ So ultimately, kids go hungry even though resources are available to offer meals. In the case of breakfast, often teachers and administrators don't want the administrative hassle of serving another meal. Across all meal service programs often parents don't know what is available for their kids. And sometimes kids and teens would rather skip a meal than deal with the stigma associated with needing that meal. It's just not cool.
- **Challenge:** What would your team do to boost awareness and connect kids to existing meal programs?

Focus Area - Optimize Geographic Locations for Available Meal Programs

- **Insight:** In a perfect world, nutritious meals - breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks would be available at every school, afterschool program, home and other venue where kids living in poverty are gathered --- but that is not the case. Some meals are available at home, some are offered in school, some are offered after-school and yet others are available at a variety of non-profit sites across Cook County.
- **Challenge:** Leveraging existing community based resources where underserved youth are present, what is the optimal mix of geographic locations/distribution points to get meals to children?

Focus Area - Inspire Kids to Make Healthier Choices

- **Insight:** Although school meal nutritional content has improved dramatically to include fruits and vegetables, kids are still slow to consume healthy items and some schools report significant amounts wide up in the trash bin.
- **Challenge:** What would your team do to inspire kids to make healthier choices?

¹ % of students eligible in free lunch programs who participate in breakfast and summer programming

We don't need help with:

- Advertising campaign for child hunger
- Supply chain and logistics for our food pantry distribution network
- Procurement systems
- Volunteers and Fundraising

Bulleted numbers below reflect number of folder in Dropbox:

1. Context Setting Resources:

- Summer Meals Video – 4 minutes (in Video Links Word Document)
- School Breakfast Video – 4 minutes or less – Midwest Dairy (in Video Links Word Document)
- Rise & Shine Illinois Public Service Announcement 1: Child Hunger (in Video Links Word Document)
- Rise & Shine Illinois Public Service Announcement 2: Child Hunger (in Video Links Word Document)
- 2015 IL School Breakfast Financial Sustainability Report_Rise and Shine Illinois.pdf
- IL Kids Count 2015/Voice for IL Children Report: Confronting Poverty, Creating Opportunity.pdf

Available Data Sets (all with metadata tabs available):

- **2a and 2b. IL Statewide - School site specific information, 2015-2016 – Source – State Board of Education (At least one year of data; maybe two; roughly 3,500 schools) Examples of data fields, but not limited to:**
 - School name
 - Address
 - Enrollment
 - Eligibility for free and reduced price meals
 - % eligible for free and reduced price meals
 - Breakfast participation rate
 - Lunch participation rate
- **3. IL Statewide - Summer site specific information, 2015 and 2014 data available. (roughly 1,700 sites) Source – State Board of Education - Examples of data fields, but not limited to:**
 - Site name
 - Sponsor name
 - Site address
 - Operating times
 - Meal types – breakfast, snack or lunch
 - Meal claims - # of meals served
- **4. IL Statewide – Afterschool Meals (CACFP) 2015- Apr 2016. (Roughly 900 sites across the state) Examples of data fields, but not limited to:**
 - Sponsor name
 - Address
 - Meals counts
 - Eligibility for free and reduced price meals
 - Meal type (afternoon snack, supper)
- **5. Cook County school and summer meal participation rates by community area, 2015-2016. Source – State Board of Education. Examples of data fields, but not limited to:**

- Enrollment in NSLP sponsored schools
 - Children eligible for free and reduced price meals
 - % eligible for free and reduced price meals
 - School breakfast participation rate (during the school year)
 - School lunch participation rate (during the school year)
 - Summer breakfast participation rate
 - Summer lunch participation rate
- **6. U.S. Census demographic information – Using American Fact Finder Word Document. Offers instructions for how to use this tool to access local census tract /census block level data (depending on level of granularity desired), 2014. Examples of data fields, but not limited to:**
 - population
 - child population
 - unemployment
 - poverty
 - 185% of the federal poverty level
 - child poverty
 - median income
 - ethnicity/race
 - % of households participation in SNAP
 - ... and many more through American Fact Finder
- **7. Food insecurity rate and # of people food insecure, 2014. Source – Feeding America Examples of data fields, but not limited to:**
 - Census tract
 - Chicago community area
 - Chicago ward
 - Cook County suburban municipality
 - Cook County commissioner
 - State senate district
 - State house district
 - US Congressional district
- **8. Other Community Assets files (for other ideas, see <https://data.cityofchicago.org/>)**
 - Grocery stores
 - Farmers Markets, 2015 (outdated)
 - Urban Agriculture Projects
 - SNAP retailers, 2015
 - IL Dept of Human Services office locations
 - Low income housing (including multifamily Section 8 housing locations)
 - Chicago affordable housing database, 2016
 - Institutions of higher education
 - Public libraries
 - Headstart Locations
 - Cook County Health care system partner locations, 2016
 - Access Community Health system sites
 - Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) sites
 - Community Organizations
 - KaBOOM playground sites