

Pandemic Inspires Heightened Response to Food Insecurity

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COMMUNITY OUTREACH.



More local families sought help feeding their loved ones during the pandemic than ever before, and those numbers are not showing signs of slowing. Food insecurity among children in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties rose over 5% from the start of the pandemic to today, according to Feeding America. We responded quickly by partnering across our institution and in the community to provide much needed food and essential resources.

“By joining forces we’ve been able to tackle food insecurity on a broad and significant scale within our hospital and the community,” says Joseph Vaughan, Manager of Community Partnerships and Community Benefits at Stanford Children’s Health.

Two of the traits that drive our work at **Stanford Children’s Health** are an incredible spirit of collaboration and a true caring for our patients and the greater community. Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital Stanford developed ways to feed visiting parents who couldn’t leave the hospital due to pandemic protocols. These efforts include grab-and-go meals, vouchers for the hospital’s Harvest Café, grocery gift cards, and food bags distributed by medical clinics. Rachel Kozkowski, Program Manager, Family Food Support Program, credits a grant from **Packard**

Children's Foundation and Stanford Children's **Community Partnerships** for empowering her team to continue the program through 2022, and likely beyond.

"In the last year, we've handed out over 3,000 bags of food, 600 grocery gift cards, and over 3000 meal vouchers to patient families," says Kozlowski.

The Stanford School of Medicine has longstanding efforts of providing lunches to school children, distributing food at community medical clinics, and supporting area food banks.

"This year, with the help of Community Partnerships' funding, we've distributed roughly 25,000 pounds of food and touched over 3,000 families," says Melanie Ramirez, Program Manager, Pediatric Advocacy Program, at the Stanford School of Medicine.



Stanford Children's Health Community Partnerships has deep, longstanding relationships with nonprofits in the community. Fresh Approach is one of nearly two dozen nonprofit agencies that receive millions of dollars in grant money each year to advance established health initiatives through Packard Children's community benefits grants program.

“Packard Children’s funding allowed us to pilot a new program and scale it. Today, we work with 50 area farms to deliver emergency food boxes via a network of nonprofits,” says Andy Ollove, Food Access Program Director, Fresh Approach.

Awareness around food insecurity was heightened during the pandemic, but the commitment to addressing it will continue long after it ends.

