

Full Backpack.

Full Heart.

Full of Promise.

2024

**OPERATION
BACKPACK[®]**

Handbook



**Volunteers
of America[®]**

MICHIGAN



Operation Backpack®

Kids are counting on you...

Getting started

We can't wait to see you succeed

Studies show that prepared children perform better and have higher confidence levels in school. Operation Backpack® seeks to give that same opportunity to at-risk and homeless children.

Your support and donations are critical pieces to changing the lives of our most vulnerable students across the state. **Operation Backpack® would not be here without you.**

How it works

Teams organize drives by raising funds and collecting new backpacks and supplies. Volunteers of America Michigan provides a toolkit with school supply lists and digital versions of a full-color flyer & poster that can be printed and distributed to help promote your drive. We also provide images to use on your social media platforms. **We want to help YOU succeed, just let us know how we can help.**

At the end of the drive, we distribute backpacks and supplies to at-risk and homeless students across Michigan through coordination with the local Intermediate School Districts (ISD) to ensure that all children in need receive the supplies needed to succeed. This year we will also host our first community resource fair & backpack giveaway the Back To School Bonanza.

Ways to get involved



Donate Funds for Operation Backpack®

Your financial support makes this program possible. Community partners can gather funds together and give as one donation, you can donate online by scanning the qr code, or you can mail a check to Volunteers of America Michigan.



Organize a Drive

You can organize a local drive and invite your friends and colleagues to participate by donating school supplies and backpacks using our supply lists as a guide. Want to save some time? You can also purchase supply kits on our website.



Volunteer

Get involved! We need your help to sort all of the donated supplies. You can write encouraging notes to the students receiving the school supplies and help stuff backpacks at our office!



Become a Sponsor

You can ask your company if they want to become a sponsor this year. Scan the QR code or visit our website to download a sponsorship opportunity packet. Or encourage children in your life to become a “backpack buddy” through our peer sponsorship.

1. Let us know your goals

For planning purposes, it is important for us to know what you are aiming for. How many backpacks? Will the packs be filled?

2. Set up collection bins

Set up bins in high traffic areas to collect donations. You can label them using the posters available in the toolkit provided.

3. Print supply lists

If you are donating full backpacks, make sure your team knows they must refer to the provided supply lists. Once backpacks are filled, complete and attach the appropriate grade packing slip. **Please indicate if a backpack is missing any items from the slip to ensure no child goes without.**

4. Promote your event

Print the provided flyer and poster from the toolkit. Remember they are customizable and you can type in your event information. Post them in common areas and even on your social media outlets. We also have provided graphics and sample posts that you can use

on your social media pages. It is important to share that information so people know who to contact with donations and questions.

5. Collect supplies

Let the donations of supplies roll in. Be sure to keep reminding people to donate throughout the donation drive.

6. Deliver supplies

Schedule a time to deliver the supplies you have collected. Visit voami.org/backpack to schedule.



How do I describe Operation Backpack® to my team?

Operation Backpack® is the back-to-school drive that collects supplies and distributes them to thousands of homeless and at-risk children across the state of Michigan.

What makes Operation Backpack® so special?

Operation Backpack® get the backpacks to the kids before they go to school, so when they start school they look and feel more like their classmates and less like a ‘homeless kid.’ **Everything is new.** Providing backpacks that are of good quality, and supplies that help them succeed, give the child a sense of value and belonging.

Why should I get involved?

One of the most devastating consequences of family homelessness is the impact it has on a child’s education. The stigma of being homeless weighs heavily on these children in their school and peer groups. When they arrive at school without a backpack or proper supplies, they are seen by other students as *different* rather than as a potential new friend.

Who will be receiving the backpacks?

Local Intermediate School Districts (ISD) provide information for eligible children from their homeless education program to make sure the donations go to the children who are most in need. We use that information to transfer your donated goods to those children specifically.

Tips for a successful drive

We are here to help you every step of the way

Program timeline

Be sure to mark your calendars

Get the word out

Raise awareness of **Operation Backpack®** through company newsletters, email, internet, and social media sources. Let your team be aware of how many backpacks you want to collect and send out updates to let them know how close you are to meeting or exceeding your goal.

Invite your leadership to participate

Having support from your leadership is extremely important. It can help set the tone for your drive's success. **Operation Backpack®** presents a wonderful team-building opportunity and visible demonstration of corporate responsibility. You can ask your administration if they want to become an official sponsor this year.

Encourage participation

You can use engagement activities in your office to get people involved. Need some ideas? Here are a few that other organizations found to be helpful.

- Offer employees the option of 'dress-down' Fridays during your supply drive. If they bring a donation, or supplies for your drive, they get to wear jeans to work that Friday.
- Encourage friendly competition, form teams in various departments across the office. Maybe provide lunch for the winning team once the event is complete.
- Make sure to include any summer associates or interns.



June 1

Start raising awareness in your office or group and gathering team members.



June 8

Set team goals. Let us know what you have planned.



June 15

Start posting on social media to announce your Operation Backpack® drive.



June 19

Official start date of the public Operation Backpack® drive.



August 5-9

Drop off week. Please note all supplies and backpacks must be delivered or shipped to our Southfield office at 21415 Civic Center Drive, Suite 306, Southfield, MI 48076.

August 5-16

Volunteer Week is now two weeks! Join us to sort and fill backpacks, write encouraging notes for the students, and make a difference!

For more information, please email us at volunteers@voami.org.



2021 Gardner-White Stuff-a-Bus Event



Social Media Samples

Easy to post - just copy and paste

Facebook

Like us on Facebook @voami

“One of the most devastating consequences of family homelessness is the impact it has on a child’s education. Help us put backpacks in the hands of the kids who need it most. Learn more at [@voami](http://www.voami.org/backpack) www.facebook.com/voami **#OperationBackpack**”

“Homeless children begin school without the necessary supplies, forcing them to start the year at a disadvantage. Help set them up for success by donating to [@voami](https://www.voami.org/backpack) today at www.voami.org/backpack **#OperationBackpack**”

Twitter

Follow us on Twitter @voami

“Proud to join [@voami](https://twitter.com/voami) helping **#homeless** kids to go school prepared w/ **#OperationBackpack** www.voami.org/backpack”

“Education is key to breaking the cycle of family **#homelessness**. Help [@voami](https://twitter.com/voami) **#OperationBackpack** www.voami.org/backpack”

Instagram

Follow us on Instagram @volunteersofamericamichigan

“One of the most devastating consequences of family homelessness is the impact it has on a child’s education. Help us put backpacks in the hands of the kids who need it most. Learn more at www.voami.org/backpack [@volunteersofamericamichigan](https://www.instagram.com/volunteersofamericamichigan) **#OperationBackpack**”

“Homeless children begin school without the necessary supplies, forcing them to start the year at a disadvantage. Help set them up for success by donating to [@volunteersofamericamichigan](https://www.voami.org/backpack) today at www.voami.org/backpack **#OperationBackpack**”



Use the QR code to download graphics you can use on social media

Graphic Samples



Sponsorship Opportunities



Valedictorian - \$5,000

- Recognition as a Title Sponsor of **Operation Backpack®** on all print, event and online materials
- Joint media coverage opportunities
- Joint media press release
- Priority logo placement on all campaign materials, website and digital promotions

Dean's List - \$2,500

- Recognized on our website
- Listed on print, event, and online materials
- Name on event signage and banners

Honor Roll - \$1,500

- Recognized on our website
- Listed on print, event, and online materials
- Name on event signage and banners

School Yard - \$500

- Recognized on our website
- Listed on online materials



Backpack Buddy- \$25

- Recognized on our website (*Parent Signed Photo Release Required)

Note: This sponsorship level is specifically for high school aged or younger kids who would like to support their peers.

Sponsorship Form

Sponsor Information

Company (if applicable): _____
 Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____

Sponsorship Type

- Valedictorian Sponsor\$5,000
- Dean's List Sponsor.....\$2,500
- Honor Roll Sponsor..... \$1,500
- School Yard Sponsor.....\$500
- Backpack Buddy (Kids < 18 Yrs)..... \$25

Payment Method

- Payment Enclosed Invoice
- Checks can be made out to Volunteers of America Michigan with "Operation Backpack" in the memo line.*

Signature _____ Date ___/___/___

Please send your completed form to Hailey Priebe by e-mail or by mail.

hpriebe@voami.org

21415 Civic Center Dr. Ste. 306
 Southfield, MI 48076

Note: If an invoice is preferred, upon receipt of this form, Volunteers of America Michigan will send an invoice for payment of the sponsorship amount selected. We ask that pledges are paid in full by the end of the program 8/16/2024. Your sponsorship is not refundable. We thank you for your understanding.

You Make a Difference

A snapshot of the difference YOU made in 2023



**Students
Served**



**Caring
Donors**



**Teams Collected
Supplies**



**Districts
Supported**

Thank you, thank you, thank YOU! Your support and dedication to helping children in need made a HUGE impact in your community. Your gift showed students you believe in them, and it gave them the confidence needed to succeed.

Every time they use their new backpack, they will be reminded they have people in their corner. THANK YOU!