

Capital BlueCross Supports Family Fresh Cupboard for Local School Districts Program provides fresh food to help address hunger for students and their families

In an effort to reduce hunger and support families in need, Capital BlueCross has joined the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank in a school-based fresh food cupboard program. The pilot program is operating in the Steelton-Highspire and Elizabethtown Area school districts.

The cupboard is based in a centrally located school building in each district. Families in need with children enrolled in the districts may visit the cupboard weekly. They receive a family food box containing 20 pounds of healthy food including fresh produce, milk, dairy products and meat. The box also contains a recipe card, nutrition education flyers, and information on where to find other charitable food programs in the community.

Capital BlueCross' support allowed each district to purchase an industrial-sized refrigerator and freezer to store perishable items. The company also provides funding to purchase fresh foods, including turkeys, so the families may enjoy a Thanksgiving meal together.

Childhood nutrition plays an important role in school performance. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), lack of adequate consumption of specific foods, such as fruits, vegetables, or dairy products is associated with lower grades among students.

"By supporting the family fresh cupboard, we are taking steps to solve hunger for the whole family. This program helps encourage healthy family meals that are shared together. The benefits are numerous, including the positive impact it can have on a child's progress in school," said Susan Hubley, Vice President, Corporate Social Responsibility, Capital BlueCross. "As a community-based health insurer, we are proud to join the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank in helping to ensure children and their families have access to healthy, fresh food."

The cupboard serves 300 students and their families in the Steelton-Highspire School District and 50 students and their families in the Elizabethtown Area School District.

"We are very excited to partner with Capital BlueCross and innovative local school districts to support family fresh food cupboards", said Joe Arthur, Executive Director of Central Pennsylvania Food Bank. "This model, which holistically serves school students and their families in need, aligns perfectly with our Bold Goal Strategic Plan to close the meal gap in our 27 county region by 2025."

The cupboard also is available to those in need over the summer, and other times of the year when school is not in session.

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