

WELL KIDS

CENTRAL IOWA



Make Healthy Foods Available Everywhere for Everyone

Well Kids of Central Iowa supports policies that increase access to and affordability of healthy foods by including hunger-fighting organizations in the sales tax exemption; providing an enhanced food tax credit for donation of healthy food products such as dairy, produce, and protein; and increasing access to food assistance benefits such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Well Kids also supports the funding of the Double Up Food Bucks initiative.

The Ask: Amend Iowa Code 423.3 by adding: The sales price of tangible personal property sold to an IRS designated, non-profit food bank incorporated for the primary purpose of fighting hunger and food insecurity and/or providing emergency food services to the needy in the State of Iowa. An Act exempting from the state sales tax the purchase price¹ of tangible personal property or specified digital products² sold and services furnished to a nonprofit food bank.

- Non-profit food banks and pantries serving Iowans across the state who experience hunger and food insecurity are still subject to state sales tax. We estimate between \$200,000 - \$250,000 per year is collected from purchases made by the food bank system.
- The food bank system can use those funds to purchase up to an additional 1.25 million pounds of food each year, providing up to 1 million more meals for families in need.
- Food Bank for the Heartland, serving western Iowa and Council Bluffs, purchases most of their service needs, equipment and office supplies in Nebraska where they're exempt from sales tax.
- River Bend Food Bank, serving the Quad Cities, relocated to Iowa from Illinois, and the sales taxes have been a burden on their operations. They continue to make purchases in Illinois when they can as they are not subject to sales tax in that state.

The Ask: Provide an enhanced food tax credit for donation of healthy food products such as dairy, produce, and protein.

- An enhanced food tax credit for healthy food products such as dairy, produce, and protein, would promote the donation of these items which are in need within the emergency food system.
- Organizations that donate to nonprofit hunger-fighting organizations would have more incentive to donate healthy foods as they would receive a greater tax credit for their donation.

The Ask: Increase access to food assistance benefits in Iowa.

- Access to food assistance benefits, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), are vital to its recipients in choosing what food is best for their families.
- Decreased access would harm local grocers and farmers and increase food demand that food pantries and anti-hunger organizations would not be able to meet.
- Food Assistance benefits are a successful and essential tool in the fight to end poverty, and they generate positive economic activity in communities, so increased access would promote these advantages.

The Ask: Fund Double Up Food Bucks to help low-income families eat more fruits and vegetables while supporting Iowa farmers and growing local economies.

- Double Up Food Bucks (DUFB) ensures SNAP participants have greater access to nutritious foods and helps encourage them to purchase more fruits and vegetables
 - SNAP is the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program formerly known as food stamps.
 - How DUFB works: if a family spends \$10 in SNAP benefits at the farmers market or grocery store, they get \$10 in Double Up Food Bucks to spend on fruits and vegetables. This means they bring home \$20 of healthy food for just \$10.

- Additional dollars allocated to DUFB will help our state secure a 1:1 match in federal funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, not only increasing access to healthy food across the state but funneling millions of dollars back into the economy. This makes Double Up a win/win/win: Low-income families eat more healthy food, area farmers gain new customers and make more money, and more food dollars stay in the local economies. Each has a positive ripple effect of benefits.

- History: What started as a small pilot at 6 farmers markets in 2016, has grown into a statewide healthy food incentive program with more than 30 sites; including 19 grocery stores.

- DUFB is designed to meet families' immediate needs for healthy food while also supporting healthier communities by addressing the underlying causes of poor diet in urban and rural communities.

- With DUFB, federal nutrition dollars work harder-simultaneously reducing hunger while supporting healthier diets for SNAP households, which can support long-term healthcare savings.
 - Fact: In 2018, 98% of surveyed shoppers said they purchased more fruits and vegetables because of DUFB. Just as important, 86% said they were eating less junk food.

- Low-income families should not have to choose between being hungry and being healthy. With programs like Double Up, they don't have to make that choice.
 - 15.3 % of Iowa's children are food insecure – that's 1 in 7.¹
 - 1 in 9 Iowans struggles with hunger.²

- This is a practical, bipartisan approach to improving the health impact of the SNAP Program

1. <https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2017/child/iowa> 2. <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/iowa>

Strengthen Places Where Every Kid Learns and Plays & Market What Matters for a Healthy Life for Everyone

Well Kids of Central Iowa supports the promotion of healthy habits through 5-2-1-0 messaging and technical assistance resourced by obesity funding at the Iowa Department of Public Health.

The Ask: Continue to support IDPH's programming for community obesity prevention efforts through the 5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count campaign by maintaining the level of funding achieved during the 2019 session.

- In 2016 data showed that 69% of Iowans are overweight (37%) or obese (32%). This is higher than the national average of 65%. The combined obesity and overweight rate in 2016 for Iowans age 10 to 17 years old was 30%. That ranks Iowa 30 out of 51. (Utah is the lowest at 19.2% and Tennessee is the highest at 37.7% obesity rate.)
- 87 of 99 counties currently cite obesity, lack of nutrition, and lack of physical activity as major health issues. Obesity is the top issue statewide. Related conditions like cancer (42 counties) and diabetes (42 counties) also made it to the top ten list.
- Citizens in communities around Iowa are benefiting from 5-2-1-0 Implementation grants provided by IDPH with this funding through a variety of changes in infrastructure and through development and/or increase of programming like adding water bottle filling stations in schools, improving parks, providing additional community center programming, making community garden additions or improvements, and in many other ways. In central Iowa, Warren County is using their IDPH funds to increase 5-2-1-0 programming reach within schools, within the healthcare setting, and with other stakeholders to coordinate and maximize the impact of the 5-2-1-0 message.
- Private partners of the IDPH efforts already include United Way of Central Iowa, Healthiest State Initiative, Iowa Association of Regional Councils, Iowa Medical Society, and Iowa Councils of Governments. Continued funding supports and expands the public-private partnership and investment which will make a difference in the health of Iowans.

Activate Employers and Health Care Professionals to Promote and

Support Health and Well-Being for Everyone

Well Kids of Central Iowa supports the Coalition to Advance Mental Health in Iowa for Kids (CAMI4Kids) recommendations focused on children's mental health. Mental health is connected to social, emotional, and cognitive development and is the foundation for a healthy life, healthy community, and healthy state. When we ensure children's mental health needs are met, they are more likely to perform better in school, graduate, and are more likely to be healthy, productive adults in our community. When we ensure the healthy development of the next generation, Iowa benefits from a productive workforce and responsible citizenship.

The Ask: Ensure adequate, predictable, and sustainable funding for Iowa's mental health system across the lifespan.

- 1. Ensure sustainable regional funding for mental health services across the state.***
- 2. Increase provider reimbursement rates to give Iowans better access to essential services and address workforce shortages.***

Expand access to policies and programs that support prevention, early identification and early intervention for children's social-emotional development so that we can mitigate long-term, chronic, and expensive health conditions later in life.

- 1. Ensure that all children receive EPSDT-covered screenings and treatment.***
- 2. Expand programs that have proven successful and cost efficient, such as the 1st Five Healthy Mental Development Initiative and System of Care.***

Fully fund children's mental health crisis services, including the statewide hotline and costs associated with providing local mobile crisis services (training, capacity, dispatch, etc.).

- House File 690 provided a great start and framework for a system to support children's mental health in Iowa; now we need to provide adequate and sustainable funding for it. Our children are our future. Tapping into their potential is vital to our state's well-being. As Iowans, if we choose to invest in a fully-funded children's behavioral health system, we are choosing to invest in the things that make our communities stronger and ensure that every child meets their fullest potential.
- Mental health services should be funded across the life span (birth to death) of all Iowans to avoid pitting services for children against services for adults.
- The role and impact of prevention is greater in a children's system. While adult health care often focuses on health maintenance and the prevention of disease progress, the focus of services for children is habilitative (maximizing potential and independence