



Twigs was founded in 2011 to feed hungry children. Most of the kids we help receive free or discounted meals at school. For those children, weekends and summer breaks often mean having little to nothing to eat.

In the Missouri-Illinois bi-state, there are nearly 400,000 people with limited or uncertain access to food. Children and the elderly are most at risk and the problem is growing. People everywhere are struggling.

“Most of our citizenry believes that hunger only affects people who are lazy or people who are just looking for a handout, people who don’t work, but, sadly, that is not true. Over one-third of our hungry people are innocent children who are members of households that simply cannot provide enough food or proper nutrition ... in our country the problem is not having too little – *it is about not caring enough.*”

*Erin Brokovich*



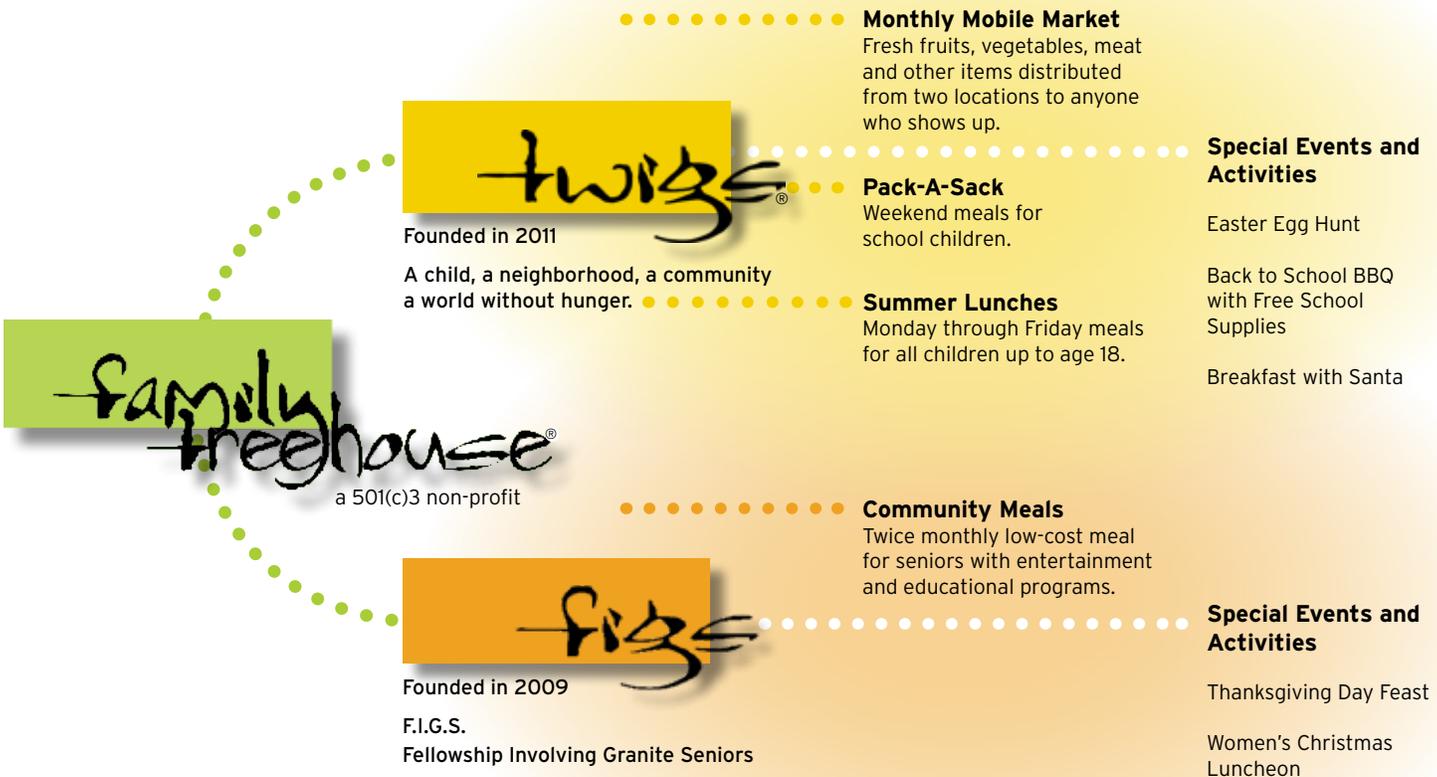
**T**wigs currently provides free summer lunches in 41 communities and free bags of weekend meals in 16 school districts. In addition, Twigs distributes nearly 12,000 pounds of free food each month from a “pop-up” market to anyone who shows up.

Twigs’ sister organization, F.I.G.S, hosts a bi-monthly meal for seniors.



**In 2019, Twigs served 109,621 free summer lunches from 54 locations.**



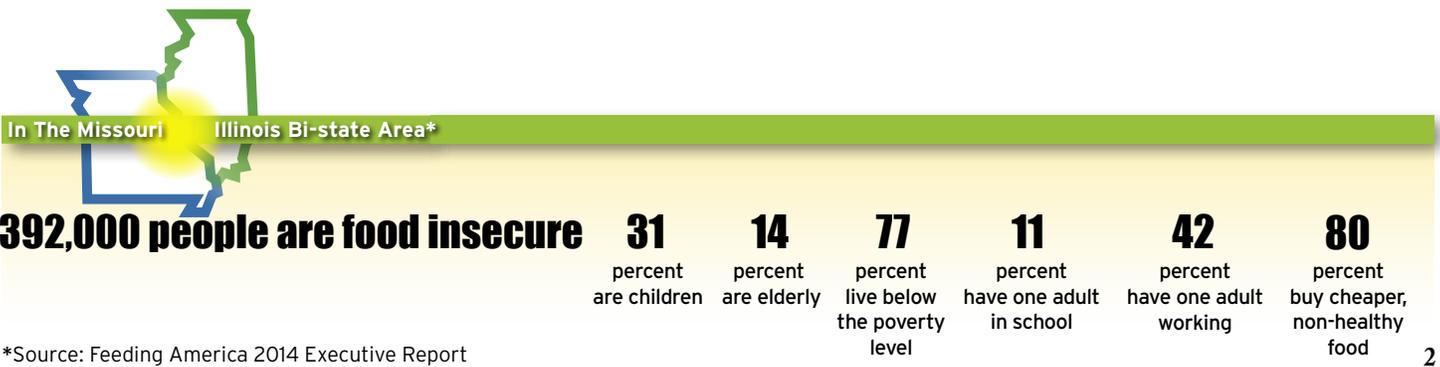


## Why Care?

It is well documented that hungry children are often desperate, agitated and angry. They are also more likely to get into trouble and their ability to learn is compromised. Hungry children grow up believing no one cares and their self-esteem suffers. They are frequently sick and when they do eat, they tend to consume food high in calories with little to no nutritional value. The consequences of hunger can last a lifetime.

In many school districts, **every** student currently enrolled relies on meals they receive from the National School Lunch Program. At schools where Twigs provides weekend food, attendance is up and disciplinary problems are down.

“Research shows that many children who do not have enough to eat wind up with diminished capacity to understand and learn. Children don’t have to be starving for this to happen. Even mild under nutrition ... can do it.”  
 Carl Sagan



\*Source: Feeding America 2014 Executive Report

## Critical Differences

Unlike other programs where families are required to apply for assistance and then drive somewhere to get help, Twigs brings food to those we help with no questions asked, no strings attached.

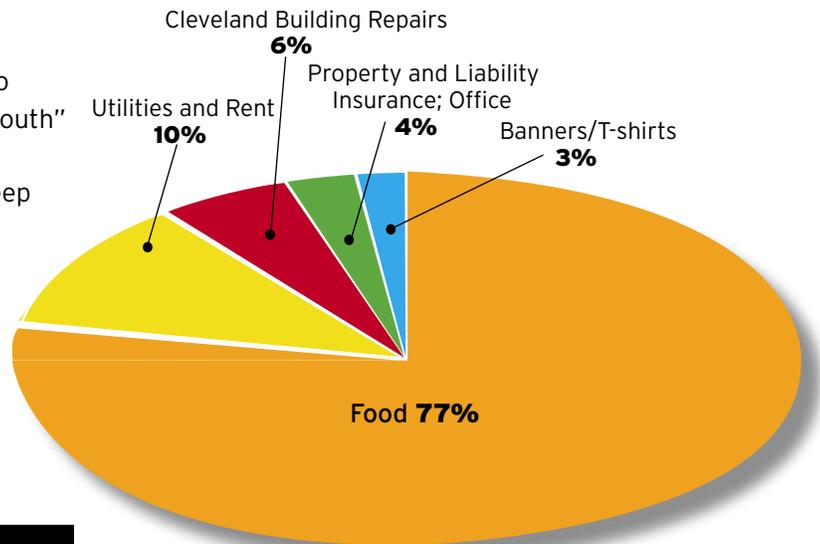
Summer lunch sites are established with input from school administrators, elected officials and/or community leaders. Locations are then identified so no child has to walk very far to eat. Moving a lunch site only a block or two can double the number of children fed. During the school year, weekend meals are delivered to schools for students to take home.

Twigs has a volunteer board, no paid positions and no marketing budget. Programs have grown “word-of-mouth” and impact people living in 12 counties in Illinois and Missouri. Over 600 volunteers work year-round to keep up with the demand for services.

“Poverty is a very complicated issue, but feeding a child isn’t.”

Jeff Bridges

2019 Fiscal Year Expenses



## Our Partners

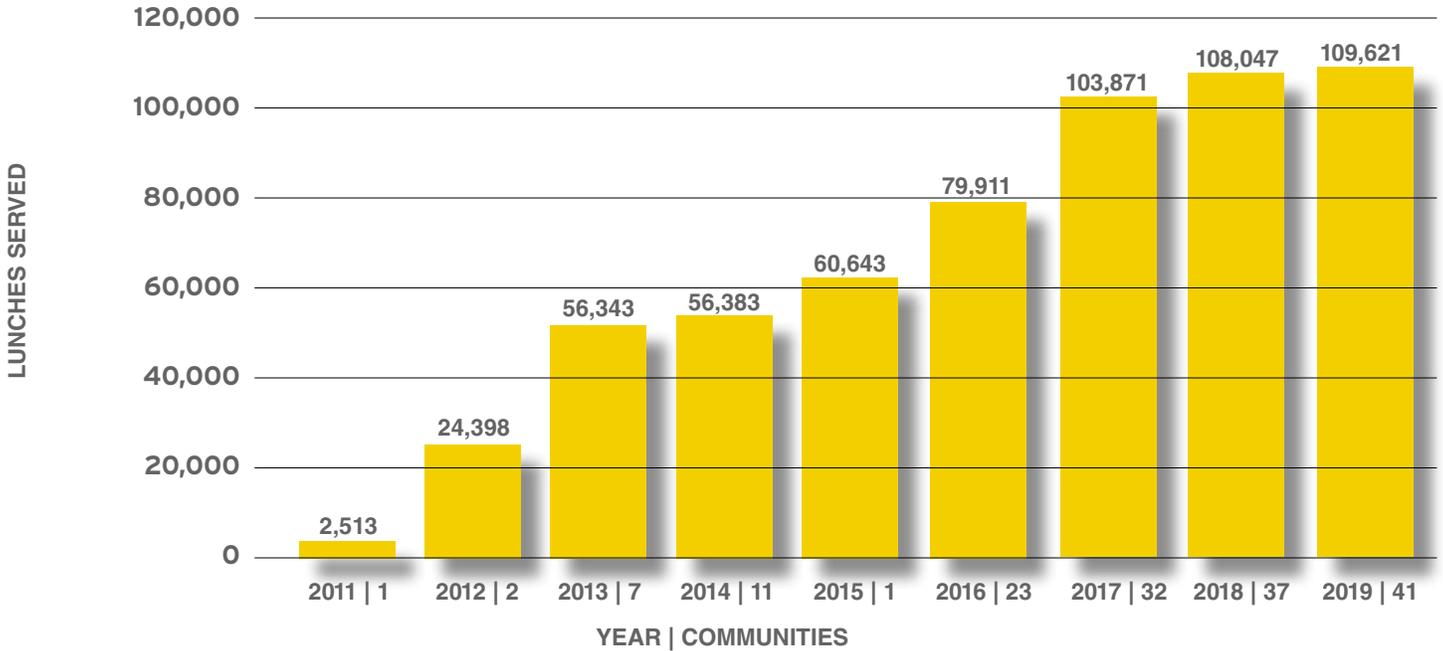
In addition to volunteers, partnerships are our most important asset. They vary by community but often include churches, schools, civic organizations, local businesses, seniors groups and area Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops.

Twigs is indebted to nine key partners for their generosity and support. They make what we do possible.



## Our Impact By the Numbers

**Free Summer Lunches.** The day after schools close, volunteers distribute meals from multiple locations\* in 12 Illinois and Missouri counties, Monday through Friday from 11:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. Every child who shows up is fed. Each lunch costs \$1.35; a child can be fed for an entire summer for \$75.



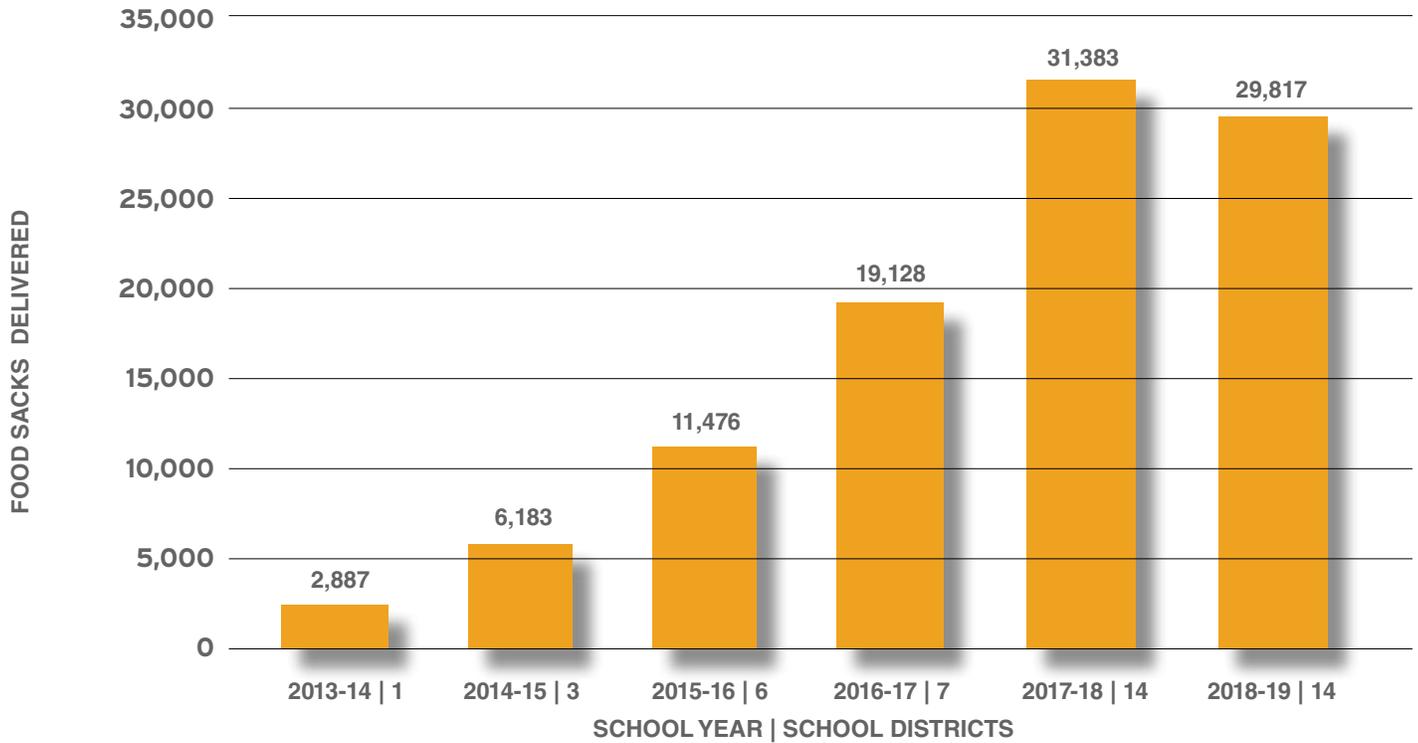
\*Empty lots, parks, fire departments, township halls, schools, churches, YMCAs, libraries and community centers.



**Free Food Market.** The first Tuesday of every month, from noon until 2 p.m., volunteers distribute fresh fruits, vegetables, meat and other items provided by the St. Louis Area Foodbank. Rain or shine, hot or cold, people often arrive as early as 6:30 a.m. to claim their place in line.

Years	Food Distributed Monthly	Locations	Households Served
2012-19	10-12 thousand pounds	2	250 to 300

**Free Weekend “Pack-a-Sack” Meals.** With input from school social workers and administrators, children at risk of having nothing to eat over the weekend are identified and given a Twigs Pack-a-Sack to take home. Volunteers assemble and deliver the food sacks that school employees distribute at the end of the school day every Friday. To avoid embarrassing the children, bags are discretely placed inside their backpacks. A month’s supply of weekend meals costs \$20 per child.



**A group of 40 to 50 volunteers gather every three weeks to fill bags with milk, cereal, soup, granola bars and other non-perishable food items. It takes only an hour and a half to assemble 1,000 Pack-a-Sacks.**

## The Annex



Twigs stores and distributes over 1 million food items annually.



Members of Boy Scout Troop 4005 help pack food to earn a service badge.

In 2017, Twigs moved its central storage and distribution center to the vacant Worthen School Annex located at the corner of Maryville Road and Stratford Lane in Granite City.

The facility is leased from Granite City School District #9. It provides the space needed to consolidate the storage of the 1 million plus food items Twigs collects and distributes each year and to improve the working conditions for volunteers.



The snow cone station at our annual Back to School BBQ is always a hit. Attendees receive a free meal and every child takes home free school supplies including a new back pack.

## How to Help

Foodbanks, individuals, corporations and foundations provide both food and funding to sustain all programs. Identifying new sources of support while maintaining current services is a constant challenge.

Donations of time, money and talent are always needed.

Volunteers interested in the summer lunch program must be 17 years or older, pay for and pass a background check and purchase a Twigs t-shirt to wear when distributing food. Younger lunch volunteers must be accompanied by an adult who has met these criteria.

To learn more, to volunteer or to donate, go to: [twigsforkids.com](http://twigsforkids.com) or email [twigsforkids@gmail.com](mailto:twigsforkids@gmail.com). Contact Twigs and F.I.G.S. Founder and Chief Dreamer, Lisa Guilliams, at 618.973.1627.

“If we can conquer space, we can conquer childhood hunger.”

Buzz Aldrin

## Twigs Locations

### Office (Mailing Address)

2101 Cleveland Boulevard  
Granite City, Illinois 62040

### Annex (Central Storage, Distribution & Event Space)

2450 Stratford Lane  
Granite City, IL 62040

