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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Brighter Bites Launches Produce Voucher Program to Continue to Support Food Insecure Families during Coronavirus Pandemic

Nonprofit rolls out \$2 million COVID-19 relief program

Houston, TX (April 23, 2020) – The combined public health crisis and economic collapse inflicting our nation has brought much uncertainty to all of our lives, but is especially magnified for those who identify as food insecure. With the onset of the COVID-19 crisis and widespread school closures, 25,000 families in Houston, Austin, New York City, Washington, D.C. and Southwest Florida who normally rely on nonprofit [Brighter Bites](#) for weekly produce and nutrition education are now in even more need of daily nourishment. These are families who already struggle to make ends meet.

Today, Brighter Bites is announcing a new, emergency initiative aimed at ensuring that all families who are currently enrolled in Brighter Bites around the U.S. have the opportunity to access fresh produce when they need it most.

Brighter Bites is rolling out the initiative this week for 14,100 families in Houston and Austin in partnership with the Texas grocery retailer [H-E-B](#) and next week for 1,100 families in Southwest Florida with [Southeastern Grocers](#), parent company of [Winn-Dixie stores](#).

Brighter Bites is giving \$25 produce vouchers bi-weekly to every Brighter Bites household for fruit and vegetable purchases over the next two-three months at H-E-B and Winn-Dixie stores. This initiative will ensure no Brighter Bites family has to forfeit health or safety in order to survive this crisis.

“This is a time that our families need healthy food more than ever to boost their immune systems. When schools closed and our distribution model was interrupted we knew we had to pivot our business,” said Brighter Bites CEO Rich Dachman. “Brighter Bites will continue providing our families with fruits and vegetables through this program, allowing them to maintain the same level of produce in their homes as they did through Brighter Bites

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distributions. We could not have executed this program without the partnership of H-E-B, Southeastern Grocers, and Winn-Dixie. We are so grateful for their support.”

Dachman added Brighter Bites will convert its online nutrition education programs to a distance learning model.

Under normal circumstances, Brighter Bites works with their families across 100 plus schools in six cities, with each family receiving 25 pounds of fresh, seasonal produce and nutrition education on a weekly basis. Brighter Bites families were actively engaged in the program, and data shows that they were consuming significantly more fresh produce and talking about nutrition more often in their homes, too.

To sustain this program for all Brighter Bites families for the next two to three months, the nonprofit will need to raise additional funding to continue issuing produce vouchers to families until this crisis subsides. To make a donation please visit www.brighterbites.org.

About Brighter Bites:

Brighter Bites is a nonprofit that creates communities of health through fresh food with the goal of changing behavior among children and their families to prevent obesity and achieve long-term health. Brighter Bites is an evidence-based, multi-component elementary school, preschool, and summer camp program that utilizes reliable access to fruits and vegetables, nutrition education, and consistent exposure to recipes and messages that feature fresh food. Since 2012, Brighter Bites has provided more than 27 million pounds of produce and millions of nutrition education materials to more than 275,000 individuals (including teachers) in Houston, Dallas, Austin, New York City, the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area, and Southwest Florida. To learn more about Brighter Bites visit www.brighterbites.org.

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