



NEWS RELEASE

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Wake County Serves Free Summer Meals to Kids

Each summer, many children wait for the last bell of the school year to ring, so they can enjoy a week at camp, a family vacation or time at the pool. However, for children who receive free and reduced-price meals at school, summer can mean hunger. Just as learning doesn't end when school lets out, neither does a child's need for good nutrition.

To help, Wake County is partnering with local nonprofit organizations to launch the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) on June 13. It will offer children and teens free, nutritious meals at one of many participating sites throughout Wake County during the summer months.

"Almost 56,000 Wake County youth are eligible for free or reduced-price meals in our public school system, and we do not want them to go hungry while school is out," said Regina Petteway, director of Wake County Human Services. "We encourage these children to visit the site nearest them for a free meal, so their bodies and minds can remain well fueled until school reopens in the fall."

Hunger is one of the most severe roadblocks to the learning process. Lack of nutrition over the summer may set up a cycle for poor performance once school begins, and make children more prone to illness and other health issues. The SFSP is designed to fill the nutrition gap and make sure children get the healthy meals they need.

Meals are free to children and teens ages 18 and younger. There is no application necessary, and children do not have to show proof income to receive a meal. Service will run throughout the summer, ending on Aug. 12.

Meal sites change throughout the summer. Families are encouraged to check these resources frequently to find the site most convenient to them:

- Visit wakegov.com/humanservices and click on the "Summer Food" banner;
- Call 1-866-3HUNGRY; or
- Text "FOODNC" to 877-877.

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