



NEWS RELEASE

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Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina Keeps Focus on Children

RALEIGH –The Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina is widely known as an organization that provides food for those at risk of hunger through smaller non-profit agencies such as rescue missions, food pantries and soup kitchens. The Food Bank also acts as a first responder in times of natural disasters and recently provided nearly 500,000 pounds of disaster relief to our neighbors in central and eastern North Carolina. A lesser known fact is the Food Bank's heavy involvement in fighting childhood hunger. When school is in session, the organization supports Kids Cafe programs which provide meals after school and BackPack Programs which provide meals on weekends. When school cafeterias close for summer vacation, the Food Bank continues to find ways to make up for those missed meals by initiating its own awareness building and call to action campaign called **Kids Summer Stock** and by sponsoring Summer Food Service Program sites around its service area to provide breakfast and lunch for children.

Kids Summer Stock

The Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina kicked off its annual food and funds drive **Kids Summer Stock** on June 2. This campaign serves to raise food, funds and awareness in our 34-county service area at a time when food drive donations tend to slow down and school cafeterias close to more than 277,000 children on the free and reduced meal program. Children served by our branches in Durham, Greenville, New Bern, Raleigh, Sandhills, and Wilmington are still in need of meals when school is out.

During the summertime, community-based non-profit agencies such as food pantries and children's programs supported by the Food Bank report an increase in the number of parents and grandparents seeking food assistance for their families.

The community can support **Kids Summer Stock** in the following ways:

- Donate money - For every dollar donated, the Food Bank can generally provide eight dollars (\$8) worth of food or approximately four meals. Log on to www.foodbankcenc.org or text 40meals to 50555 to make an instant \$10 donation.
- Donate food - Hold a food drive in your community this summer.
- Donate time - Spread the word via Social Media – i.e. Twitter, Facebook and Blogs.

This awareness-building food and funds campaign has been extremely successful and has provided more than 4 million meals to children and their families during the past three summers.

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The goal for the 2011 **Kids Summer Stock** Campaign is to provide 1.2 million meals. **By the end of June, the 2011 Kids Cafe Campaign had collected food and funds to provide 1.07 million meals. With the continued support of the community, the organization hopes to far exceed the goal when the campaign culminates at the end of July.**

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

In addition to monetary and food donations that provide meals during the summer, the Food Bank provides additional summer meals by sponsoring sites through the **Summer Food Service Program**. Nearly 5,500 meals were served to children during the first week the Food Bank-sponsored sites opened in mid-June.

The **Summer Food Service Program** (SFSP) ensures that children in low-income areas continue to receive nutritious meals during long school vacations when they do not have access to school lunch or breakfast. Benefits of participating in the program include drawing children into supervised activities that are safe, fun and filled with learning opportunities; children benefit nutritionally by receiving complete, wholesome meals; and parents benefit from some help in stretching their food dollars. Partner sites include community based organizations with summer programs at schools, churches, and youth centers.

In the past two years, the Food Bank partnered with 40 sites to feed over 2,000 kids during the summer months. This is the third year the Food Bank has sponsored Summer Food Service Program sites.

For additional information about sites where summer meals are sponsored by the Food Bank, go to: www.foodbankcenc.org, scroll down and click on the "Free Meals for Kids" tab.

When school is in session the Food Bank supports Kids Cafe and Backpack Programs.

The Food Bank recently provided more than 187,000 meals to 1, 600 children through 26 **Kids Cafe Afterschool Programs** in 25 counties. In fiscal year 2010-2011, the Food Bank's 13 **BackPack Programs** in 10 counties provided support to nearly 1,100 children and provided over 47,000 backpacks to children in need with volunteers donating 4,192 hours of volunteer support.

The Food Bank would like to expand both programs and provide more sites in all 34 counties through corporate sponsorships.

For additional information about the Kids Cafe and Backpack Programs, contact J. Caprice Brown at 919-865-3037 or cbrown@foodbankcenc.org.

About the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina

The Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina is a nonprofit organization that has provided food for people at risk of hunger in 34 counties in central and eastern North Carolina for 30 years. The Food Bank serves a network of more than 800 partner agencies such as soup kitchens, food pantries, shelters, and programs for children and adults through warehouses in Durham, Greenville, New Bern, Raleigh, the Sandhills (Southern Pines) and Wilmington. In fiscal year 2009-2010, the Food Bank distributed more than 41.5 million pounds of food and non-food essentials through these agencies. Sadly, hunger remains a serious problem in central and eastern North Carolina. In these counties, more than 500,000 struggle each day to provide enough food for their families. www.foodbankcenc.org.

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