



NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STOP SUMMER HUNGER: KIDS SUMMER MEALS

Food Bank, Golden Corral and K&W Pilot New Model to Serve Children When School Cafeterias Are Closed

Raleigh, NC -The Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina kicked off its 7th Annual STOP SUMMER HUNGER campaign in late May, just as most children launched into a fun-filled, worry-free summer. But for 300,000 children dependent upon the schools free and reduced-meal program across central and eastern North Carolina, summer break ushers in the uncertainty of their next meal. For their parents and caregivers, summer brings the stress of feeding their children when school cafeterias close for the long summer break. In addition to the Food Bank's overall Stop Summer Hunger campaign that collects food and funds during June and July with a goal of providing 3.2 million meals, the Food Bank of Central & Eastern NC also sponsors breakfast and lunch sites around the service area through its Kids Summer Meals program.

The food pantries and summer feeding sites supported by the Food Bank see a spike in demand during the summer months as a result of families seeking alternatives to provide these lost meals for their children. Through partnership with community organizations such as summer camps, YMCA's, etc., the Food Banks Kids Summer Meals provides a location for children to receive free breakfast and lunch meals in addition to supporting various enrichment activities for children such as exercise and summer reading programs.

The Food Bank has expanded its Kids Summer Meals program from 14 sites serving nearly 400 children in Summer 2010 to 90 sites serving 4,100 children. The 2013 effort alone fed more than 136,000 healthy breakfast and lunch meals along with fresh fruit. The Food Bank is projected to serve 140,000 meals to more than 5,000 children this summer.

In its quest to continually improve upon meal service and quality, the Food Bank has partnered with Golden Corral, the Golden Corral Charitable Fund and K&W Cafeteria for a unique service model. In the Food Bank's Sandhills and Wilmington branch service areas, local Golden Corral restaurants have partnered with the organization to pilot a program where they prepare meals for the Kids Summer Meals Program. In Wayne County, K&W Cafeteria has adopted the same meal service model.

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"It is a unique model of reinvesting donor funds back into the community and seeing direct and immediate impact in the lives of the children served as a result of the partnership with Golden Corral," said Ashley Delamar, Vice President of Development, Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina.

In the Sandhills region, Golden Corral prepares breakfast and lunch on a daily basis for 150 children who participate in the Kids Summer Meals programs through the Food Banks partnership with the Aberdeen Boys & Girls Club and the Boys & Girls Club of the Sandhills. The two programs share mealtime together at the Sandhills program site after picking up the meals from the local restaurant.

In Wilmington, nearly 250 children participating in the Kids Summer Meals program through the Food Banks partnership with the Wilmington Family YMCA (140 children) and the YWCA of Lower Cape Fear (100 children) receive breakfast and lunch prepared and delivered by the local Golden Corral.

Thanks to the Golden Corral Charitable Fund, thousands of children fed through the Kids Summer Meals program receive fresh fruit along with their meals. Many of the children have only eaten fruit that comes in a shelf-stable package and the fresh fruit is a new experience. One child recognized a pear only as a cube from fruit cocktail.

K&W Cafeteria prepares meals for six Kids Summer Meals in Goldsboro providing nourishment to more than 500 children ensuring that the focus is on summer fun and not just food.

"The kids are enjoying the variety of food offered by this food service model from Golden Corral and K & W restaurants," said Gideon Adams, Senior Programs and Outreach Manager for the Food Bank of Central & Eastern NC. "The donation of the fresh fruit by the Golden Corral Charitable Fund is an important contribution that makes summer a healthier time for the children."

The goal for the overall 2014 Stop Summer Hunger Campaign is to provide 3.2 million meals for our children.

The Stop Summer Hunger Campaign ends on July 31. For additional information or to donate, go to www.foodbankcenc.org/ssh.

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 more than 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 2013-2014, the Food Bank distributed nearly 54 million pounds of food (45 million meals) and non-food essentials through these agencies. Sadly, hunger remains a serious problem in central and eastern North Carolina. In these counties, more than 560,000 struggle each day to provide enough food for their families.

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