



PRESS RELEASE

1030 15TH STREET NW, SUITE 1100W, WASHINGTON, DC 20005
800.969.4767 NOKIDHUNGRY.ORG

RELEASE: No Kid Hungry Kentucky Grants Over \$159,000 to Combat Summer Hunger in Rural Communities Across the State

Thanks to expanded federal flexibilities, more rural schools and community groups can serve free summer meals in ways that reach more of the kids who need them

June 10, 2024

No Kid Hungry Contact: Laura Rice at lrice@strength.org

Feeding Kentucky Contact: Katherine@RunSwitchPR.com

Frankfort, KY: For kids who receive school meals, the summer months can be the hungriest time of year. This year promises to be different, thanks to newly expanded guidelines that will give school districts and community organizations the flexibility to offer non-congregate meal service in many more rural communities. To support the rollout of this effort, No Kid Hungry Kentucky recently announced over \$159,000 in grants to help ten organizations across the state reach even more kids with summer meals.

For many children, free and reduced price school meals can be a lifeline that ensures reliable access to nutrition during the school year. When schools close for the summer, however, these meals disappear and families struggle from the strain on already-tight budgets. This can be particularly true for rural families.

In a recent No Kid Hungry survey of rural families, parents reported on the unique hardships they faced during the summer when school is out. More than half of rural families say they don't have enough money for food during the summer. Over 80% spend more on groceries when their children are out of school for the summer—an average of \$168 more each month.

Summer meal programs were designed to provide healthy meals during summer vacation, but have historically only reached a fraction of the kids who need them due to barriers like transportation, fuel costs, extreme weather and parent's work schedules. In rural areas, where

kids often live many miles from their closest meal site, these challenges have been particularly stark.

“There’s long been a huge gap between the number of kids getting meals in the summertime and the kids who really need them - particularly in rural communities. New flexibilities for summer meals in rural communities means that no longer has to be the case,” said John Cain, Program Director for Kentucky Kids Eat, the official childhood hunger relief program of Feeding Kentucky. “We’re excited to support these schools and community groups in offering summer meals in ways that work for their community - like allowing families to pick up multiple meals at a time or even offering home delivery.”

No Kid Hungry Kentucky’s grant funding supports the adaptations needed to reach as many kids as possible with summer meals, including meal delivery, refrigeration and transportation costs. The following school districts and community organizations received grants in Kentucky:

- Breckinridge County School District
- Cumberland County School District
- Harlan County Community Action Agency, Inc.
- Henry County School District
- Jackson Independent School District
- KCEOC Community Action Partnership
- Livingston County School District
- Mercer County School District
- Metcalfe County School District
- Woodford County School District

No Kid Hungry is also helping families find summer meals near them through our Free Meals Finder map and texting hotline. Parents and caregivers can text the word “FOOD” (or “COMIDA”) to 304-304 to find sites in their neighborhood.

No Kid Hungry Kentucky is a public-private coalition between No Kid Hungry and Feeding Kentucky.

###

About No Kid Hungry

No child should go hungry in America. But millions of kids in the United States live with hunger. No Kid Hungry is working to end childhood hunger by helping launch and improve programs that give all kids the healthy food they need to thrive. This is a problem we know how to solve. No Kid Hungry is a campaign of Share Our Strength, an organization committed to ending hunger and poverty. Join us at NoKidHungry.org.

About Feeding Kentucky:

Feeding Kentucky is comprised of seven Feeding America food banks that reach all 120 counties of Kentucky and serve an estimated one in seven of all Kentuckians annually. Last year, its members distributed 78 million meals in partnership with more than 1,400 charitable

feeding agencies such as pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters. For more information on how you can fight hunger in your community, visit [FeedingKy.org](https://www.feedingky.org).