



CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE

A Voice for Washington's Children, Youth & Families

Summertime Childhood Hunger Rising Small Investment Can Deliver Huge Impact

A small, up-front investment can draw millions in federal funds to help curb summer hunger for Washington kids. By chipping in \$250,000, the state could leverage up to \$4 million in federal funds to expand summer meal sites in a dozen communities across Washington. The state money would go directly to community schools, nonprofits, tribes, cities and faith-based organizations to hire local people and purchase food from local stores. The federal dollars would pay for additional food at a time when hunger-relief organizations are struggling to feed the growing number of families in need.

This fall, the parents of 433,000 Washington children signed them up for free and reduced-price school meals; this is 42% of all Washington school children. Fortunately, these children can be sure they'll get a nutritious lunch and, in most cases, breakfast at school no matter how uncertain their family budgets are in these tough economic times.

Unfortunately, only an average of 32,500 children had access to nutritious summer meals during the summer of 2009; that's only 11% of the kids who ate free or reduced-price school breakfasts or lunches during the school year.

Kids who rely on school meals during the school year often go without the nutrition they need during the summer months. We know how to solve childhood hunger any time of the year – surround our children with nutritious meals where they live, learn and play.

The federal *Summer Food Service Program* aims to fill the summertime childhood hunger gap, but the program is woefully underutilized in Washington; it reaches fewer than 1 in 9 of the children who eat free or reduced-price lunch during the school year. Last summer, due to budget cuts, many of the summer schools and other programs that host summer meals were cut back to only a few weeks or eliminated entirely, leaving families in need without a meal program for most – if not all – of the summer.



Modest investments the Legislature has made in recent years have helped communities to feed hungry children during the school year. It's time to make a commitment to keeping kids well-nourished when school is out.

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SUMMER MEALS SITES BY COUNTY, 2009

County	Summer Sponsors	2009 Sites	Eligible Children	Eligible Children Per Site	Ranking by Children Per Site
Adams	2	3	3,040	1,013	26
Asotin	1	6	1,491	249	5
Benton	5	12	13,770	2,804	29
Chelan	3	8	7,047	881	23
Clallam	3	6	3,806	634	16
Clark	6	26	26,652	1,025	27
Columbia	1	1	232	232	3
Cowlitz	2	7	7,618	1,088	28
Douglas	2	2	3,875	1,938	33
Ferry	1	1	589	589	15
Franklin	1	8	10,484	1,311	32
Garfield	1	1	140	140	2
Grant	7	17	11,472	675	20
Grays Harbor	5	24	6,077	253	6
Island	1	1	2,591	2,591	34
Jefferson	0	0	1,163		35
King	11	245	78,973	322	9
Kitsap	3	17	11,138	655	18
Kittitas	0	0	1,627		35
Klickitat	3	3	1,522	507	13
Lewis	6	6	5,970	995	25
Lincoln	0	0	904		35
Mason	4	6	3,935	656	19
Okanogan	4	6	3,820	637	17
Pacific	2	4	1,724	431	10
Pend Oreille	2	4	949	237	4
Pierce	12	93	50,515	543	14
San Juan	1	1	453	453	11
Skagit	5	7	8,696	1,242	30
Skamania	0	0	432		35
Snohomish	5	25	32,561	1,302	31
Spokane	9	66	30,580	463	12
Stevens	6	31	3,254	105	1
Thurston	7	14	11,904	850	22
Wahkiakum	0	0	225		35
Walla Walla	3	16	4,575	286	7
Whatcom	11	13	10,300	792	21
Whitman	3	5	1,443	289	8
Yakima	13	38	35,121	924	24
Total	151	723	400,668	553	

List does not include camps or Outward Bound programs through universities. Source: Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2009.