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SUMMER FEEDING SITES OFFER FREE MEALS TO KIDS

Second Harvest Food Bank Connects Families to Food

SAN JOSE, Calif., June 15, 2015 – The carefree days of summer are here. But for many local kids, summertime means not having enough to eat. Summer can be hard on families struggling to put food on the table because their kids no longer have access to the free and reduced-price meals they get at school. Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties wants local families to know there are resources available, including Second Harvest programs, federally funded summer feeding sites where kids can get a free meal, and CalFresh (food stamps).

There are more than 60 sites in [Santa Clara County](#) and more than 20 sites in [San Mateo County](#) where a free lunch is served to any child 18 and under. Some of the sites also offer free breakfast and an afternoon snack, as well as free meals for adults who accompany their children. The kids' meals are provided through the federal Summer Food Service Program and the adult meals are covered by Second Harvest Food Bank.

Families can also get groceries and fresh produce from Second Harvest. The Food Bank partners with more than 330 nonprofit agencies to provide food at more than 770 sites in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties, including schools, community centers, pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters.

Families who are struggling to put food on the table can call Second Harvest's Food Connection multilingual hotline at 800-984-3663 or visit www.shfb.org/getfood to learn about food-assistance programs that can help, including the summer feeding sites and CalFresh (food stamps).

"Kids should be able to have fun, enjoy a good book, and focus on the summer instead of worrying about getting enough to eat," said Kathy Jackson, CEO of Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. "Second Harvest is working with libraries, day camps, and other organizations up and down the peninsula to make sure kids and families have access to the nutritious food they need this summer, whether that's a hot meal or a bag of groceries."

Studies show that kids who don't get enough to eat often suffer emotional and physical effects that can hamper their ability to do well in school and succeed later in life. Hunger has been linked with delayed development and learning difficulties. Children who struggle with hunger are also at higher risk for health complications as well as behavioral issues, anxiety, and mood swings.

Childhood hunger is a serious problem, even in wealthy Silicon Valley. An estimated one in three local kids is at risk for hunger.

While the local economy may be booming, the cost of living, especially housing, is making it extremely difficult for low-income families to pay their bills and put food on the table. Nearly 250,000 people, including 100,000 kids, rely on Second Harvest for food every month. The Food Bank distributes more than 1 million pounds of food every single week.

Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties is the trusted leader dedicated to ending local hunger. Since its inception in 1974, Second Harvest has become one of the largest food banks in the nation, providing food to nearly one quarter of a million people each month. The Food Bank mobilizes individuals, companies and community partners to connect people to the nutritious food they need. More than half the food distributed is fresh produce. In fact, Second Harvest provides more fresh fruits and vegetables than any other food bank in the United States. Second Harvest also plays a leading role in promoting federal nutrition programs and educating families on how to make healthier food choices. Visit www.SHFB.org to get involved.

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