



Lowcountry Food Bank looking to expand Kids Café program in Horry County

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Thousands of children in South Carolina go hungry every day. Research has shown that students who receive nutritious food do better in school, have better attendance and have fewer behavior problems.

The Lowcountry Food Bank has been doing its part to fight child hunger for nearly 40 years through a variety of programs, one of which is the Kids Café. This program provides healthy supper meals to students in after-school programs.

Kara Moore, director of the organization's Child Hunger Program, said many kids have to rely on the free breakfasts and lunches they get at school as the only food they get all day.

"We want to make sure children don't go hungry when they're not in school," she said.

Kids Café works through many different after-school programs. Moore said they will provide food to any structured after-school enrichment program whether it's through the school system, recreation departments, churches or other groups.

"The financial and time investment for our partners is minimal," she said.



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There is no cost to the local groups to be part of the Kids Café. The program is federally funded through

the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program and is one of the largest charitable meal service programs in



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the country. The Lowcountry Food Bank serves 10 coastal counties and Moore says there

are currently 14 Kids Café programs being served— but none in Horry County. "We want to get the word

out to all groups big and small about the availability of the Kids Café meal program," she said. "Maybe there are some smaller churches that aren't aware of the program and we want to reach out to them."

Moore said she knows there may already be some active after school meals programs in the area and Lowcountry Food Bank is not trying to duplicate efforts.

"We just want to fill in the gaps where meals are needed," she said. "Everyone's goal is to make sure no child goes hungry."

In the summer when school is not in session, the Kids Café morphs into the Summer Meals program with essentially the same program providing nutritious meals and snacks.

In 2020, the summer program provided more than 25,000 snacks and meals at 22 sites throughout coastal South Carolina.

To find out how a local after school program can participate, contact kidscafe@lcfbank.org.

The Lowcountry Food Bank was first organized in Charleston County in 1983 and now spans the South Carolina coastal region from the Georgia line to the North Carolina border.

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