



FEED TOOLKIT

School & After-School Food | Soup Kitchen

Food is a necessity in life, and the sharing of food builds relationships. In the Gospels, we frequently see Jesus feeding people. Prepared and ready-to-eat food are part of the Feed action area.

- SCHOOL & AFTER SCHOOL FOOD -

SCHOOL LUNCH AND BREAKFAST PROGRAM

The **National School Lunch Program (NSLP)** and **School Breakfast Program (SBP)** was one of the top 5 factors which have a significant impact on hunger as identified by Craig Gunderson¹. Childcare or after-school programs may be eligible to participate in the NSLP (National School Lunch Program) which can provide meals as well as after-school snacks.

In the 2014-2015 school year, **61.8%** of students in Arkansas public schools participated in the meal program, with the lowest percentages of students participating in the central and northwest regions.² According to FRAC (Food Research & Action Center), the total number of students in the 2013 school year who participated in the program was **246,500** - nearly $\frac{1}{4}$ of a million children in Arkansas alone!³ The qualifications⁴ to participate in the NSLP program are:

- Free meal: Household income must be below 130% of the Federal poverty threshold
- Reduced-Price meal: Household income must be below 185% of the Federal poverty threshold

The **Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)** started in a few states in 2011. The results were an unqualified success. In 2014, this program went nationwide. Now, any school with a very high poverty rate can provide free meals - both breakfast and lunch - to all students without the need for a lengthy application process.

- [Community Eligibility Provision.pdf](#)

For more statistical information for Arkansas, see also:

- [Arkansas Report Card .pdf](#)
- [FRAC Arkansas.pdf](#)

¹ Craig Gunderson, *Addressing U.S. Food Insecurity* (ConAgra Foods Foundation, 2012).

² Office for Education Policy 2014 Arkansas Report Card (www.OfficeForEducationPolicy.Org)

³ Food Research & Action Center (<http://FRAC.Org>)

⁴ Arkansas Department of Education, Child Nutrition Unit (<http://DataCenter.KidsCount.Org>)

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It is a well-known fact that children who come to school without eating breakfast perform poorly. To try to resolve this issue, the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance is sponsoring Breakfast After the Bell test sites where all children are provided a free meal to start the day. The results are looking promising!

- [Breakfast After the Bell.pdf](#)
- [School Breakfast Month 2016 .pdf](#)

How can you help with the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs?

1. Bring awareness to the program - stress the importance of signing up for the program at the beginning of the school year.
2. Talk to your school about participating in the Breakfast After the Bell program. Contact the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance at (501) 399-9999 or www.ARHungerAlliance.Org.
3. If you have a day-care or after-school program, use the program to provide meals and snacks.

Kids Cafe Program was started by *Feeding America* in order to provide free after-school meals and snacks to children. The location can be anywhere children gather such as churches or Boys and Girls Clubs. In 2014, over 150,000 children were fed through the Kids Cafe Program nationwide.⁵ Currently, Kids Cafe programs are found at locations such as Pine Bluff Boys and Girls Clubs and Children's Hospital.

Contact your contact your local food bank to find out where a Kids Cafe is currently located in your area, or ask how you can start one.

- [200KReasons Arkansas Food Banks.pdf](#)

SUMMER MEALS

Children who rely on school lunches frequently lose weight during the summer break, a sure indication that they are not receiving enough to eat when school is not in session. Another result is "academic decline" - children don't retain what they learned in the previous school year when they go hungry over the summer. Less than 15% of the children who participate in the National School Lunch Program during the school year receive help during the summer school break⁶. Many reasons exist, such as lack of awareness of the meal site or the inability to get to a site. Other school breaks affect childhood hunger as well.

Serving meals during the summer and other school breaks is desperately needed by many children. Low income families report that it costs an average of more than \$300 monthly to feed their children in the summer months, money many of these families simply do not have. There are many opportunities available for involvement in this critical need.

- **AR Dream Center Food for Good Program:** With partners USDA, PepsiCo, and DHS, the program brings free meals to anyone that is 18 years of age or younger - instead of making the children come to them. On weekdays during the summer school break, a van delivers nutritious meals to locations as varied as mobile home parks and churches. The Food for Good staff, who are fully trained and insured, will set-up, feed the children, and clean-up. Location providers only have to the space. For

⁵ Feeding America (www.FeedingAmerica.org)

⁶ Arkansas Department of Human Services Arkansas Special Nutrition Program -SNP (<https://dhs.arkansas.gov/DCCECE/SNP/SummerInfoM.aspx>)

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more information on becoming a Food for Good site, contact the AR Dream Center at (501)-232-0630 or visit www.ARDreamCenter.TV/Become-a-Food-for-Good-Site for more information.

- **Arkansas Department of Human Services Special Nutrition Program (SNP):** A 100% federally funded program, the SNP provides up to 3 meals a day plus snacks. You must meet certain criteria to become a site. To find out more about becoming a SNP site, call (501) 682-8869 or (800) 482-5850 ext. 28869 or visit <https://DHS.Arkansas.Gov/DCCECE/SNP/SummerInfoM.aspx>
- **Feeding America Summer Programs:** Through its member food banks, Feeding America operates several programs to close the summer feeding gap. To participate, contact your local food bank about their program offerings.
 - Kids Cafe program - free meals are served at locations nationwide. Find out how you can start a Kids Cafe or how you can participate in one.
 - Summer Backpack programs - see www.feedingamerica.org/about-us/helping-hungry-children for information on this program.
 - School Pantry programs - families can receive food through a school food pantry during the summer
- **200KReasons Arkansas Food Banks.pdf**
- **Samaritan Community Center SnackPacks for Kids:** The SnackPacks for Kids program provides a bag filled with healthy snacks to children who are at risk for hunger. When school is out, the bags are distributed through various sites around the state one day each week. In 2014, the program provided food to 2,000 children each week. To find out how you can help, contact Samaritan Community Center in Rogers, AR at (479) 636-4198 or visit www.SamCC.Org.
- **USDA Summer Food Service Program (SFSP):** With partners providing locations and awareness, the USDA is leading the charge for free meals for children during the summer months. Any child 18 or under can attend a meal program without pre-registration. The SFSP website is full of information ranging from finding a site to tips on hosting a site.
 - To **host** a site, call the Arkansas Department of Human Services at (800) 482-5850 ext 28869 or visit www.FNS.USDA.Gov/SFSP/Summer-Food-Service-Program-sfsp.
 - To **volunteer** at an existing site near you, call (866) 3-HUNGRY (866-348-6479) or go to www.FNS.USDA.Gov/SummerFoodRocks.
 - To **raise awareness** of site locations, download resource materials from <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/sfsp/summerresources2016.pdf>.

For even more information about Summer Meal sites in Arkansas:

- Contact the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance - AR No Kid Hungry program at (501) 399-9999 or www.ARHungerAlliance.Org.
- Visit the AR No Kid Hungry Summer Meals site: <http://AR.NoKidHungry.Org/Summer-Meals>
- Find a Summer Meal Site near you. Call (888) 4KID4AR or text FoodAR to 877-877.

WEEKEND FOOD PROGRAMS

If 61.8% of public school students in Arkansas⁷ receive free or reduced lunches at school, what do they eat on the weekend? This is where the backpack and snack-pack programs comes in. The food packages, containing child-friendly and nutritious foods, are distributed on the last day of school each week through the school counselor's offices to those children in need. There are 3 main programs in Arkansas.

- **Arkansas Foodbank Food for Kids (formerly Arkansas Rice Depot):** The program started in 1994 when a school nurse asked the Arkansas Rice Depot for help providing food for hungry children. The Food for Kids program at the Arkansas Rice Depot grew from that request. (Visit www.RiceDepot.Org/Programs/Food-For-Kids for even more information.) The ARD distributes a list of items needed to fill backpacks. These items can be collected and delivered to the ARD.
 - **Food for Kids Wishlist.pdf**
- **Feeding America Backpack Program:** The program, providing backpacks filled with food, has grown and spread nationwide. Feeding America, through their Backpack Program, enlists the help of their food bank members to fill the need. (See www.FeedingAmerica.Org/About-Us/We-Feed-Children/Backpack-Program for information on this program.)
- **Samaritan Community Center SnackPacks for Kids:** The SFK program provides a bag filled with healthy snacks for the weekend to children who are at risk for hunger. Currently, this program serves over 125 schools in the northwest Arkansas counties of Benton, Carroll, Madison, and Washington, distributing more than 8000 bags each school year.⁸ To find out how you can help, contact Samaritan Community Center at (479) 636-4198 or www.SamCC.Org.

Unless you have a personal contact at a school, the best way to participate in any of these programs is to contact your local food bank. They know which schools in your area are in need of assistance.

- **200KReasons Arkansas Food Banks.pdf**

⁷ Office of Education Policy 2014 Arkansas Report Card

⁸ Samaritan Community Center (www.SamCC.Org)

- SOUP KITCHEN -

Soup Kitchens are an important part of feeding those who are low-income and food insecure. Whether you choose to open your kitchen once a month, once a week, or every day depends on the need and the resources available to you. A Soup Kitchen takes commitment in order to provide a reliable source of nutrition for those in need. Here are some factors to take into account when planning a Soup Kitchen.⁹

- 1. Research:** Before you start, review the needs in your area. Any funding application will require that you show a need.
 - Lookup census information.
 - <http://QuickFacts.Census.Gov/>
 - Find out what hunger looks like in your area.
 - www.FeedingAmerica.Org/Hunger-In-America/Our-Research/Map-the-Meal-Gap.
 - See if your area is currently being served. If so, you may want to consider joining forces instead of starting a new kitchen. You may also look for a nearby Soup Kitchen and see if they can provide guidance as you create yours.
 - **200KReasons Arkansas Food Resource Directory.pdf**
- 2. Paper work:** Be sure you register as a nonprofit organization with your state. Some of the benefits of registering include federal tax exemption, being able to legally solicit for donations, and eligibility for grants and other funding. Be sure you know all of the state and federal tax and other regulations that apply to a nonprofit. For information on registering in Arkansas, see:
 - <http://ArkansasAG.Gov/Programs/Arkansas-Lawyer/Charities>
- 3. Funding:** Regular, consistent and adequate funding is important for the success of your Soup Kitchen. Funding can come from your church, individual or corporate donors, fund raising events, and grants. Put together a presentation of the needs and how you see your Soup Kitchen as a solution to those needs. For many grants, you must already have your soup kitchen established. To learn about grant writing, consult your local library, bookstores, or people you know who have received grants. For more information on funding see:
 - **200KReasons Funding Resources.pdf**
- 4. Location:** You need a location that is accessible to the community you are trying to serve and has enough space to store your food, has the necessary utilities for a kitchen, and provides space for tables and chairs. Churches and community centers are one place to start. Alternatively, you may want to consider a mobile Soup Kitchen.
- 5. Advertise:** Let people know where you are and what you offer. Don't forget to advertise fundraisers and promote your accomplishments. Contact local newspapers and television stations. Print and distribute flyers. Join a local coalition of charitable organizations or ministerial alliance if there is one available in your area. Go to city hall and town meetings.

⁹ www.ShareFaith.Com/blog/2013/10/Start-Soup-Kitchen-CommunityChurch/ and www.Zakat.Org/blog/How-to-Start-a-Soup-Kitchen/

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6. **Acquire food:** Contact your local food bank about how they can help supply food for your kitchen. Check with grocery stores and restaurants about food donations or purchasing discounts. Hold food drives. Contact local churches asking them to regularly collect and donate food to your organization. Make a list of what foods you need! You do not want to waste contributions or try to put together a meal without the proper ingredients.
7. **Gather volunteers:** Ask any charitable organization what their greatest asset is - they will probably state that it is their volunteers. Volunteers are needed for picking up food donations, raising funds, distributing flyers, preparing and serving meals, and the list goes on.
8. **Pray:** Pray that the Lord will bless your organization and for the people it serves.

- INTERNET RESOURCES -

*There is a wealth of information available to help you
FEED
the hungry such as these 200KReasons Recommended Websites*

AR DREAMCENTER: www.ARDreamCenter.TV

200KReasons Toolkit: **Feed**

Keywords: **Summer Meals**

The Food for Good Program provides free meals to children during the summer school break. See www.ARDreamCenter.TV/Become-a-Food-For-Good-Site for information on this program.

ARKANSAS ATTORNEY GENERAL OFFICE: <http://ArkansasAG.Gov/Programs/Arkansas-Lawyer/Charities>

200KReasons Toolkit: **Feed**

Keywords: **Soup Kitchen**

Register your organization as a non-profit charity in order to receive benefits such as federal tax exemption and the ability to legally ask for donations.

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION / CHILD NUTRITION UNIT:

<http://DataCenter.KidsCount.Org>

200KReasons Toolkit: **Feed**

Keywords: **School Lunch Program**

Statistics regarding the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) can be found on this site.

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ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION / SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM:

www.ArkansasEd.Org

200KReasons Toolkit: **Feed, Read & Learn**

Keywords: **Hunger Education, School Lunch Program**

Site provides information on the number of children receiving free and reduced cost meals at school for current and prior years, as well as predictions for future years at www.ArkansasEd.Org/Divisions/Fiscal-and-Administrative-Services/E-Rate/Free-and-Reduced-School-Lunch-Data.

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS): <https://DHS.Arkansas.Gov>

200KReasons Toolkit: **Feed**

Keywords: **Summer Meals**

Information on becoming a summer meals site through the Special Nutrition Program sponsored by **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - SNAP** can be located at <https://DHS.Arkansas.Gov/dcece/SNP/SummerInfom.aspx>.

ARKANSAS FOODBANK: <http://www.arkansasfoodbank.org/>

200KReasons Toolkit: **Feed, Volunteer & Witness**

Keywords: **Food for Kids Backpack Program, Volunteer**

The mission of the Foodbank (in union with the former Arkansas Rice Depot) is to find "**Sensible Solutions**" to hunger in Arkansas. For the **Food for Kids Backpack Program**, go to www.RiceDepot.Org/programs/Food-For-Kids.

FEEDING AMERICA: www.FeedingAmerica.Org

200KReasons Toolkit: **Feed, Read & Learn**

Keywords: **Backpack Program, Hunger Education**

Information on the **Backpack Program** sponsored by Feeding America is located at www.FeedingAmerica.Org/Our-Response/We-Feed-Children/Backpack-Program. "**Map the Meal Gap**" provides invaluable statistical information in an interactive format. It can be found at www.FeedingAmerica.Org/Hunger-In-America/Our-Research/Map-the-Meal-Gap.

FOOD RESEARCH & ACTION CENTER: <http://FRAC.Org>

200KReasons Toolkit: **Feed**

Keywords: **School Lunch Program**

Statistics regarding the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) can be found on this site.

NO KID HUNGRY / SHARE OUR STRENGTH: <http://AR.NoKidHungry.Org>

200KReasons Toolkit: **Feed, Teach**

Keywords: **Cooking Matters, Summer Meal Site, Nutrition Education**

Summer meal site information from the **Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance** and **Share Our Strength No Kid Hungry** can be found at <http://AR.NoKidHungry.Org/Summer-Meals>. To learn how to participate in the **Cooking Matters** and **Cooking Matters at the Store** programs, go to <http://CookingMatters.Org>.

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OFFICE FOR EDUCATION POLICY: www.OfficeForEducationPolicy.Org

200KReasons Toolkit: **Feed, Provide**

Keywords: **School Lunch Program, Weekend Food Programs**

Statistics regarding the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) for Arkansas for the 2014-2015 school year can be found on this site.

SHARE FAITH MAGAZINE: www.ShareFaith.Com/blog/2013/10/Start-Soup-Kitchen-CommunityChurch/

200KReasons Toolkit: **Feed**

Keywords: **Soup Kitchen**

The on-line periodical lists many factors in running a Soup Kitchen.

UNITED STATES CENSUS BUREAU: <http://QuickFacts.Census.Gov>

200KReasons Toolkit: **Feed**

Keywords: **Soup Kitchen**

Research the needs in your area using the government census data.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA): www.FNS.USDA.Gov

200KReasons Toolkit: **Feed**

Keywords: **Summer Meal Site**

Become a summer meal site through the Food and Nutrition Service division's **Summer Food Service Program**. Information can be found at www.FNS.USDA.Gov/SFSP/Summer-Food-Service-Program-sfsp. Find an existing site at www.FNS.USDA.Gov/SummerFoodRocks.

ZAKAT FOUNDATION OF AMERICA: www.Zakat.Org/blog/How-to-Start-a-Soup-Kitchen/

200KReasons Toolkit: **Feed**

Keywords: **Soup Kitchen**

The on-line periodical lists many factors in running a Soup Kitchen.

Download the complete list:

- [200KReasons Recommended Websites.pdf](#)

All Referenced files are available for download on the website or are included in the Toolkit.

For more information, email 200KReasons@arumc.org
or visit our website www.200KReasons.arumc.org.

