

Food 4 Kids Update –September 2020 – “Filling the Gap”

Our formal summer meal program ended on August 28th with meals provided through Sunday, August 30th. Normally schools would pick up where we leave off, but, with delayed openings of as much as 2 weeks, there was a potential gap in providing free meals for children in several of the towns we serve. Food 4 Kids has partnered with Cape Kid Meals (www.capekidmeals.org) to help bridge that gap.

CKM is providing bags of shelf stable meals for children – breakfast and lunch. Food 4 Kids is distributing the bags at Stony Brook Elementary School in Brewster, Church of the Holy Spirit in Orleans and Eastham Elementary School. Because all the food is shelf-stable, we are able to distribute meals on 2 days only: Monday, August 31 (meals for 8 days) and Tuesday, September 8 (meals for 6 days). As with the program this summer, all meals are provided **free** and for **all** children. And as an added bonus, Food 4 Kids, with the help of Shaw's Markets, is giving out grocery gift cards to all families.

We were recently asked how this summer compares to others. More specifically, is the need greater?

It's really hard to compare this summer with any other, the situation is so different. We have been serving about 450-500 children a day, not all that different than we have in summers past. But they are receiving a lot more food.

Normally we would provide lunch and a light snack. This summer we are providing lunch and a more substantial breakfast. Normally we would only provide meals for 5 days a week. This summer we are providing meals for 7 days. Normally we would reach children by providing meals to summer recreation programs and library programs, most of which are in session for only 6 weeks. This summer parents are making a trip 5 days a week every week, to pick up meals. It is this last point that we believe speaks to the significant need this summer.

Families have been going every day to pick up meals for their children. And most have actually been doing this for 6 months, since schools closed in early March. If there wasn't a significant need, they wouldn't bother.

So the answer to the question is YES, the need has been greater this summer. And with a lot of help and support, we have been able to help meet it!