
Summer Nutrition

Contributed by Petri Brill, Advocate

School is finally out and summer has arrived! It's the season for flip flops, picnics, adventures, popsicles, and just kicking back and relaxing a bit. Summer is the time of year when parents realize how underpaid teachers actually are! For many, however, summer may not be totally carefree: 70.4% of students in Aurora Public Schools and 29% of students in Cherry Creek School District utilize the free or reduced cost lunch program. No school means these families have to provide those meals for their kids over the summer, and this may create hardship. I have found two super cool resources that provide free meals to children 18-years-old and younger for low-income families.

The Colorado Department of Education and Hunger Free Colorado have partnered to offer Summer Food Service Program. This program offers free, nutritious meals to kids up to the age of 18, and they provide fun activities at all the sites. Here's a list of some (not all) locations they serve from: Aurora Municipal Center Central Library, Virginia Court Elementary, Overland HS, Utah Pool, Mosley Elementary, Meadowood Rec Center. For more info, you can call their bilingual hotline at 855.855.4626 or visit their website at www.kidsfoodfinder.org.

Jewish Family Services is offering a program called Lunchbox Express. This is a mobile food delivery system that arrives at various locations on mini school buses. So fun! The food is freshly prepared daily by professional cooks. Volunteers are on hand to serve the food and then take care of the trash in an effort to keep our city parks clean. The Aurora location is Spencer Garrett Park, 1600 Joliet Street. The program also has locations in Denver and Lakewood. Serving time is from 11-11.30AM. For more info, you can contact Doug Vega at 720.248.4671 or dvega@jewishfamilyservice.org.

No doubt at some point over the summer your kids will come to you with that ever-dreaded phrase, "I'm bored." When they do, remind them they could be in class taking a pop quiz! Whether you are traveling this summer or staying close to home, I wish you and your family a fun and safe summer! And lastly, please know if you and your family need additional assistance with information about food resources, you can always contact your Arc of Aurora advocate.