



4th August 2017

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JUMPING THE HURDLE OF HOLIDAY HUNGER

- Charities, schools and councils offer food provisions to food insecure children during the school holidays
- More than 6 out of 10 parents on a low income aren't able to afford to buy food outside of term time
- Government urged to make commitments to tackle food insecurity in the UK at the Global Nutrition Summit on 4th August

The school holidays have arrived and while children are out of school 6 out of 10 families on a household income of less than £25,000 will not always be able to afford to feed their children. For families on a low household income, the additional food that is usually provided by the free school food programme places considerable strain on household food budgets. When fixed bills such as rent and utilities are still due, the food bill is the outgoing that is compromised. This results in 1/3 of parents missing meals so their children can eat over the school holidays, yet many children are still not being fed say 39% of teachers

On the 4th August the UK will be celebrating a National Fun Day to highlight the intervention of schools, charities and councils around that country who make healthy food provisions for children in the school holidays. There is excellent work already happening all over the UK to support children and families during the holidays and this day puts a spotlight on those organisations. The day will include healthy food for children and families and free activities.

This national fun day coincides with the Global Nutrition4Growth Summit that will take place at the Rio Olympics; a legacy of the London 2012 Olympics, which built on the work being done internationally to address hunger and food insecurity. The first summit was a fantastic example of UK leadership in food and nutrition. For the 2016 summit we are asking the UK Government to make a series of domestic commitments, in addition to international development commitments, to improve nutrition and food security for all: both in the UK and abroad.

We are asking for the following commitments:

- A new vision for food and nutrition security in the UK which delivers healthy, affordable sustainable diets for all;
- A targeted package to improve the life-chances of women and children most at risk of a poor diet, which includes:
 - Increase the uptake and voucher value of the Healthy Start programme (free weekly vouchers for pregnant mothers and children under 4 to spend on milk, plain fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables, and infant formula milk for those receiving social income support and various other benefits;
 - Protect and improve child nutrition during the school holidays by piloting holiday provision for the UK's most vulnerable children, and;
 - Conduct an annual national measurement of household food insecurity.



"For many years now, I have worked alongside fellow Parliamentarians and experts in the world of children's health, nutrition and education to ensure we finally end the issue of child hunger, including during the school holidays, and that is why I welcome the Make Rio Count national fun day to help raise awareness of what more can be done by the Government."
Sharon Hodgson MP

Some support for holiday hunger is currently provided on a local level but support from central and devolved Government is needed to allow these activities to continue in the future. Civil society groups and the All-Party Parliamentary Group for School's Food Holiday Hunger Task Group have been working to raise the awareness of this issue to policy makers and the 4th August provides a platform for Government to show leadership.

Notes to Editor

1. The Food Foundation is a food think tank addressing policy gaps and changes needed to improve the UK food system to support the nation's health (www.foodfoundation.org.uk)
2. Statistics from a report by Make Lunch called Isolation and Hunger: the reality of the school holidays for struggling families 17th July 2015 (https://www.makelunch.org.uk/downloads/Isolation_and_Hunger.pdf)
3. Healthy Start Vouchers (<https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/>)
4. Civil society groups who are supporting the need for the government to commit to the asks at the Nutrition4Growth summit are Sustain, First Steps Nutrition and Church Action on Poverty