

Feeding Kids Over the Summer and Finding Fun for Free

Summer has arrived, and soon we will experience the bittersweet last day of school. Mixed feelings fill the air as the excitement of finishing another school year tangles with the anticipation of what comes next.

Some parents are wondering if their kids will stay interested in learning over the summer vacation. Some are already nervous for the fall as their eager child enters school for the first time. Some kids will be involved in summer school and other learning activities. For some families, simply feeding the children over the summer may be a cause for concern.

For students attending North Mason's summer school program, breakfast and sack lunches will be provided. Even students not enrolled in the summer school program can come to school for free breakfast and lunch.

For families of kids who receive free lunches during the school year, resources are available. Free meals and snacks to all children and teens (18 years and younger) are provided during the summer months through the Washington State Summer Food Service Program, also called "Summer Meals." Proof of income, address or citizenship is never required to participate in the program. Visit ParentHelp123.org and click on "resources."

Washington Summer Feeding Programs are listed on our NorthMasonSchools.org website under Support Services/Food Services/Summer Feeding Program as follows:

- The Family Food Hotline at 1-888-4-FOOD-WA. Calling this number will give families the location, meal times, and contact information for summer meals based on your full address, city, and zip code.
- Text *FoodWA* to 877-877 to receive a return text with information on summer food sites based on your zip code.

Programs like these can ease stress for families when times are hard. When essential needs are met, there is more time to spend creating new traditions and lasting memories.

There are many things to experience this summer and not everything has to cost money. I love finding new things to do with my family that cost little and give us a chance to get out of the house and just be together.

For example, one of our favorite fun activities is walking the creek in our back yard hunting for rocks. It does not cost us a thing and we learn many things together. Learning does not have to end at the finish of the school year – learning can be a continuous adventure!

I pray this summer that we can all create happy memories without worry and enjoy the sunny or even the rainy days. Hopefully the available resources can help lift some burdens from hunger and let everyone enjoy their families.

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