

Children can get free food at these sites through summer meal programs around Tulsa

By Chase Reavis Tulsa World Jun 5, 2019



A 4-year-old eats his lunch at Will Rogers High School as part of the Summer Food Service Program on June 4, 2019. CHASE REAVIS/Tulsa World

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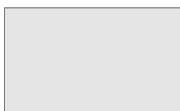
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Three years ago, Crystal went from having no kids to three after becoming a guardian to her two nieces and nephew. With a tight budget, the 37-year-old has opted to take her children to get free meals provided by the Summer Food Service Program.


The three kids, ages 10, 5 and 4, ate lunch Tuesday at Will Rogers High School, one of more than 50 sites in Tulsa that are sponsored by the program.

Crystal is a Tulsa resident who the Tulsa World is identifying only by her first name due to safety concerns for the children. She plans to take the kids to food sites every weekday this summer for free nutritious meals, but she thinks that other families may benefit from the program even more.



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"I would make sure they ate one way or another, but there are some kids that don't always have that option," she said.

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Two agencies are working to provide meals to children ages 18 and younger in the Tulsa area: the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma and Tulsa Public Schools.

Food sites located at schools are sponsored by Tulsa Public Schools, while the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma sponsors other sites, including the Salvation Army.

Richard White, the executive director of the Salvation Army Boys & Girls Club of Metro Tulsa, said the program especially benefits parents who work but want to be sure their kids are fed.

"I don't like clichés, but it does take a village to raise a kid," White said.

Last summer, 1,522,863 meals were served as part of the summer food service program in Oklahoma, down from 1,557,532 in 2017, according to data collected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Oklahoma food sites served an average of 13,418 people each day last summer.

"If there is a kid going hungry, it's because a parent doesn't know the right question to ask or the right place to go," said Kim Falcon, the director of development for the Salvation Army Boys & Girls Club of Metro Tulsa.

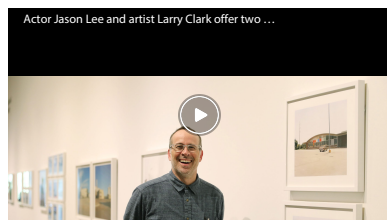
[Printer-friendly list of free summer meal sites through Tulsa Public Schools - 2019](#)

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For an interactive map of food bank summer meal sites, go to okfoodbank.org or meals4kidsok.org.

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