

Developing and delivering a Healthy Holidays project in Leeds

Over 30,000 schoolchildren in Leeds are going hungry in the school holidays as families are struggling to meet the costs of feeding their children in the holidays. Healthy Holidays projects can help by running activities during the school holidays to enable vulnerable children to have access to food, fun activities, learning and support for their families. At the moment Healthy Holidays projects are running a little differently in light of COVID-19. However there are lots of ways projects can continue to support vulnerable families in Leeds during this time.



Key Facts:

- **1/3** of parents have skipped a meal so that their kids could eat during the school holidays.
- **41%** of parents on low household incomes say they sometimes feel isolated in the school holidays due to being unable to afford to go out and entertain their children.
- **78%** of parents on low household incomes believe a community holiday club would ease parent stress
- **More than 6 out of 10 parents** with household incomes of **less than £25,000** said they weren't always able to afford to buy food outside of term time. For households with incomes of **less than £15,000**, that figure rose to **73%** of parents who struggled to afford food in the holidays.
- **39%** of teachers say there are pupils in their school that do not get enough to eat over the school holidays.

This factsheet has been written to offer guidance and support organisations and voluntary groups to develop Healthy Holidays projects in Leeds. The [Filling the Hunger Gap](#) website devised by the All Party Parliamentary Group on School Food - Holiday Meals Task Group offers 10 key points to consider when developing Healthy Holiday projects, these have been used and localised to share the support available in Leeds.

1. Principles – How can your organisation deliver a Healthy Holidays project?

Consider your understanding of local children, young people and children's nutritional and wellbeing needs. This information can help shape your project and might be helpful for applying for funding. The [Leeds Observatory](#) provides data and information about communities and geographies in Leeds. Are there any new insights emerging from the response to COVID 19 on eating, shopping and accessing food that you can support with? How could you access this information?

2. People - Have you agreed leadership for your project that has clear lines of responsibility to staff and volunteers, partners and funders?

Consider who is best to lead your project and what useful skills you will need to make it successful. What are your strengths as an organisations? and what do you need support with? Do you have staff skilled in the preparation and transportation of food available to support the project? There are lots of organisations you may wish to partner with who can add value to your project. It may be helpful to talk to a project who has experience of delivering a Healthy Holidays project. The [Leeds Food Aid Network](#) or the [Leeds Community Foundation](#) can help direct you to local projects.

3. Plan – How will you deliver the Project? Have you worked out a budget for your project?

Timetable what you will need to do and by when, considering resource requirements. [Leeds Community Foundation](#) may be able to help direct you to funding opportunities. Consider approaching your local supermarket as most have a community budget which can be allocated by the Store Manager, or alternatively food donations may be possible. If you are regularly delivering projects which involve food you may wish to become a member of [Fareshare](#) (Currently the membership fee is waived until September 2020). An added benefit of being a Fareshare member includes additional support on food safety. Alternatively consider working with [Re-Think Food](#) who could assist with food supply. FareShare and RE-Think food both work together to support with access to surplus food in the city.

4. Partnership - Have you contacted the right partners to help refer and deliver?

Get in touch with schools, family support teams, agencies such as public health and locality council teams, organisations and individuals that can help short, medium and long term with your project. Formalise their support and agree referral routes. Consider working with existing programmes.

For support engaging with or partnering with schools you can contact the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Service at schoolwellbeing@leeds.gov.uk

Healthy Holiday projects provide an opportunity to engage low income families and ensure they are linked into appropriate support networks that can help maximise incomes and manage finances.

The Leeds Money Information website (Leeds MIC) is a useful resource for signposting families to advice agencies that support families in financial hardship. Leeds MIC provides details and links to agencies nationally and in Leeds that offer free, independent, confidential help and advice on where to access food

support, advice on money, debt, budgeting, reducing bills and affordable loans. Please visit www.leedsmic.org.uk

Healthy Holidays is also a time to consider linking families to School Uniform Re-use projects in their area. Zero Waste Leeds have launched a Facebook Group to connect families, schools and third sector partners into a city wide scheme to donate, exchange and be part of school uniform re-use projects. To find out more please join the Facebook Group and download the Inspiration Guide here:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/603050533660854>

5. Policies - Have you the right policies in place that protect your project and the children that will be in your care?

Ensure you have the correct policies in place for working with vulnerable children and families. These may include - health and safety, food hygiene including requirements to deliver food, child protection, confidentiality, safeguarding, and public insurance. In regards to food it is expected that all projects dealing with food must comply with [Food Hygiene Regulations](#) as a minimum. This includes having safe operating procedures in place for the organisation and having suitable premises. If the project is only dealing with food as a one-off activity (5-10 sessions per annum) and does not do anything else during the year around food, then registration with Environmental Health will not be required. For more information on food safety for community cooking please visit: <https://www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/food-safety-for-community-cooking-and-food-banks>

6. Premises - Have you found the right venue for your project?

Identify and secure a delivery site for the duration of your project that has the capacity to meet your project's needs. If working with existing programmes ensure you are able to adapt either your delivery or the site appropriately. Be innovative, your food provision could be lunch boxes and the activities could be in a local park or community garden.

7. Preparation - How will you ensure your project is delivered well?

Plan the marketing of your project in advance to engage partners to help with the promotion and referrals. Consider all the information you will need about participant – are there any dietary requirements and additional needs. Consider the best food option for your project and plan its preparation. Ensure all frontline staff have the correct certification and training needed. Have your resources and documentation in place e.g. - food safety manual, policies. As far as possible engage potential participants or their advocates/families in informing the delivery design regarding food and activities. Healthy Holidays projects have the potential to deliver a range of appropriate information from debt management to healthy eating. The [Public Health Resource Centre](#) provides lots of leaflets, models and activities which can be sourced to support your delivery. You may find that some families need further support with access to food or their finances. The Money information centre (MIC) website has lots of information on where to access free, independent and confidential advice and support in the following areas, debt and money advice, benefits advice and universal credit, emergency food, low cost loans and reducing utility bills and payment holidays: <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/leedsmic/Home>

To support a parent/carer who may be entitled to free school meals, they can go online to check if they meet the eligibility criteria or apply at <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/council-tax-and-benefits/free->

[school-meals](#). Alternatively they can call the Council Tax and Benefits helpline on 0113 222 4404 for help and advice.

You can download a copy of the Family Food Leaflet at <https://www.schoolwellbeing.co.uk/resources/653> which provides information on healthy start, food banks, free school meal and Leeds MIC.

During this time you will have to consider what the Government's most recent guidance is on managing the spread of COVID 19 – The link below will provide you with the most up to date information <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing> (as of 4th July). As things change new resources are made available to display and share.

8. Provision - Have you considered all the elements that will make your project a good social experience as well as providing good food?

Play and fun activities make a valuable part of a successful project so agree with your partners how many days your project will run, what it will offer, who will be at each session and the time it will be on. You may have to consider online activities for children, young people and families rather than face to face provision. The Healthy Holidays directory has been devised to collate the many resources available online to support children and families to take part in fun activities. If you are proposing to deliver sports activities you may wish to apply to join [StreetGames](#) Doorstep Sport network to receive their seal of approval - StreetMark. Being a StreetMark approved organisation has a range of benefits including access to support and use of the StreetGames logo for branded marketing material. If you are delivering a cooking project you may wish to view the [Leeds Cooking Consensus](#) which offers lots of information and links to training opportunities.

9. Plate - Have you considered your food options?

As much as possible the food served during Healthy Holidays projects should try to reflect the [School Food Standards](#). The [Health and Well-Being Service](#) offers lots of useful information on food in schools in Leeds including a lunch box toolkits. You may wish to vary your offer between a hot service, pack lunch, make and taste self-catering or a mixture. Dietary requirements and cultural preferences should be accommodated. Offer where possible food that is freshly prepared and healthy. If you need more support on healthy eating, Leeds City Council provide a free one day training course called [Healthy Living Training](#).

10. Pause - Have you thought about the impact your project may have?

It's important to keep a record of participation and activities. Monitoring and evaluating your project will help you to adapt your activities to ensure your project best meets the needs and preferences of participants. This can help give ideas of how your project can be continually improved or identify where you may be having challenges. This will also help support fundraising and demonstrate the outcomes of your project.