



NEWS RELEASE

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PORTION DISTORTION EDUCATION WINS SALVATION ARMY BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB A BIG AWARD

Agency Wins Award for Real World Application of Program Component

RALEIGH, NC – The **Nutrition Education Award** was presented to the **Salvation Army Boys & Girls Club of Wilson** on Wednesday, May 16 during the **Standards of Excellence Awards Celebration for the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Kids Cafe Programs**. The **Standards of Excellence Awards Celebration** honors **Kids Cafe partner agencies** that have excelled in the core components and have achieved distinction with the operation of their program. The Agency Services and Programs (ASAP) Department of the **Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina** hosted the event at **North Carolina State University's McKinnon Center in Raleigh**. Winners received \$1,000 to improve and further supplement their program.

At a time when **childhood obesity** is on the rise, nutrition education is critical. **The Salvation Army Boys & Girls Club of Wilson Kids Cafe** program adopted the theme "**Portion Distortion**" to promote healthy food choices to program participants. The theme is easy for the kids to understand and to apply to everyday life. This year, the Salvation Army program focused on **fast food portions** and through education, encouraged the kids to **be aware of the slick marketing of fast food companies**. Discussion was generated about **the health effects of large fast food portions** and how **one change such as portion control can make a difference**. As a result, **Boys & Girls Club Kids Cafe participants have lost a total of 50 pounds**.

"**The health of our children is at risk**. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (BCBSNC) is proud to partner with the Food Bank by sponsoring the Kids Cafe program," said Kristine Carlson, Program Manager for BCBSNC. "More than ever, it is important **to educate our children about proper nutrition, portions, to prepare healthy food, and the benefits of an active lifestyle**. The Food Bank's Kids Cafe **programs are successful** in doing just that and we plan to support them by **making sure there is a Kids Cafe in all 34 counties**."

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The **Nutrition Education Award** rewards the agency that has most effectively incorporated nutrition education into the program operation. Eligible programs are those that conduct **programming aimed at empowering kids to become advocates for healthy eating and an active lifestyle to achieve a healthy weight both during and outside normal program operation.**

The Salvation Army Kids Cafe program won the **Nutrition Education Award** not only because of the many activities in which the children are involved, such as actually learning to prepare nutritional meals and fitness activities, but because such a hands on, real world example quickly captured the interest of participants with measurable results. Employing the Portion Distortion concept made the program “real” to Kids Cafe participants and remains on their minds at all times. The goal was not necessarily to lose weight, but to simply control portions of whatever you eat.

The Salvation Army Boys & Girls Club of Wilson, located at 316 S. Tarboro St in Wilson, NC, presents its Kids Cafe as an after school program offering academic enrichment, mentoring, nutrition education, physical activities, parental involvement and most importantly, a nutritious meal to about 180 youth in the area. The program operates three days a week from 3:00 p.m. - 6 p.m. and phone number is 252-243-5443. The program director is Matt Edwards.

The Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina currently has **23 Kids Cafe programs** in the following **21 counties: Columbus, Craven, Duplin, Durham, Edgecombe, Halifax, Jones, Lee, Lenoir, Moore, New Hanover, Orange, Pender, Pitt, Richmond, Scotland, Vance, Wayne, Warren, Wake, and Wilson Counties.** From July 2006 through April 2007, the Food Bank’s Kids Cafe programs have served over 83,600 meals and received over 13,955 hours of volunteer support. The Food Bank’s programs serve approximately 1,057 children per week.

Other award recipients were:

Best All-Around – Homework Haven in Raleigh

Physical Activity – Beulaville Youth Center

Parental Involvement – Homework Haven in Raleigh

Community-Based – Richmond County Enrichment Corporation in Richmond County

Katy Howard, a participant in the Boys & Girls Clubs of Pitt County – Farmville Unit Kids Cafe was recognized for her **greeting card design** that was **one of five** selected from entries representing more than **200 food banks** in the country and was used as **part of an online giving campaign** supporting Food Banks nationwide. Katy received a \$250 check for recognition of her participation in the contest.

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The Kids Cafe program is one of the nation's largest charitable meal service programs, providing free and prepared food and nutrition education to children. The Food Bank's programs are sponsored by **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina**.

For additional information on the Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina Kids Cafe program, contact J. Caprice Brown, Outreach, Evaluations & Programs Manager, at 919-865-3037.

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About the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina

The Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina is a nonprofit organization that provides food for people who are hungry in 34 counties in central and eastern North Carolina. The Food Bank serves a network of more than 890 partner agencies offering soup kitchens, food pantries, shelters, and programs for children and adults. In fiscal year 2005 - 2006, the Food Bank distributed more than 31.4 million pounds of food and non-food essentials to these agencies. Sadly, hunger remains a serious problem in central and eastern North Carolina. In these counties, more than 400,000 struggle each day to provide enough food for their families. www.foodbankcenc.org

About the Kids Cafe Program

The Kids Cafe program is one of the nation's largest charitable meal service programs, providing free and prepared food and nutrition education to hungry children. It is a comprehensive approach to ending childhood hunger through after-school programs - initiated by America's Second Harvest - The Nation's Food Bank Network and administered locally by the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina for children ages 15 and under. The Food Bank's programs are presented in collaboration with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina. One of the primary strengths to the program is its flexibility. The primary reason for this approach is that poverty and hunger manifests differently in different communities thus requiring a community based approach to solving the childhood hunger dilemma.