Food support and cookery resources for families

Lewisham

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Since the Covid-19 pandemic, Lewisham Council has provided families who receive Free School Meals with £15 weekly vouchers during school holidays to help tackle holiday hunger. These vouchers have been funded through the UK Government's Household Support Fund.

The previous UK Government was due to end its Household Support Fund in September 2024. While the council will continue to provide holiday vouchers during the summer holidays, it cannot currently commit to continuing the scheme beyond this point, when government funding is due to end, and no extension / replacement has been committed to by the new government.

We know that school holidays put particular pressure on family budgets and that the end of these vouchers will have a direct impact on low-income households. That's why we are sharing a list of resources to help families who need a bit of extra help during the holidays below. Our website has more information about support for households who are struggling with the cost of living and information about other support you could be entitled to. Visit lewisham.gov.uk/support.

Free financial support and advice in Lewisham:

- *Worrying About Money*? is a step-by-step guide for people facing money worries. It signposts to local organisations who can help people to maximise their income. It's available online at www.worryingaboutmoney.co.uk/lewisham, or as a downloadable poster, or physical leaflets can be collected from Laurence House Catford – please contact gemma.king@lewisham.gov.uk if you would like printed versions.
- Face-to-face money advice sessions with Citizens Advice Lewisham are located across the borough – current locations are:
    - Leemore Centre SE13 5EU, every Monday, 9.45-11.45am
    - Clyde Family Hub SE8 5NH, every Tuesday, 1pm-5pm
    - St John the Baptist Church SE6 2RP, every Wednesday, 12 noon-2pm
    - Perry Rise Baptist Church SE23 2QL, every Thursday, 12 noon-2pm

    Check www.lewisham.gov.uk/support for an up-to-date list.

- Advice Lewisham can be reached on 0800 231 5453 for enquiries about benefits, housing, debt, employment, immigration, family & consumer issues.
- Money Helper can help with free, confidential advice with money - call 0800 138 7777.
- Lewisham Plus Credit Union can help you with savings and affordable loans – call 0333 202 3642.
- The Bank of Things in Unit 19 at Lewisham Shopping Centre provides everyday necessities (not food) to young people aged 11 to 25 as well as a community fridge with surplus snacks available.
- More support towards the cost-of-living can be found at www.lewisham.gov.uk/support.

Food support

- Lewisham Foodbank, run by The Trussell Trust, can provide food parcels to families in need. You **must** have a voucher before you can collect a food parcel. To get a voucher, please contact an organisation that supports you, like a school, housing association, social worker, Citizens Advice, GP or faith organisation. Ideas of who may be able to refer you for a food

parcel can be found here. If you don't have online access, please call one of our freephone helplines:

  - **Help Through Hardship:** 0808 208 2138
  - **Advice Lewisham:** 0800 231 5453

Each voucher can only be used once, and you can have **up to** six vouchers in six months. A list of foodbank locations is available at lewisham.foodbank.org.uk/locations/.

- A list of alternative free and low-cost community food in Lewisham is available at Lewisham Local's website: lewishamlocal.my.site.com/s/food-projects-and-community-meals. This list includes community food provision from food banks, social supermarkets, and community meals. Social supermarkets can offer longer-term support if you become a member and pay between £2 - £5 per week to access a range of groceries. A printable list is available here.
- Lewisham Council recently provided additional funding to these community food projects to help meet increased demand for food support:
  - Feed The Hill
  - Rehoboth Community Outreach
  - Sporting Way - Grove Park Youth Club
  - Catford Soup Kitchen
  - World of Hope
  - Living Waters Christian Centre
  - Sydenham Community Supermarket
- Healthy Start scheme: If you're more than 10 weeks pregnant or have children under 4, you may be entitled to get cash support to buy healthy food and milk. For more information and to apply, visit www.healthystart.nhs.uk.
- Money Saving Central has collated a list of places where kids can eat free during the summer holidays. Visit www.moneysavingcentral.co.uk/kids-eat-free.

Cooking resources

- Barnardo's and the British Dietetic Association have some advice on cooking on a budget:
  - families.barnardos.org.uk/healthy-eating/feed-family-for-fortnight
  - www.bda.uk.com/food-health/lets-get-cooking/cooking-at-home/cooking-on-a-budget.html
- The Independent Food Aid Network has produced some recipe cards which show how to make different meals without an oven. Download and print them here.
- Public Health Lewisham have created an African Caribbean cookbook which covers budgeting and healthy eating. It can be downloaded here.
- Free summer cooking classes for families – call Adult Learning Lewisham on 020 8314 3300 to enrol.