

NEWS RELEASE
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Poe Center for Health Education Prepares for a Summer of Healthy Fun and Nutrition

Local Nonprofit Targets Children and Families with Nutrition Education

Raleigh, N.C. – The Alice Aycock Poe Center for Health Education (Poe Center) will continue to serve the local community during the hot summer season by providing health education programs for all ages. For youth, the Poe Center will offer the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Healthy Habits Camp, packed with fun-filled activities and nutritious meals. For adults, the Poe Center will join First Baptist Church in Raleigh's Clothing Ministry to provide education on the importance of nutrition and physical activity.

"The Poe Center is dedicated to helping children and families learn about creative and easy ways to make healthy decisions," said Ann Rollins, Executive Director of the Poe Center. "We are excited to provide summer programs that will educate the local community on how to be active, stay safe and have fun during the summer season."

As Wake County's first and only open feeding site for free and healthy lunches, the Poe Center will continue the SFSP for the second year, providing free and healthy lunches to low-income youth under the age of 18. Lunch will be provided every Wednesday at WakeMed's PlayWELL Park at Poe from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. beginning June 18 and continuing through August 6. In addition to a free meal, participants are welcome to take part in "Wild Wednesday" activities during and after lunch until 12:30 p.m. "Wild Wednesday" activities include:

- **Summertime Safety (June 18)** – Demonstrations on summertime first aid and risk prevention
- **Safe Fun in the Hot Sun (June 25 & July 16)** – Visits from Cam the Sun Safety Mascot
- **Wild Water Day (July 2 & 23)** – Enjoy a Poe and Grow Garden experience and water balloon toss competition
- **Yoga for Youth (July 9 & 30)** – Bring a towel or yoga mat for summer stretching
- **End of Summer Dance Party (August 6)** – Music and more with dance ribbons, hula hoops and water balloons

In addition to the SFSP, the Poe Center will host two sessions of Healthy Habits Camp, running June 23 – 27 and July 28 – August 1. Healthy Habits Camp is a free week-long camp for rising 1st-5th grade students who qualify for free and reduced lunch. Campers receive free breakfast and lunch, as well as a fun-filled week of health education, games, crafts and playtime.

Throughout the summer, the Poe Center will continue its visits to the First Baptist Church in Raleigh's Clothing Ministry to educate adults about nutrition with its Healthy POEtential program. Healthy

POTential emphasizes the importance of good nutrition and physical activity. The one-hour interactive program covers nutrition and physical activity basics, the “MyPlate” food guide, decoding the Nutrition Facts label and how to get the most out of your food budget.

“As one of the partners in the Advocates for Health in Action (AHA) collaborative, the Poe Center continues to provide valuable services and education to the community to increase access to healthy foods and physical activity,” said Michele McKinley, Project Coordinator for AHA.

About the Poe Center

The Alice Aycock Poe Center for Health Education is a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating and empowering North Carolina’s children, youth and their families to make choices that increase positive health behaviors. Since establishing its Raleigh facility in 1991, the Poe Center has provided health education to nearly one million children throughout North Carolina. By engaging in fun, highly interactive lessons, preschoolers through twelfth graders receive information that follows the NC DPI Healthful Living Essential Standards on a variety of health topics, including nutrition, dental health, general health, family life and drug prevention. For additional information about the Poe Center, please visit www.poehealth.org.

About the Summer Food Service Program

The Poe Center is Wake County's 'open' feeding site, meaning that any child, 18 years and younger, in the area may eat at that site during meal service times. Other sites are 'closed enrolled' sites, meaning a child must enroll in the summer enrichment program to receive a meal at the site. Anyone interested in participating in a local summer feeding program should contact the church, club or summer program sponsor. For a complete list of feeding sites, call 1-866-3-HUNGRY or 1-877-8-HAMBRE (for Spanish speakers) and a live operator will tell you where the closest sites serving free, nutritious summer meals are located or visit www.whyhunger.org/findfood to locate sites using an online map.

About the Clothing Ministry

The Clothing Ministry is an expression of the church’s concern for people in need. This ministry provides for the distribution of clothing donated by Wake County residents, striving to provide adequate clothing for families, homeless person, those in transition from relocation or re-entry into the workforce, or any person with an identifiable need. It was established in 1983 and serves 1,000 people each month.

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