



**Spark Community Café
Teen Drop In Center**

Purpose of Grant



- Spark Café seeks to provide a welcoming place for youth in Versailles KY by expanding our hours to 8-10 AM and 3-5 PM Wednesday through Friday.
- The Café will have breakfast items in the morning and to-go cold sandwiches and salads in the afternoon for youth to pick up on their way to/from school.
- The grant will purchase a front of Café refrigeration unit to display ready-to-go sandwiches, salads and snacks for youth to eat at the Café or to take with them as well as cover the cost of food for the first 3 months of operation.

How it will work



- As our mission says, all who enter our doors will be able to eat or have something to drink regardless of their ability to pay.
- Spark gift cards will be the “currency” of these additional hours of operation.
 - Spark gift cards will be distributed through the schools and other youth organizations to those who need assistance.
- This will ensure that all who come in will be the same in the check-out process.

Is there a need?



- There is no other location within downtown for youth to gather for coffee or other drinks, snacks and a quiet atmosphere that also has Internet access and 20 tables for different sized groups.
- Over the years, the need for a safe place for casual gathering for youth has been a consistent theme in community discussions and surveys.
- Spark Café can be a place for studying, conversation, or simply hanging out for our community's youth.

Is there a need?



- This component of the Spark Community Café mission is focused on the @2,322 students attending Woodford County's middle and high schools, particularly those who are eligible for free and reduced lunches.

Middle School

996

43.5%

2.9%

Total Students

% Free Lunch

% Reduced lunch

High School

1,326

38.0%

3.2%

- Data in a recent report (Does SNAP cover the cost of a meal in you county?, July 26, 2021) notes the SNAP benefit in Woodford County will be 3% below the actual average cost of a meal. The need to address food insecurity and hunger in our community remains.

- \$2.27 SNAP benefit per meal
- \$2.34 Average meal cost

Desired Outcomes



- Provide snacks and to-go meals for all youth, especially food-insecure youth.
- Introduce a more diverse group of food insecure youth and their families to the Spark Café mission.
- Provide opportunities for youth interns and volunteers to learn work and leadership skills (e.g., management, marketing, and customer service).

Bringing our community together when we:



- Provide a safe and comfortable morning and afternoon gathering place for our youth.
- Encourage interaction among youth that crosses the cliques that typically define social activities in the formal school setting.
- Support youth as they build new relationships and explore new opportunities for activities.
- Have information for distribution on diverse youth services available in the community.
- Inspire youth to become more active in the civic life of this community and consider returning to our community after post-high school education or training.

Sustaining the impact



- End of fall and summer semester evaluations of the costs of the additional hours of operation to determine the amount of funds that are required to sustain the program.
- Review customer satisfaction data to determine if any adjustments need to be made in hours of operation or any other aspects of the program to maintain and expand youth participation.
- Identify new donors specifically interested in the youth program.
- Identify other potential grant opportunities to support this program.
- Expand our network of youth-support services partners.



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