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Department
of Agriculure

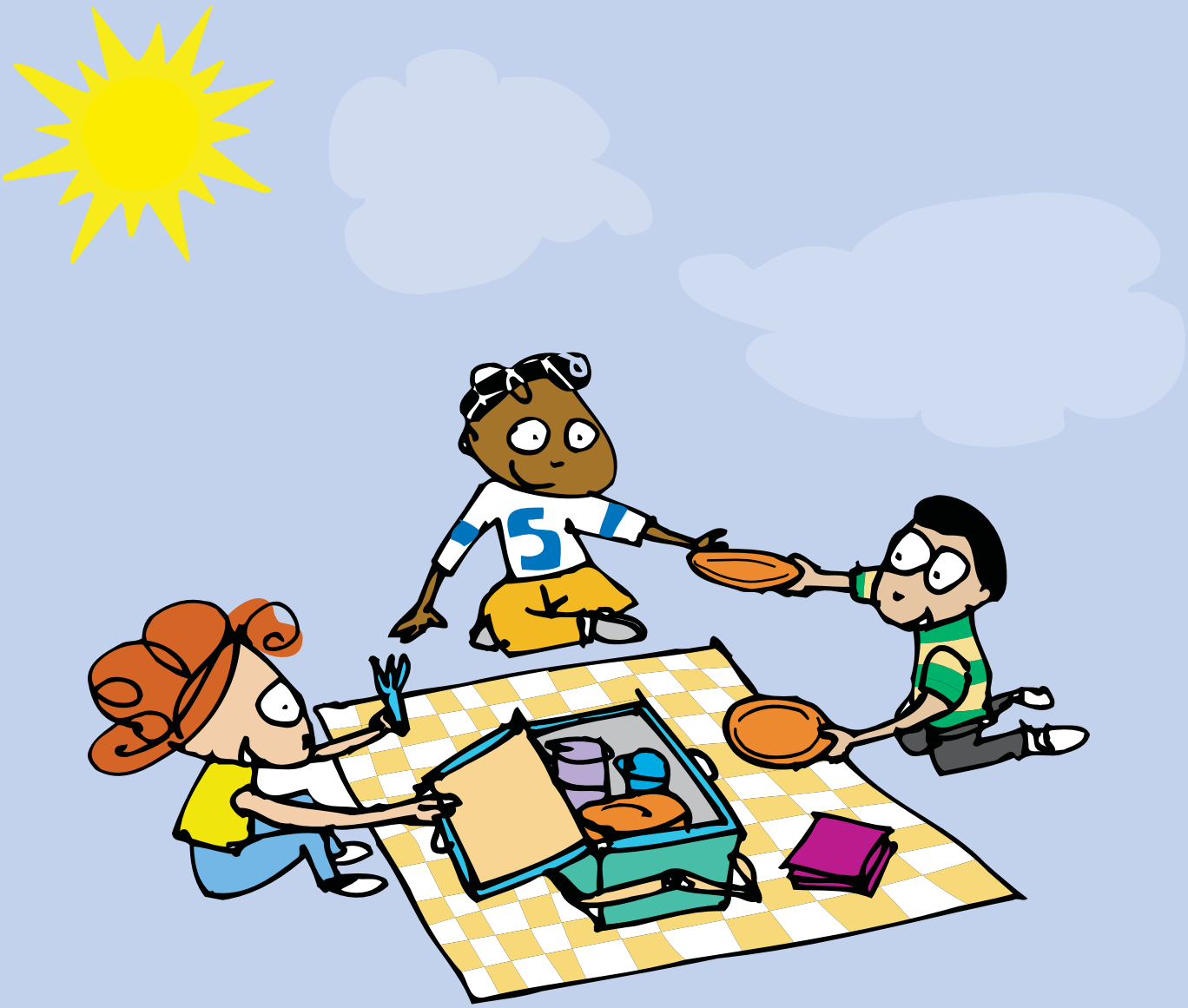
Food and
Nutrition
Service

FNS-415

June 2010

Summer Food Service Program

Outreach Toolkit for Sponsors and Feeding Sites



Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

Outreach Toolkit for Sponsors and Feeding Sites

The SFSP Outreach Toolkit will help sponsors and sites create outreach materials such as fliers, letters to parents, and press releases that will help the community learn about the program. Many of the materials included on this site are designed to be customized. You can download PowerPoint files, information sheets, letters, and marketing materials and modify them to suit your specific needs.

If you are interested in becoming an SFSP sponsor or feeding site, please click here.
http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer

Food that's in when school is out.

Chapter 1: What Is Outreach?

- Definition of outreach
- Making a plan
- Thinking ahead: What about next year?

Chapter 2: Outreach to Families and Children

- Planning outreach to families and children
- Creating outreach materials and templates
- Outreach to Families and Children Checklist
- More information on recruiting children for SFSP
  http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer/library/recruit.pdf

Chapter 3: Outreach to Media

- Planning outreach to media
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- Why create partnerships?
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Chapter 1: What Is Outreach?

Definition of Outreach

Outreach includes many different activities. It can be sending letters home with children for their parents to learn about the program. Or it can be hosting a kick-off event to celebrate the start of summer and inviting your local newspaper, radio station, or TV station. It can also be creating a partnership with a local company that will provide rides for children to the feeding site. Sometimes outreach is talking to everyone you know about the program. Basically, outreach is spreading the word in any and every way you can.

Outreach is important to make your feeding site successful. The more people who know about the program, the more children will come to eat. Outreach may also help your site get food and money donations and volunteers to help supervise any activities for the children who come to eat. This toolkit will help you to plan outreach activities and create materials.

Making a Plan

It is a good idea to think about what outreach you need to do before you begin talking to people and creating materials. Making lists of people you want to talk to and what you want them to do is a good start. Here are a few tips on how to make an outreach plan:

- **Who needs to know about your site?** And who can help you tell others about the site? Make a list of all the groups of people you want to talk with about the feeding site. Include parents, children, schools, media, government offices, and any others who work with families or can spread the word.
- **Who can help your site by donating or volunteering?** Also make a list of people and organizations that can help your site. Think about which people and organizations could make donations of food, money, supplies for children's activities, and other items your site might need. Include groups that could provide volunteers to help supervise the children or plan activities. Volunteers can help you do outreach too!
- **How can I reach each group with my message?** You can also start thinking about how to reach each group and write ideas down. Some ideas could include a phone call or visit in person, or mailing a brochure, or even sending a letter home with a child. Getting a story in the newspaper, hosting a kick-off event, or creating a flier are all ways to reach different groups.

Outreach is just one part of creating a successful SFSP feeding site. The Managing the Program page **(http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer/sponsors/managing.html)** gives many great resources for sponsors and feeding sites about day-to-day SFSP operation. And visit Tips for Success **(http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer/library/tips.html)** to learn about keeping costs low, programming, improving meals, and more! Finally, you can also read about Best Practices **(http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer/states/best_practices.html)** in the SFSP. Now, let's focus on outreach!

- **What do I need to tell each group?** Write down everything that each group has to know to take action. For example, parents and children would need to know that free meals are available at a specific location and what days and times. You would also include information about any activities that are provided for the children. For a newspaper reporter, you would include general information about the Summer Food Service Program, as well as the locations, days, and times of the meals.
- **When do I need to reach out to each group?** Think about when you should contact each group. For example, it would be easier to reach children before school is out when you could ask the school to send home a flier to parents. Consider writing down what outreach tasks you plan to do each month on a calendar. Don't forget to do outreach during the whole summer—it will keep kids coming to eat.

Consider writing down what outreach tasks you plan to do each month on a calendar. Don't forget to do outreach during the whole summer—it will keep kids coming to eat.

Thinking Ahead: What About Next Year?

As you do outreach during the summer, keep a list of things that you want to do again next year—as well as things that didn't work well. Also think about ways that you can make outreach easier for next year. Here are some things to think about:

- Which outreach activities worked well and which didn't for this year?
- Can I ask my partners, donors, and volunteers to start thinking about next year?
- Can I reuse outreach materials, activities, and other supplies next year?

Finally, USDA would love to hear about your outreach successes! Watch the Summer Food Web page for opportunities to submit your promising practice or contact our outreach staff at **outreach@fns.usda.gov.**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

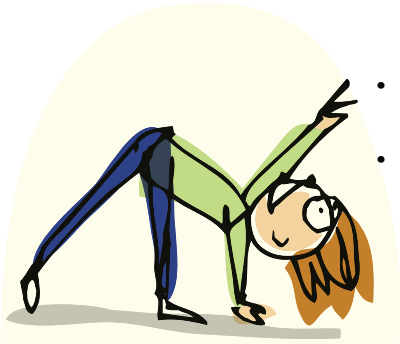
Chapter 2: Outreach to Families and Children

Planning Outreach to Families and Children

Now, it's time to organize your list of outreach ideas and start creating materials! Here are some tips that will help you do outreach to families and children:

- Talk to your local schools as early as possible. See Chapter 4 on Outreach to Community Organizations for specific ideas.
- Distribute fliers, letters to parents, and children's activity sheets in your target neighborhoods. Don't forget to repeat this form of door-to-door outreach throughout the summer program.
- Host a kick-off event to introduce the program to families and showcase program activities to the children. You can even get the parents' and children's input and ideas for activities and menus at the event--if the families and children feel like they own the program, they will be more involved, and children may be more likely to attend.
- Include a calendar of activities and menus with fliers and other communications, so children and parents will know what is happening on various days.
- Consider an attendance award like a certificate for a week of perfect attendance or a prize from the "treasure chest." These items will work well for younger children, but you may consider a point system for larger prizes or privileges for older ones. Make sure that you include prizes and contests in your outreach communications. They will give children incentive to attend.
- Plan to engage the children in activity planning or helping at lunches as a greeter or by handing out napkins, etc. Older children may be able to lead activities, and many of them may want to come as "volunteers." Be sure to market the program to older children as an opportunity to help. Some schools may even offer credit for volunteer hours.
- Begin to think about potential challenges that may arise with attendance. Will transportation be an issue in your area? If so, start thinking about which individuals or organizations can assist with this need.
- Make sure you include a method of evaluating customer satisfaction for both parents and children. Ask what menus and activities they liked best.
- Consider planning several family events throughout the summer to promote the program. A kick-off event is a great start, but other events allow you to evaluate parents' thoughts and to gather their ideas. Make sure you take various work schedules into consideration when scheduling events.
- Search for ways to engage children and parents in outreach efforts. Word of mouth is more powerful than any flier.
- Use community resources to publicize your site. By registering at the National Hunger Clearinghouse Resource Directory at **http://www.whyhunger.org/resources/resource-directory.html**, your site becomes part of a network of service providers who are fighting hunger and poverty on the front lines. Registration at Serve.gov at **http://www.serve.gov** connects your site to volunteers in search of service opportunities within their communities.

Make sure that you include prizes and contests in your outreach communications. They will give children incentive to attend.



Creating Outreach Materials and Templates

There are three steps to creating good outreach materials that will get out the word about your feeding site to families and children in your area:

1. **Words:** Think about who you are communicating to—families and/or children. Write out what they need to know. Think about what type of message would be appealing to them. For example, if you're creating an activity or coloring sheet for children, include something like, "Come have lunch and play games with your friends." For parents, the message would be different, "Bring your kids for lunch and fun learning activities in a safe place."
2. **Type of material:** Think about what type of material you need. Do you need a letter with lots of information? An activity page for children? A door hanger or flier you can leave at each house? How long the message is may determine what type of material you create. If you have a lot to say, you may need a letter. If you want something for children, a coloring page or stickers may work best.
3. **Visual look:** Think about how you want your material to look. Do you want to use photos or clip art? Do you want only words? Note that if you use photos of your feeding site, you need to have written permission from everyone in the photos (or permission from parents of children) to use the photos.

Now you're ready to create your materials on your own, or you can use one of our templates by just typing in your information and printing! Check out the following pages to find templates for:

- Letter to parents
- Flier for families
- Activity/Coloring sheet for children
- Door hanger for families
- Attendance certificate for children
- Calendar with sample entry

Summer Food Service Program

Dear Parent(s) or Guardian(s),

Summer is coming soon.You may be thinking about what your child will do for meals while school is out. The good news is that the U.S. Department of Agriculture partners in your local community to serve free meals. It's food that's in, while school is out. There are no income requirements, and any child under age 18 may come to eat.

Here is information about your local Summer Food site:

Days meals are served:

Times meals are served:

Place where meals are served:

Contact for more information:

We look forward to seeing your child this summer! Thanks!

Sincerely,

Food that's in when school is out.

Hey Kids...

Do you like fun?
Do you like friends?
Do you like food?

Yes or No

Come eat lunch with your friends this summer!

It's free and fun.

Days: _____

Times: _____

Place: _____

_____

Contact: _____

KIDS! Here is Your Ticket!

Use it for Food and Fun with Friends this Summer.

DAYS: _____

TIMES: _____

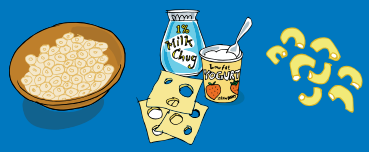
PLACE: _____

_____

CONTACT: _____

_____

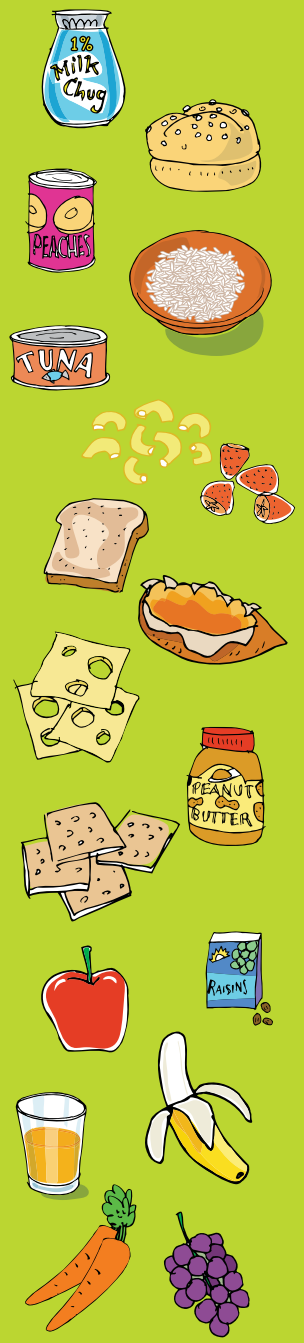
Food that's in when school is out.



The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) provides lunches for hungry children during the long summer vacation. The nearest SFSP Site is located at:

For more information, please contact:

USDA The United States Department of Agriculture is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

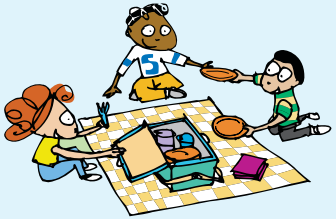


Certificate of Attendance presented to:

_____

_____

Director of Programs



Checklist for Outreach to Families and Children

- [ ] **1.** I have identified which neighborhoods, schools, and other organizations that work with families I want to talk to.

- [ ] **2.** I have created outreach materials.
  a. I have created messages for parents and children.
  b. I have decided what type of outreach materials I need to create.
  c. I have decided how to send out or distribute outreach materials.

- [ ] **3.** I have contacted local schools to help distribute outreach materials.

- [ ] **4.** I have thought about what types of activities our feeding site could host to attract more children to come and eat.

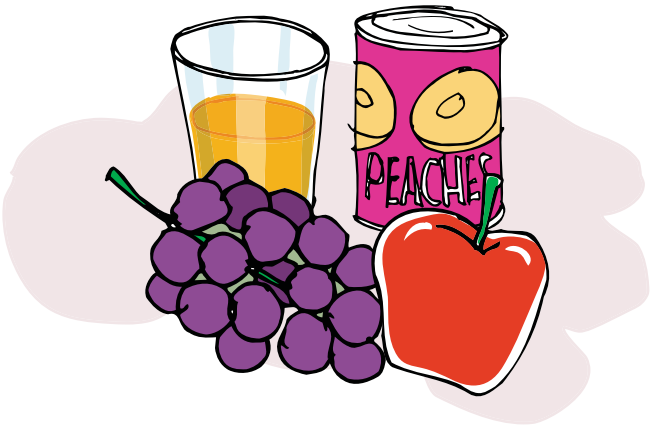
- [ ] **5.** I have considered hosting a kickoff event like a family day at the park, concert, or game day to spread the word about the feeding site.

- [ ] **6.** I have a plan to get parents and children to help with outreach.

- [ ] **7.** I have registered the site to assist those looking for help and connect with those who want to help.

  a. I have registered the site in the resource directory of the National Hunger Clearinghouse at **http://www.whyhunger.org/resources/resource-directory.html**
  b. I have registered the site on Serve.gov to help find volunteers. **http://www.serve.gov/recruit.asp**

- [ ] **8.** I have a plan to evaluate what worked or didn't work this year, so outreach can be improved for the next year.



Chapter 3: Outreach to Media

Planning Outreach to Media

The media are powerful outreach tools, but only when you use them. It's very rare for the media to find you; usually you have to make the first contact. A successful community program is often a welcome break from some of the routine coverage, so you may be surprised at the reception you receive. Here are three tips to getting the media to cover a story about your feeding site:

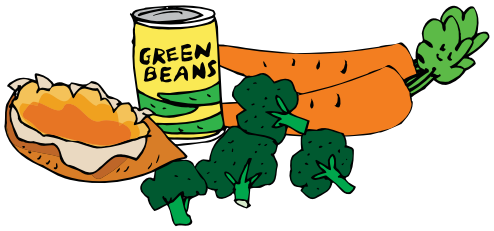
A successful community program is often a welcome break from some of the routine coverage, so you may be surprised at the reception you receive.

1. **Contact the media when you have a newsworthy story.** Only call a reporter when you have real news such as your kickoff event, the announcement of a large donation or sponsorship, or a story about your new feeding site opening.
2. **When working with media, be prepared.** When you call a reporter, be prepared to answer questions. When you submit a news release, make sure it is complete and free of grammatical errors. The easier you make their job, the more likely an editor or reporter will cover your story.
3. **Getting a story covered takes work and followup.** Just because you send a news release, doesn't mean they will cover your story—no matter how great your program is. Pick up the phone and make a followup call and offer to help set up a visit.

Two Ways To Talk to Media

Generally, there are two different ways to let editors and reports know that you have a story: sending a news release and pitching a story.

- **News/Press Release:** If you have an event, special activity, or call for volunteers, submit a news release to your newspaper's local news editor, your TV station's local news assignment editor/producer, or your radio station's producer. A followup call is OK, especially if you want the media to show up at an event.
- **Story Pitch:** If you would like to see a longer, feature story about your program with interviews of volunteers and participants, you should pitch a story. You can write a letter to share your story idea. It's a good idea to start the letter with a quote about your feeding site or another introduction that will catch an editor's attention. You can also list potential story ideas—try to list at least three. A followup call is OK, and make sure to offer help with setting up interviews and times to visit the feeding site if needed.



Deciding Which Media To Approach

- TV and radio are great outlets to approach if you have an event. If people can see or hear what is going on, they tend to be drawn to come. Also invite the newspaper, but remember that the story will be focused on what happened at the event—not drawing a crowd.
- Newspapers are always looking for a positive feature story. These longer stories tend to have lots of personal quotes and photos. Perhaps discuss the possibility of having a reporter spend a week at lunch with one child participating in the program—you'll need parental permission, of course.
- Don't forget to post your events and special activities on community calendars. Most media have them on a Web site. Ask permission to post your lunch program every day it meets. Make sure to include as much detail as possible, such as menus and activities.

Crafting Messages for Media

Here are some tips for writing news releases and pitch letters.

News Release:

- Try to keep your release to one page, double-spaced.
- Always include your contact information in case the media has questions.
- Put the most important information first in case the end gets deleted by an editor.
- Include photos and quotes if you have them. Make sure you have each person's permission in writing—or parent's permission for children.

Pitch Letter:

- Keep it short and simple. Be direct about your story idea and offer to help.
- Put the most important information first—the five W's: who, what, when, where, and why.
- Always include contact information for a person who can be available anytime.
- Always offer to help set up interviews, site visits, gather photos, etc.
- Try to have at least three story ideas in your letter. That way, if they don't like one, you have more to offer.

Now you're ready to create news releases and pitch letters on your own by using one of our templates . Check out the following pages to find templates for:

Check out the following pages to find templates for:

News Release for Newspapers

i. Kickoff event
ii. Donations and volunteers needed
iii. Site opens for summer/new site created

News Release for TV and Radio

i. Kickoff Event
ii. Donations and volunteers needed
iii. Site opens

Pitch Letter for all Media

Program Fact Sheet

Fact Sheet—How You Can Help

Date:
Contact:
Phone:
E-mail:

SAMPLE

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Summer Food Kickoff Set for [insert date]

[Your city's name here in all caps]—With summer right around the corner, it's time to think about keeping children eating healthy while school is out. [Your organization's name] provides free meals to children during the summer. You can come to the [name and type of event—kick off festival, carnival, game day, picnic, etc.] to learn more about summer meals and for a day of fun with your family.

[Event name] will be on [day of the week, date] from [start time] to [end time] at [location]. There is no cost to attend. More information is available at [insert phone number, Web site, etc.].

Each year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture partners with local organizations like [insert your organization's name here] to provide free meals to children when school is out for the summer. Any child under age 18 may come and eat. This summer, meals will be served at [insert location] on [insert days] at [insert times]. For more information about the national Summer Food Service Program, visit **http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer.**

Date:

Contact:

Phone:

E-mail:

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Summer Food Kickoff Set for

Date:
Contact:
Phone:
E-mail:

SAMPLE

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

You Can Help Feed Kids This Summer-Donations and Volunteers Needed

[Your city's name here in all caps]—With summer right around the corner, it's time to think about keeping children eating healthy while school is out. [Your organization's name] provides free meals to children during the summer. Volunteers are needed throughout the summer to help serve meals, supervise children, and do outreach in the community.

This summer, meals will be served at [insert location] on [insert days] at [insert times]. Contact [organization's name] at [insert contact info –phone number or email] for more information about volunteering or donating to the Summer Food program.

Each year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture partners with local organizations like [insert your organization's name here] to provide free meals to children when school is out for the summer. Any child under age 18 may come and eat. For more information about the national Summer Food Service Program, visit **http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer.**

Date:

Contact:

Phone:

E-mail:

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

You Can Help Feed Kids This Summer-Donations and Volunteers Needed

Date:

Contact:

Phone:

E-mail:

SAMPLE

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Summer Food Program Feeds Kids For Free

[Your city's name here in all caps]—With summer right around the corner, it's time to think about keeping children healthy while school is out. [Your organization's name] provides free meals to children during the summer.

This summer, meals will be served at [insert location] on [insert days] at [insert times]. There are no income requirements or registration. Any child under age 18 may come to eat. For more information, contact [insert contact information here].

Each year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture partners with local organizations like [insert your organization's name here] to provide free meals to children when school is out for the summer. For more information about the national Summer Food Service Program, visit **http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer.**

Date:

Contact:

Phone:

E-mail:

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Summer Food Program Feeds Kids For Free

Date:
Contact:
Phone:
E-mail:

SAMPLE

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

SUMMER FOOD KICKOFF SET FOR [insert date]

With summer coming soon, it's time to make sure children are eating healthy while school is out. [organization's name] provides free meals to children during the summer.

On [insert day of week and date] from [start time] to [end time] at [location], [organization's name] will host [name and type of event—kickoff festival, carnival, game day, picnic, etc.]. Come to learn more about summer meals and have fun with your family.

This summer, meals will be served at [insert location] on [insert days] at [insert times]. For more information, contact [insert info].

Date:

Contact:

Phone:

E-mail:

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

SUMMER FOOD KICKOFF SET FOR

Date:

Contact:

Phone:

E-mail:

SAMPLE

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

You Can Help Feed Kids This Summer

Summer is coming, and you can help feed kids while school is out. [organization's name] serves free meals during the summer. Volunteers are needed all summer to help serve meals, supervise children, and do outreach. Donations, including food and supplies are also needed.

Meals will be served at [insert location] on [insert days] at [insert times]. For more information about volunteering or donating, contact [organization's name] at [contact info].

Date:

Contact:

Phone:

E-mail:

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

You Can Help Feed Kids This Summer

Date:

Contact:

Phone:

E-mail:

SAMPLE

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

SUMMER FOOD PROGRAM FEEDS KIDS FOR FREE

Summer is coming, and it's time to make sure kids eat healthy while school is out. [organization's name] serves free meals to children during the summer.

Meals are served at [insert location] on [insert days] at [insert times]. There is no income requirement or registration. Any child under age 18 may come to eat. For more information, contact [insert info].

Date:

Contact:

Phone:

E-mail:

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

SUMMER FOOD PROGRAM FEEDS KIDS FOR FREE

Date:

Contact:

Phone:

E-mail:

SAMPLE

Summer Food Service Program

Dear [insert editor's or reporter's name]:

Each summer, children wait for the last bell of the school year. Summer is an exciting time for children to enjoy playtime with friends, a week at camp, a family vacation, or time at the pool. But for many children who receive free and reduced-price meals at school, summer can mean hunger. Just as learning does not end when school lets out, neither does a child's need for good nutrition.

Your organization's name] provides free meals to children during the summer as part of the USDA Summer Food Service Program. This summer, meals will be served at [insert location] on [insert days] at [insert times]. There are no income requirements or registration. Any child under age 18 may come to eat.

I encourage [media station or paper's name] to cover our feeding site since many children in the community could benefit from the program. [Include free and reduced-price lunch stats if you have them.] You may find the following list of story ideas helpful: [Include your own story ideas, based on your feeding site. Some samples are below.]

- A general story about our site that includes interviews with our staff and volunteers.
- A day at [Summer Food Service Program] story that gives first-hand experience about your visit.
- A profile of a needy family, whose children come to the site for meals.

I'm happy to help set up a visit or interviews or provide more information. Thank you for considering our story ideas.

Sincerely,

Food that's in when school is out.

Date:

Contact:

Phone:

E-mail:

Summer Food Service Program

Food that's in when school is out.

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

Description

The Summer Food Service Program provides nutritious meals and snacks to children in low-income areas during the summer months and long vacation periods for schools on year-round schedules. The program:

- Served 132.1 million meals in FY 2009.
- Reimburses sponsors such as schools, local government agencies, residential and nonresidential camps, and faith-based and other private nonprofit organizations for meals served to children at eligible sites.
- Bases payments on the number of meals served. For summer 2010, USDA's maximum reimbursement rates per meal in most States are approximately: Breakfast - $1.85; Lunch/Supper - $3.25; and Snacks - $0.76.
- Serves up to two meals or one meal and one snack per day per child at schools, churches, recreation centers, camps, playgrounds, parks, and other community sites. Camps or sites that primarily serve migrant children may be approved to serve more meals.
- Provides USDA Foods to eligible sponsors.

Participants

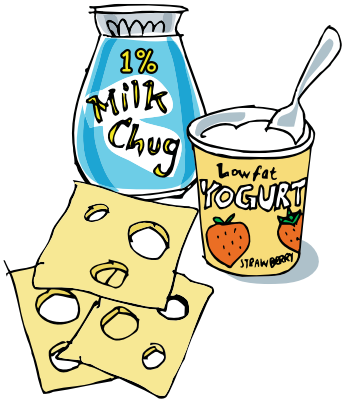
- Served over 2.2 million children at about 34,670 meal sites in 2009.
- insert local data
- Participants are generally children 18 and younger. However, meals and snacks are also available to people with disabilities older than 18, who participate in school programs for the mentally or physically disabled.

Budget

- $356 million in FY 2009
- $312.2 million in FY 2008

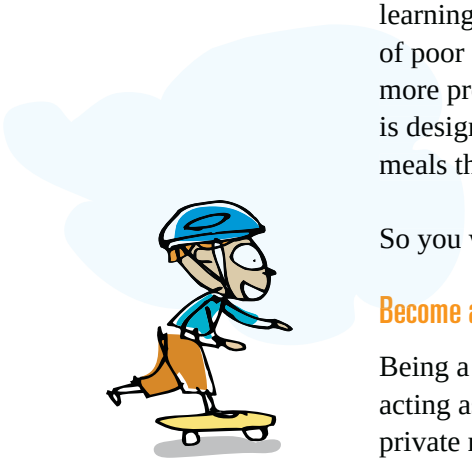
Contact Information

For more information, visit www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer or contact your State agency that administers the SFSP. View Agency listings at **www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Contacts/StateDirectory.htm.**



Summer Food Service Program: How You Can Help

During the school year, many children receive free and reduced-price breakfast and lunch through the School Breakfast and National School Lunch Programs. What happens when school lets out? Hunger is one of the most severe roadblocks to the learning process. Lack of nutrition during the summer months may set up a cycle of poor performance once school begins again. Hunger also may make children more prone to illness and other health issues. The Summer Food Service Program is designed to fill that nutrition gap and make sure children can get the nutritious meals they need.



So you want to help end hunger this summer? Here are a few ways you can help!

Become a Sponsor

Being a sponsor requires the highest level of commitment. Sponsoring means acting as the organizer for the Summer Food Service Program sites. Public or private nonprofit schools, local, municipal, county, tribal or State government, private nonprofits, public or private nonprofit camps, and private or nonprofit universities or colleges are examples of local organizations that often serve as Summer Food Service Program sponsors. Sponsors must be able to provide a capable staff, managerial skills, and food service capabilities. A sponsor may provide its own meals, purchase meals through an agreement with an area school, or contract for meals with a food vendor.

Open a Feeding Site

The Summer Food Service Program reaches only a fraction of the children in need. The primary reason for the limited access to the program is that there are not enough feeding sites. Your community building or place of faith could become a feeding site. Sites are the physical locations were food is served. Each site location must work with a Summer Food Service Program sponsor that is financially and administratively responsible for the meal service at the site. You can also help by coordinating site participation with other youth activity programs in your area.

Volunteer

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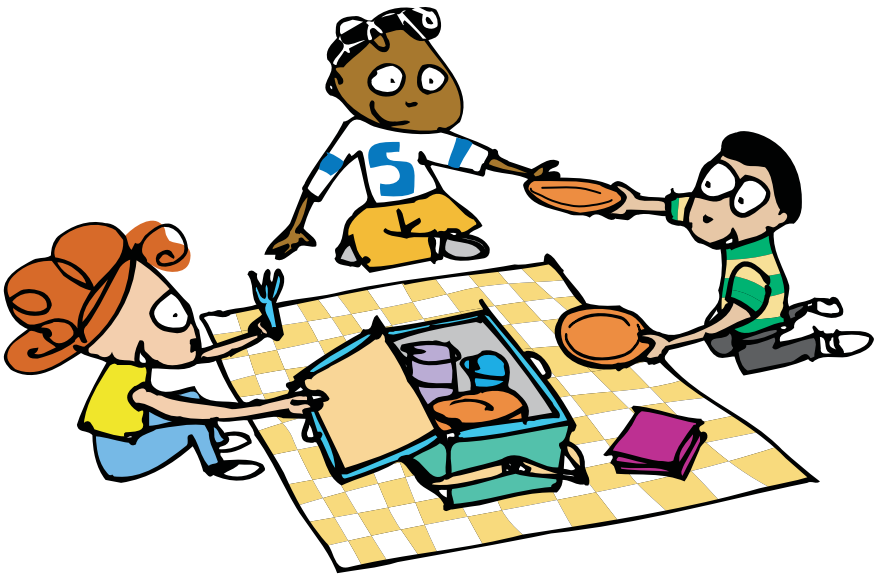
Share

Tell others how the Summer Food Service Program helps feed hungry children and discuss how they or their organization can help. The more people know about the issues, the more likely they are to take action to help end hunger or know how to help their own children.

For more information on how to become a sponsor or feeding site, visit **http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer/Sponsor.htm.**



Outreach to Media Checklist

- [ ] **1.** I've made a list of the media in my area.
- [ ] **2.** I've determined what events, news, and stories I want to share with the media.
- [ ] **3.** I've thought about what type of media to talk to—newspaper, TV, radio, etc.
- [ ] **4.** I've decided which is better, a news release or pitch, for this story.
- [ ] **5.** I've used a template to write my news release or pitch.
- [ ] **6.** I've sent my news release or pitch several days in advance of when I'd like to see a story appear.
- [ ] **7.** I've made a followup call to an editor or reporter to make sure they received my story idea and offer to help answer questions or set up a visit or interview.

Chapter 4: Outreach to Community Organizations

Why Create Partnerships?

The keys to making your feeding site successful and able to operate each year are community outreach and partnerships. Partnerships can help your site overcome challenges such as transportation, facilities, manpower, or cost of food. Partnerships can also help you do outreach. For example, another organization may work directly with families more than your organization does. Sharing outreach materials with that organization may be very effective in getting parents to bring their children to eat.

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How To Create Partnerships

There are three steps to create a basic partnership. Here are some how-to tips:

1. Research different types of organizations.

- First, create a list of your site's needs and wants—and ideas for what other organizations can do to help. Here is a brochure about how Nonprofits Can Help **http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer/library/brochurepno.pdf. http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer/library/brochurepno.pdf .**

- Start researching which other groups and organizations can help. Don't forget the groups and organizations you currently work with, such as schools. And think about new groups you don't normally work with—oftentimes churches, civic groups, local government offices, and community clubs are willing and able to assist.

Here are some tips for the types of organizations to research and approach:

- Approach schools early to get your message to families in the spring before school is out for the summer. Schools are a great resource for distributing information, connecting you with parent groups, and other resources. Here is a brochure on how Schools Can Help **http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer/library/brochureschools.pdf.**

- Potential grant-makers, donors, or corporate sponsors (for monetary or in-kind gifts) can help fill in gaps of funding and supplies. Seek out foundations, corporations who support youth or hunger projects, as well as individual donors. Think creatively about what you need: transportation, prizes for attendance, or activity supplies?

- Potential program and/or outreach partners can help provide activities, transportation, volunteers, and much more. Start with all the youth and hunger organizations, and then move on to other groups. Recreational and interest clubs may be able to facilitate activities such as dancing, crafts, sports, gardening, drama, music, or another structured activity. Don't forget to include service clubs and societies like Rotary, Kiwanis, and others.

- Also consider outreach to local government, including family and social services offices, public libraries, city or county councils, mayor's office, and others. These offices and officials may be able to help with outreach, media pitching, and building partnerships. Here is a brochure on how Local Governments Can Help **http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer/library/brochuregovt.pdf.**

- Local businesses may be willing to make monetary or in-kind donations of food or supplies. They may also be able to recruit volunteers or publicize the program to their employees and the public.

- Churches, synagogues, and other faith communities can be helpful resources. They can promote the program and potentially assist with kitchen facilities, volunteers, or transportation.

2. Make a plan and write out your "ask."

- Make a list of the potential partners and list ideas of how to ask each one to partner. Think about what they can provide and what would motivate them to join your cause. Determine how they would benefit from partnering.

Here's a list of potential donations or support to ask for:

- Monetary donations
- In-kind donations of prizes or supplies for activities (games, crafts, etc.)
- Kitchen facility use if your site doesn't have a kitchen
- Transportation of food or children to a site
- Information sharing/promotion in newsletters or on a Web site
- Volunteers to prepare food, lead activities, help with outreach, or supervise children
- Posting fliers in their office or store
- Helping to get media coverage

Decide how to contact the potential partner. Is it best to write a letter, make a phone call, or stop by an office?

Decide who should contact the partner, and prepare that person if they are meeting/talking by phone or in person. Make sure he or she has plenty of outreach materials to share.

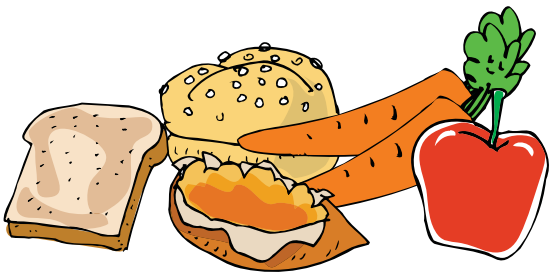
3. Meet with groups

- After the initial meeting, be sure to follow up on action items, send a thank-you note, and keep in touch on a regular basis.
- Ask your partners for outreach and program input. It is one way to thank them for their support, and they may have the best idea yet.
- Make sure to thank donors and send followup letters. See templates section for examples. Make sure to include tax deduction information on thank-you letters, so they can use it as a record of their gift.
- Ask partners who else you should approach for various needs or brainstorming.

Crafting Messages and Partner Templates

Creating messages for partners is standard business writing. Use a formal letter style and a professional tone. The following templates are available for you to customize:

- Letter asking for support
- Program fact sheet
- Fact sheet—how you can help
- Thank-you letter



SAMPLE

Summer Food Service Program

Dear:

Each summer, children wait for the last bell of the school year. Summer is an exciting time for children to enjoy playtime with friends, a week at camp, a family vacation, or time at the pool. But for many children who receive free and reduced-price meals at school, summer can mean hunger. Just as learning does not end when school lets out, neither does a child's need for good nutrition.

[Your organization's name] provides free meals to children during the summer as part of the USDA Summer Food Service Program. This summer, meals will be served at [insert location] on [insert days] at [insert times]. There are no income requirements, and any child under age 18 may come and eat. I've enclosed some outreach materials, so you can learn more about our program.

We would like to invite [partner organization's name] to support our summer food site. [Add one or two sentences about what needs your site has and how the children would directly benefit from the group's help.]

Thank you in advance for your support. We look forward to hearing from you. Please let us know if you have any questions.

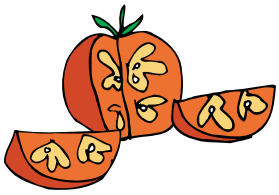
Sincerely,

Food that's in when school is out.

Summer Food Service Program

Food that's in when school is out.

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)



Description

- Provides nutritious meals and snacks to children in low-income areas during the summer months and long vacation periods for schools on year-round schedules. The program served 132.1 million meals in FY 2009.
- Reimburses sponsors, such as schools, local government agencies, residential and nonresidential camps, and faith-based and other private nonprofit organizations for meals served to children at eligible sites.
- Bases payments on the number of meals served. For summer 2010, USDA's maximum reimbursement rates per meal in most States are approximately: Breakfast - $1. 85; Lunch/Supper - $3.25; and Snacks - $0.76.
- Serves up to two meals or one meal and one snack per day per child at schools, churches, recreation centers, camps, playgrounds, parks, and other community sites. Camps or sites that primarily serve migrant children may be approved to serve more meals.
- Provides USDA Foods to eligible sponsors

Background

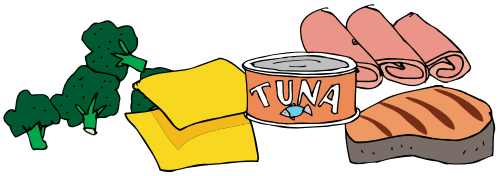
- In 1968, the Special Food Service Program for Children (SFSPFC) was created as a 3-year pilot program consisting of both the Child Care Food Program and the summer program. Congress reaffirmed its support of these programs and, in 1975, separated the child care and summer feeding components of the SFSPFC and provided each with individual legislative authorization.
- The SFSP was designed to ensure that school-aged children in lower income areas could continue to receive nutritious meals during the long school vacation, when they did not have access to school lunch or breakfast.

Participants

- Served over 2.2 million children at about 34,670 meal sites in 2009.
- Participants are generally children 18 and younger. However, meals and snacks are also available to people with disabilities older than 18, who participate in school programs for the mentally or physically disabled.

Budget

- $356 million in FY 2009
- $312.2 million in FY 2008



Contact Information

For more information, visit www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer or contact your State agency that administers the SFSP. View Agency listings at **www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Contacts/StateDirectory.htm.**

Summer Food Service Program: How You Can Help

Partnership Opportunities

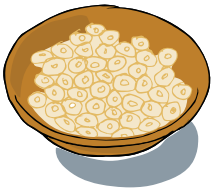
During the school year, many children receive free and reduced-price breakfast and lunch through the School Breakfast and National School Lunch Programs. What happens when school lets out? Hunger is one of the most severe roadblocks to the learning process. Lack of nutrition during the summer months may set a cycle of poor performance once school begins again. Hunger also may make children more prone to illness and other health issues. The Summer Food Service Program is designed to fill that nutrition gap and make sure children can get the nutritious meals they need.

Here are a few ways you can end hunger this summer!

Being a sponsor requires the highest level of commitment. Sponsoring means acting as the organizer for the Summer Food Service Program sites. Open a Feeding Site

Become a Sponsor

Being a sponsor requires the highest level of commitment. Sponsoring means acting as the organizer for the Summer Food Service Program sites. Public or private non-profit schools, local, municipal, county, tribal or state government, private non-profits, public or private non-profit camps, and private or non-profit universities or colleges are examples of local organizations that often serve as Summer Food Service Program sponsors. Sponsors must be able to provide a capable staff, managerial skills, and food service capabilities. A sponsor may provide its own meals, purchase meals through an agreement with an area school, or contract for meals with a food vendor.



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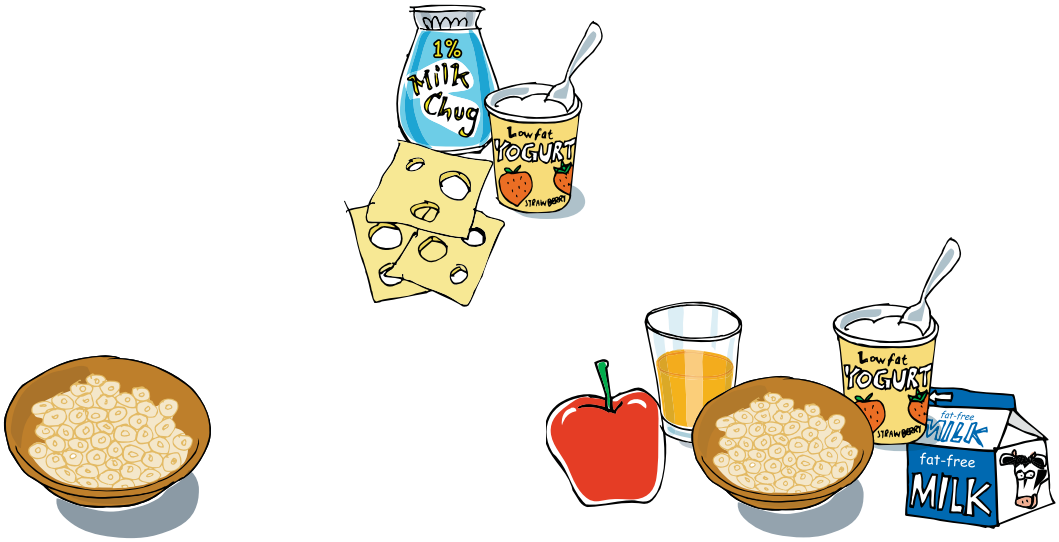

Summer Food Service Program

[date]

SAMPLE

Dear:

Thank you for your support of the Summer Food Service Program. More children will have nutritious meals this summer because of your generosity. [Add one or two sentences that references what the partner or individual did or donated and how the children directly benefited.]

As a thank-you, we want to invite you to attend a meal at our feeding site. You are welcome to help serve the meal or just eat with the children. It is an opportunity to see how your support helps children in our community. Meals are served [days] at [times] at [location]. Please let us know if you would like to come.

We look forward to partnering with you again next year and many to follow! Thank you again!

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