

Research Rundown

Article:

School Closures During COVID-19: Opportunities for Innovation in Meal Service

What was the primary aim of this article?

Highlight district **strategies** used to replace missed meals due to COVID-19.

Explore **lessons learned** to inform and strengthen future school nutrition policies for out-of-school time.

Key findings:

1 Location

Districts utilized alternate meal delivery sites such as community centers, apartment complexes, libraries, intersections, etc.

2 Multiple Meals

Districts served multiple meals and/or multiple days' worth of meals at a time via once or twice per week pick-up or delivery to cover a full weeks worth of meals.

3 Participants

Districts operating SFSP provided free meals to all children ages 18 and under.

1 When Schools are Closed

Additional program flexibilities are beneficial, especially the waiver of the congregate meal requirement.

2 New Operation Models

Consider if schools participating in Grab-n-Go and other mobile meal services were able to more effectively respond to the emergency feeding needs.

3 Other Benefit Options

Consider if the availability of P-EBT for families of school-age children will affect food insecurity and child nutrition program participation.

Put it into practice!

- If not implemented already, consider operating a mobile meal service in order to provide more opportunities for students to receive meals.
 - Add multiple stops as well as different meal pick-up times to ensure families have access to meals
- Continue to encourage your families to submit a meal application to streamline the availability of P-EBT for eligible households.

Reference:

Kinsey, E., Hecht, A., Glagola, C., Levi, R., Read, M., Smith, C. Hager, E. (2020). School Closures During COVID-19: Opportunities for Innovation in Meal Service. American Journal of Public Health, 110(11), 1635-1643. doi:doi.org/10.2105/APJH.2020.305875xt



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