



Food That's In . . . When School Is Out! Summer Food Service Program for Children

Building Partners for Summer Food

Partnering with individuals, community groups, public agencies and businesses is a way of obtaining needed resources for your Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). Whether at the State or local level, finding partners to supplement your existing resources can result in a stronger SFSP. Partnering can also generate interest in the SFSP, build community support, and help you to better meet the nutritional and developmental needs of the children you serve.

How Can Partners Contribute?

Partners can help in any number of ways short of being responsible for the overall SFSP administration.

- **Outreach.** Partners can help States find new sponsors, help sponsors find new sites, or raise community or neighborhood awareness of the location of SFSP sites. Statewide advocacy groups, local organizations, public agencies and businesses all have experience with, and systems for, communicating with the public. They can help you “get the word out” about SFSP.
- **Money.** Financial assistance can be used to improve outreach, meal quality, or Program activities.

SFSP regulations require all Program income be reported, which may result in sponsors receiving less reimbursement. Sponsors should discuss the fiscal implications of all partnerships with the State agency.

- **Other Resources.** “Resources” can mean more than money. A partnering organization can provide staff or member volunteers, facilities, and equipment. Volunteers can help with the meal service or they can plan and conduct special activities for the children. They may be willing to provide business expertise like accounting or procurement. Teenagers and college students may be available from community organizations or government programs such as the Joint Training Partnership Act (JTPA) or AmeriCorps.

- **Meal Preparation and Distribution.** Sponsors who cannot prepare their own meals can find a partner, such as a school or food service management company, to prepare and/or distribute meals. Sponsors must pay for these meal services out of their Federal operating reimbursement. Your expectations regarding the preparation, distribution, quality and payment for the meals must be carefully spelled out in the contract, as should the flexibility to meet changing circumstances. Sponsors should not underestimate the time and energy needed to build a good working relationship with their meal vendor, and should consult their State agency for help with the writing of bid specifications and the procedures for the competitive bidding process.

Why Run an Activities Program?

Combining good meals with engaging activities at your sites will help in two ways:

- more children will come to your sites, thus increasing and stabilizing attendance and improving financial stability; and
- well-nourished children will be able to take better advantage of the developmental opportunities offered in your activity program.

How Can Partners Help?

Partner with an organization that has the skills and experience to run an activities program. Volunteers from such an organization can help design and operate an activities program under your supervision, or may be able to help publicize your Program.



Potential Partners Who Can Help

Organizations and people interested in children and children's issues will be your most likely partners. Find local partners affiliated with national organizations that support SFSP.

Schools (teachers, food service directors, superintendents, school board members, school nurses)
County, city and town administrators
Public Housing Authorities / Resident Councils
Food Banks and other emergency food organizations
Pediatricians
University and community college nutritionists
Boys and Girls Clubs
Anti-hunger advocacy organizations

Parent-teacher organizations
Parks and Recreation Departments
Community Action Agencies
Religious organizations
Local businesses
Cooperative Extension offices
Child Care Workers
Social Workers
Public Health Nurses
Civic Organizations
Dietitians
YMCA and YWCA



Steps in Building Partnerships

- Establish your goals. What do you want to achieve?
- How do you need help in accomplishing your goals (Outreach, activity programs, meals, money)?
- Find partners whose skills and resources are different than yours. Good partnerships exist when both parties can better achieve their goals by working together.
- Provide your potential partners with information about the need for SFSP.
- Know how each potential partner could help accomplish your goal, but be open to modify your plan as a potential partner offers their own ideas.
- Define roles and tasks. Agree on a written description of each partner's responsibilities.
- Find ways to publicly thank your partners. For example, a local business supporting your site might appreciate a sign at the site which acknowledges their support.



Final Consideration in Developing Partnerships

Do you really want a partner? Not every partnership is wise or appropriate. You should be clear about the purpose and expectations of the partnership. Even when you share a common

purpose, other factors may prevent a successful partnership. For example, if your potential partner is in financial trouble, they may not be able to keep their financial commitments.

Where is the money going? Do you pay your partner for goods or services? If so, carefully spell out the terms of any financial agreement in writing.

Partnerships work well when each partner brings their own resources, financial and otherwise, to the relationship, but misunderstandings over money can easily destroy a partnership and your SFSP.

Trust is the key. Many sponsors underestimate the time and energy required to build and maintain trust in a successful partnership. Occasional misunderstandings are inevitable. Sponsors must be proactive in resolving those misunderstandings.

In a good relationship both partners will immediately bring problems to the other's attention. Don't wait; small problems can become big ones and threaten the partnership.



January 1998



USDA's Summer Food Service Program: Food That's In When School's Out

Are there children in your community who will go hungry this summer? Low-income children are eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals during the school year through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. But those programs end when school ends for the summer. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) helps fill the hunger gap.

Good nutrition is essential for effective learning every day, all year long. Just as learning does not end when school lets out, neither does the need for good nutrition. The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) helps children get the nutrition they need to learn, play, and grow throughout the summer months when they are out of school.

The SFSP was created to ensure that children in lower-income areas could continue to receive nutritious meals during long school vacations, when they do not have access to school lunch or breakfast. Although nearly 16.5 million children depend on nutritious free and reduced-price meals and snacks at school for 9 months out of the year, only about 12-14% of eligible children receive the free meals provided by the SFSP during the summer months.

"We know that children from low-income families will be hungry during the months when their schools are closed, because there is not enough food for them at home," said Virgil Conrad, Regional Administrator for USDA's Food and Nutrition Service. "During those long summer months, the SFSP serves what is too often their only nutritious meal of the day."

The SFSP provides activities and free meals and snacks to children and teenagers, 18 years and younger, at approved sites in low-income areas during the summer months. These sites may include schools, public agencies, day care centers, Boys and Girls Clubs, Parks and Recreations, Bible Schools and other private nonprofit organizations.

The program draws children into supervised activities that are safe, fun, and filled with learning opportunities. Children benefit nutritionally by receiving complete, wholesome meals, and parents benefit by getting some help in stretching their food dollars.

The program encourages communities to provide safe places for children to go to be with other children and supportive adults. Parents know their children are receiving healthy meals in a supportive environment. Organizations receive funds to provide meals to complement recreational and educational programs that are already taking place.

In cities, towns, suburbs, and rural communities across America, the SFSP can make a tremendous difference in the lives of children. Can the SFSP succeed in your community?

Contact your State education department (in most States) to learn more about the SFSP today. Your State education department can tell you where these sites are and how to apply.





Free Lunch for Kids This Summer!

Children 18 and under can have free food and fun during summer vacation. For the Summer Food Service Program Site closest to you, call

(_____)_____.

*There's no registration and no fee.

The Summer Food Service Program is sponsored by
the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



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Hola Ninos...

Juntemonos para las Comidas Gratis!

**Las comidas gratis sirven a todos los ninos que tienen dieciocho anos y menos
No Hay Registro y No Hay Costo**

Llame para mas informacion: (_____) _____

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Hey Kids and
Teens . . .
Join us for **FREE**
Summer **Meals!**



Power Panther says,
"Eat Smart,
Play Hard."™

Where: _____

Dates: _____

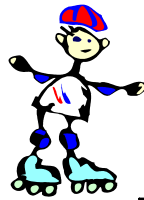
Meals & Times: _____

Days: _____

For More Information, Call: _____



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Save Money Feeding Your Children this Summer.



Children up to ages 18 may receive meals through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). The Food and Nutrition Service, United States Department of Agriculture through the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Healthy Schools, Office of Child Nutrition, administer the SFSP.

Feed your children at no cost at a local Summer Food Service Program Site:

For more information about the Summer Program, contact:

Organization:

Contact Person(s):

Telephone Number:



This organization is an equal opportunity provider and employer.





Cut Your Food Cost this Summer.....

.....Your children may
receive meals at no cost
at a local Summer Food Service
Program Site.



For more information contact your Summer Program Sponsor for local sites.

Sponsor:
Contact Person:
Telephone:



Tips for Increasing Participation at SFSP Feeding Sites: Ideas for Sponsors

As a sponsor, you play an important role in feeding needy children in your community. We want to support you in this role. This tip sheet provides practical strategies to announce your feeding sites in the community. One key to a successful program is sustained participation—getting kids to your site and keeping them coming back all summer long. These ideas have been successfully used by other sponsors so we are sharing them with you. For more ideas, please visit the new Summer Food website at www.summerfood.gov.

- √ Mail flyers and site invitations to principals, school food service managers, local officials and others in the community
- √ Have the school food service advertise Summer Food on their spring menus
- √ Ask local government buildings to post flyers which contain a list of SFSP feeding sites
- √ Before school lets out, ask the school district to send flyers home with the kids with a listing of feeding sites
- √ Distribute flyers with all site locations and times of meal service to Food Stamp offices, WIC clinics, health clinics, food pantries and churches
- √ Contact community groups which can help with door-to-door canvassing. These groups include church youth groups, Boy and Girl Scout troops, recreation centers, high school students completing a community service project, etc.
- √ Post flyers in public places such as grocery stores, libraries, post offices, buses and hospitals
- √ Display a SFSP banner in a highly visible location at feeding sites

Hey Kids and Teens!

Summer Food!

Join Us For Free Meals!



Where: _____

Dates: _____

Meals & Times: _____

Days: _____

For More Information, Contact: _____

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