



Summer Meals Newsletter

DECEMBER 2015

IT'S COLD OUTSIDE...
BUT SUMMER PLANS ARE HEATING UP!

Summertime Q&A

Question:

What can new sponsors do to become more familiar with the Program before signing up to run their own sites?



Answer:

Find a Summer Meals Mentor! Potential sponsors can ask their State agency to connect them with an experienced sponsor that can offer an “on the ground” perspective and answer specific questions about how the Program operates in the real world. Experienced

sponsors can also take potential sponsors on as a sites to help them become more familiar with the Program before they begin sponsoring their own sites in the future.

Upcoming USDA and Partner Events

December 3rd, 1:00 pm EST

Food, Research, & Action Center (FRAC):
Summer Meals at Libraries
http://org2.salsalabs.com/o/5118/p/salsa/event/common/public/?event_KEY=79984

December 17th, 1:00 pm EST

Food, Research, & Action Center (FRAC):
Providing Quality Programming at your
Afterschool Meal Program
http://org2.salsalabs.com/o/5118/p/salsa/event/common/public/?event_KEY=79983

Partnership of the Month: Let's Move! Cities, Towns & Counties

Let's Move! Cities, Towns & Counties (LMCTC) is a partnership between Federal agencies and local and organizations working to improve children's health and wellbeing. The partnership celebrates the success of local communities by awarding them with bronze, silver, and gold medals.

LMCTC sites can reach the “Gold Medal Benchmark” by championing the Summer Meals Program. City, town, and county governments can sponsor a Program, host sites, advertise the Program on billboards, and encourage local elected officials to issue a Summer Meals press release.

For more information, and to find a LMCTC site in your community, check out the Partnering with Let's Move! Cities, Towns & Counties Toolkit Page: http://origin.drupal.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cnd/SMT-Lets_Move.pdf



Now is the Time... for School Outreach!

Did you know...

In 2014, 21.7 million children received free or reduced-price meals during the school year, but only 3.8 million children received Summer Meals?

Schools are well-positioned to counter the “summer hunger gap” by supporting the Summer Meal Programs. There are many ways for schools to partner with sponsors, including assisting with outreach and promotion, hosting a site, and providing site activities.

School Outreach and Promotion:

As trusted community organizations, schools are ideal places to market the Program. Schools can help with outreach by:

- Sending informational pamphlets home with children.
- Sending letters or emails to parents or guardians.
- Including site location information in school newsletters.
- Posting a link to the FNS Site Finder on the school’s webpage and social media pages.
- Sharing information about the Program during parent-teacher conferences.
- Adding a Summer Meals announcement to the school’s robo-call system.
- Hanging a SummerFoodRocks! banner in front of the school.

Sponsors can help by providing school officials or PTA members with outreach materials, or by pointing school officials to the Summer Meals “Raise Awareness” webpage, where they can find FNS promotional materials online: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/raise-awareness>.

Sponsors can also encourage school officials to become “Summer Meal Champions” by writing a guest newspaper column about Summer Meals or by speaking publicly in support of the Program. School superintendents, principals, teachers, librarians, and other educators can emphasize the importance of year-round nutrition to childhood development and learning. The Summer Meal Toolkit has resources sponsors can use when reaching out to State superintendents, principals, and other school officials: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/summer-meals-toolkit>.



For a general overview of how to partner with schools, please see the “Working with Schools” Toolkit Page: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/sfsp/SMT-Schools.pdf>.



Site Locations and Activities:

Schools are prime site locations, and should be at the top of every sponsor’s list during the site selection process. Neighborhood schools are familiar to children and may be more accessible than other potential site locations. In addition, schools may have kitchen facilities available to vend the meals, and school administrators may be interested in providing their kitchen staff with a summer employment opportunity.

Schools may have the capacity to provide educational site activities along with the meal. Sponsors can reach out to the school PTA or volunteer board to see if teachers, parents, or older siblings may be interested in volunteering to read to the children during lunch, host a science experiment, or provide an extra-curricular activity, such as an art project, music lesson, or fitness activity.