

Role of Nutrition Educators in USDA's Summer Food Service Program

What is the need?

When the school year ends, millions of low-income children across the nation lose access to the school breakfasts, lunches and afterschool snacks they receive during the regular school year.

The Summer Food Service Program fills this gap by providing free meals and snacks to children who might otherwise go hungry.

Currently, the program is underutilized. Nationally, only 1 out of 5 children who receive free and reduced-price meals during the school year continue to receive meals during the summer months.



What can SNE members do?

- Become informed about sponsors, sites and utilization by children in your state and community.
- Promote the Summer Food Service Program to potential sponsors through your existing networks and associations. If your organization has non-profit status and a kitchen, consider becoming a Summer Food Service Program sponsor.
- Discuss with potential sponsors any possible barriers to participation and be ready to assist them in overcoming the barriers.
- Offer to work with a sponsor to plan healthful menus.
- Work with state and local agencies and sponsors to identify opportunities for nutrition education and enrichment at Summer Food Service Program sites.

How does the Summer Food Service Program work?

The program provides free meals and snacks to children 18 and under when school is not in session.

To qualify, a site must be located in a low-income area, where 50 percent or more of the children in the area are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals, or must serve primarily low-income children. Migrant sites and camps qualify under different rules.

Local governments, school districts and non-profits can sponsor summer food sites, which may be located at schools, parks, recreation centers, housing projects, migrant centers, Indian reservations, YMCAs, Boys and Girls Clubs, houses of worship, summer camps, and others places where children congregate when school is out.

Reimbursable meals must meet federal nutrition standards.

How can I find out more?

- http://www.frac.org/afterschool/summer_toolkit.htm
- http://www.frac.org/afterschool/summer_sfsp.htm
- <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Summer/>



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