

# WANT NUTRITIOUS MEALS FOR ALL KIDS THIS SUMMER?

## Now's the Time to Plan for 2017!



**Summer food programs are a great way to increase participation and retention rates in school and community activity programs.**

## There Are Federal Dollars Waiting to Improve and Expand What You're Already Doing for Kids!

### About the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP):

- SFSP is a federal nutrition program that reimburses schools and other non-profit sponsors for meals and snacks served to kids during summer break—at an even higher rate than the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).
- Schools and towns with 50% or more of their students eligible for free and reduced school meals can provide summer meals for all kids free of charge!

### Why Are Summer Meals So Important?

- Unequal access to summer learning opportunities accounts for more than half of the achievement gap faced by low income students. Accessible summer meals make it easier for all children to access quality programming.
- Kids at risk for obesity are more likely to gain weight during the summer, because they lose access to balanced school meals and opportunities for physical activity.
- Summer break can be the toughest time for low income families' finances when they have to stretch tight food budgets to cover additional meals for their children at home. Summer food programs like SFSP help all families with this extra strain on their time and budgets.
- In Vermont, summer food has room to grow: While just over **36,000** kids in this state qualify for free and reduced meals, **less than 9,000** are currently benefiting from the SFSP. **Only 25%** of the kids who need this program the most are currently participating—it's time to expand!

### Take Action to Prevent Summer Hunger:

- Summer meals and enrichment activities are essential for the health and success of Vermont's youth.

*Hunger Free Vermont: Ending the injustice of hunger and malnutrition for all Vermonters*

For more information on how to begin summer food programming in your community, contact: the Child Nutrition Initiatives Team

Email: [childnutrition@hungerfreevt.org](mailto:childnutrition@hungerfreevt.org) Phone: 802-865-0255



# How to Bring the SFSP to Your Community:



## 1) Determine eligibility.

Many schools and towns already qualify for free summer meals, and lots of others are almost there. If you're not sure if your area is eligible, ask your school's Food Service Director, or contact Hunger Free Vermont.



## 3) Apply for the SFSP.

You'll want to make sure you start early, as the Agency of Education requires that sponsors finalize their applications by early June. However, don't wait until then to get started! Applying to the program is a process that requires time, planning and proper documentation. The Agency of Education and Hunger Free Vermont are available to help you.



## 4) Serve meals and have fun!

This last part is what it's all about. You'll be trained to run the program and begin serving nutritious meals to kids. You'll keep track of the meals you serve and submit claims regularly, and your program will receive federal dollars to help feed hungry kids, combat learning loss, and close the achievement gap! Should questions or concerns arise over the course of the program, you're not alone: Hunger Free Vermont and the Agency of Education will be there to help.



## 2) Identify partners in the community.

There's no point in doing this alone. The most successful summer food programs are the ones which are paired with

activities and run all summer long. There may already be a participating sponsor in your area with whom you can partner to expand summer meals. If you think you might not have enough time, energy or money to do it all, that's okay! There's likely someone (or many people) willing to help—they just need to be asked.

## Still have questions? Check out our website at [hungerfreevt.org](http://hungerfreevt.org).

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