



---

# School's Out, Food's In!

## Promoting Your Summer Meals Program

May 17, 2022





# HOUSEKEEPING







# Today's Agenda

**Welcome and introductions**

**Resources from No Kid Hungry**

- **Paige Pokorney**, Share Our Strength

**Promotion Strategies**

- **Lynsi Barnhill**, Paducah Public Schools (KY)
- **Sara Seelmeyer**, United Way of King County (WA)

**Audience Q&A**

**Additional Resources**



No Kid Hungry is a campaign of Share Our Strength. We are committed to ending childhood hunger in the United States by helping launch and improve programs that give kids the food they need to thrive.





*center for* BEST  
PRACTICES

No Kid Hungry's Center for Best Practices provides information, tools, and resources designed to end childhood hunger.

[bestpractices.nokidhungry.org](https://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org)





**THANK YOU!**

---





## Paige Pokorney

Program Manager,  
Center for Best Practices  
Share Our Strength



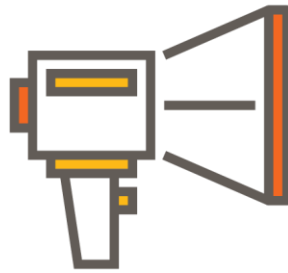
# Strategies & Models to Maximize Access



Timing and  
Location



Mobile Meals



**Effective  
Promotion**



Packaging and  
Branding



Partnerships

Check out the [CBP's Summer Meals program page](#) for more information on implementation strategies and best practices



## **1<sup>st</sup> Question: Who is your audience?**

- Children
- Parents and caregivers
- Community leaders

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Question: Where do they get their information?**

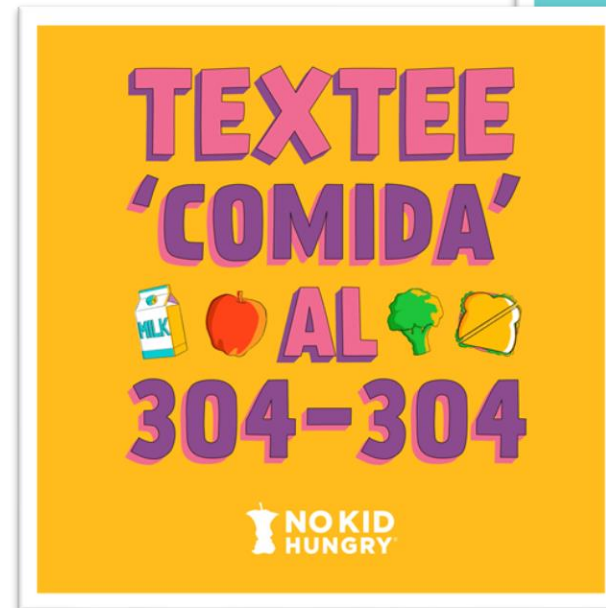
- Instagram, TikTok, Facebook
- Word of mouth, radio, bus ads
- Schools, community centers, religious institutions

# Resources from No Kid Hungry

## Summer Meals Outreach Toolkit – *new number!*

- Sample social media posts
- Website blurbs
- Customizable flyers
- Template letters to caregivers
- Template FAQs

*All in English and Spanish!*





# Resources cont.

## Communicating with Parents and Families About Changes to Summer Meals 2022 Operations

*All in English and Spanish!*

Available at: [bestpractices.nokidhungry.org](https://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org)

*Click “Latest Resources” on the orange navigation bar!*



### Communicating With Parents and Families About Changes to Summer Meals 2022 Operations

This toolkit was created to help you communicate to families about changes to your summer meals program. It includes two sections of customizable content - one for [providers changing \(but still operating\)](#) a summer meals program and one for [providers ceasing summer meals operations](#).

For the most up-to-date information and resources on summer 2022 operations, please visit the [No Kid Hungry Center for Best Practices website](#).

This document features sample language, in both English & [Spanish](#), that you can use as-is or customize to best fit the needs of your school or organization.  
Just copy & paste!

#### [For Programs Changing Operations](#)

**\*\*** *Tip: If possible, communicate anticipated program changes to families ahead of summer's start. If [mid-summer](#) changes are anticipated, be sure to communicate with families again about program changes. In either case, include updates across multiple communication channels.*

*Check your website to ensure that information about your summer meals program is up-to-date and easy for families to find.*

- *Ideally, this information should be located on the homepage.*
- *Make sure the information includes details about the times and locations of meals being served; any activities provided; and menus of planned meals.*
- *Be sure to include contact information so that families can reach out with any questions.*

#### To Include on Posters and Flyers

The summer meals program is a federal program. Due to changes at the federal level, our program will be changing for summer 2022. We are no longer able to offer [\[TYPE OF MEAL - GRAB&GO/DELIVERY/PARENT PICK-UP/MULTI-DAY MEALS\]](#) but will be offering [\[MEAL TYPES\]](#) to kids and teens 18 and under. We are dedicated to still serving children and the community, and we plan to serve

# Resources cont.

## Summer Meals in Your Community – Engagement Toolkit for Elected Officials

*A great resource to send to your  
elected officials.*



### **SUMMER MEALS IN YOUR COMMUNITY – ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS**

Studies show that kids are at higher risk for hunger, obesity, and learning loss during the summer months. Fortunately, summer nutrition programs can address these challenges. The need for healthy meals doesn't end with the school day or when summer begins. However, less than 14% of children living in low-income households receive a summer meal. Elected officials can help ensure kids have access to summer meals.

#### **What is the Summer Meals Program?**

Federal summer nutrition programs are funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and administered by a designated agency in each state. Most program providers choose to serve meals using the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) available to schools and qualifying non-profit organizations. However, schools also can choose to serve summer meals through the National School Lunch Program's Seamless Summer Option (SSO).

Summer Meals are free to all children 18 years of age or younger who drop-in at an approved open site where no sign-up is required or are enrolled in a closed site where children are engaged in other programming. Summer Meals sites include places like schools, libraries, community centers, and parks. Some program sponsors operate mobile meal programs where buses or food trucks travel from location to location, bringing summer meals to children instead of having kids go to their nearest site for a meal.

#### **Summer Meals Resources**

- [Summer Meals Fact Sheet](#)
- [Summer Food Service Program Overview](#)
- [Childhood Hunger in Your State](#)

#### **Summer 2022 Operations Update**

USDA waivers put in place at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic for Child Nutrition Programs, including summer meals, expire June 2022 and will not be available for summer 2022 operations. Many summer sites will not be able to open to serve meals and open sites will have to operate differently than under waiver operations. Most significantly, children will have to consume meals on-site. Ensuring the awareness and accessibility of summer meal sites is more important than ever. Stay updated on regulations and operations [through our website](#).

Learn more about Summer Meals by visiting [No Kid Hungry's Center for Best Practice's website](#)





## Lynsi Barnhill

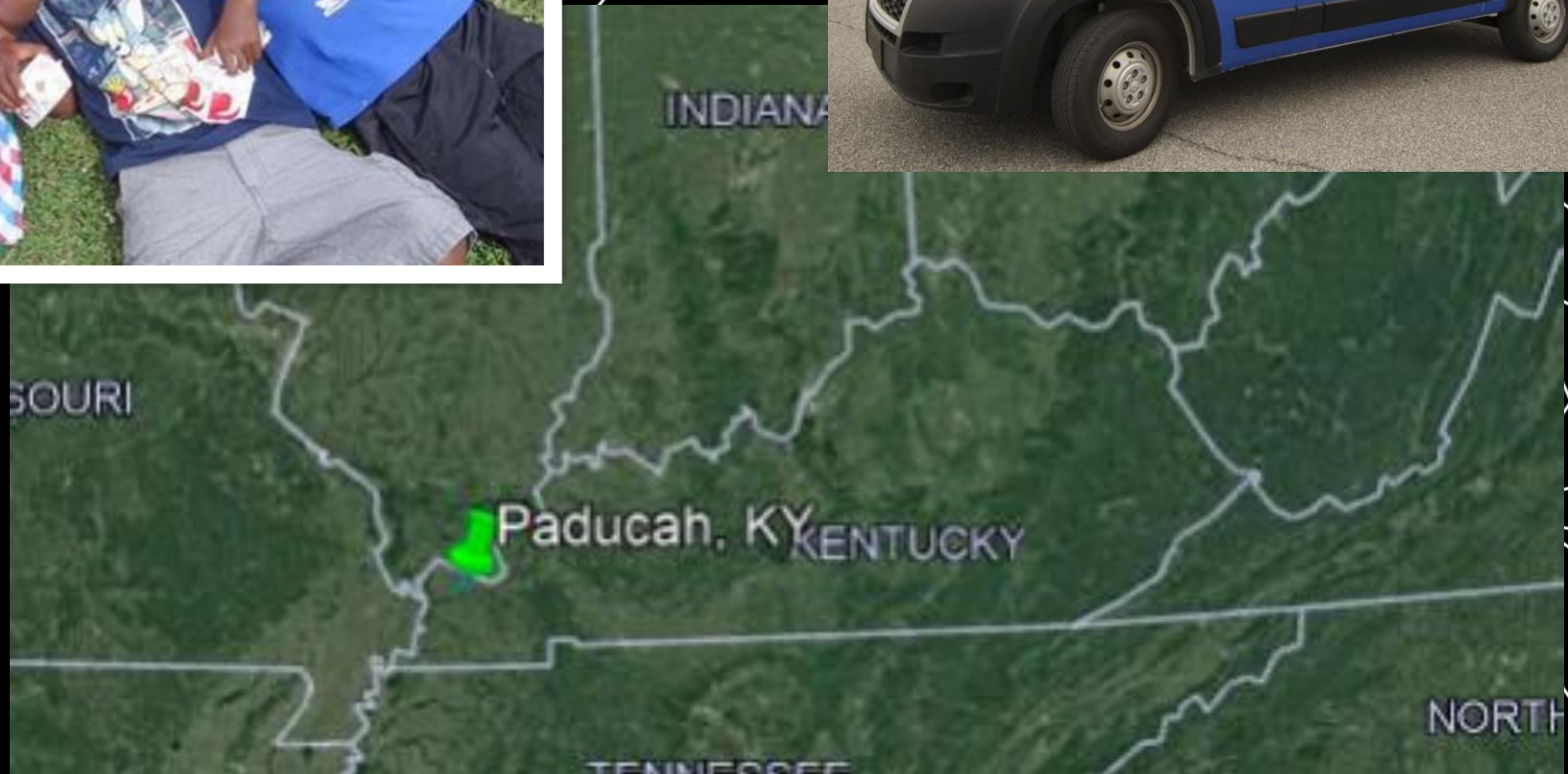
Paducah Public Schools,  
Kentucky







**PADUCAH**  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS





# KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

## WHO ARE THEY?

Parents  
Teens  
Community Groups

## NEEDS

Food insecurity  
Programs serving youth  
Meal times



## CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Where are participants currently spending time?





## SHARE A CLEAR MESSAGE

### WHO

“TORNADO TAKEOUT Summer Meals Program”

Include program contact information for guardians

### WHAT

Nutrition summer meals at no charge to ALL youth 0-18

### WHEN

Clearly communicate operating dates + times

MOBILE – Times are very important for participation

### WHERE

Participating Locations – Go where youth are



# SITE PROMOTION

## IMPACT THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

### SOCIAL MEDIA

Low cost – Large Audience

Easy to read

Eye-catching: Photos+Graphics



### FLYERS

Local Businesses

Community Organizations

Grocery Stores

Housing Facilities

Faith Based Outreach

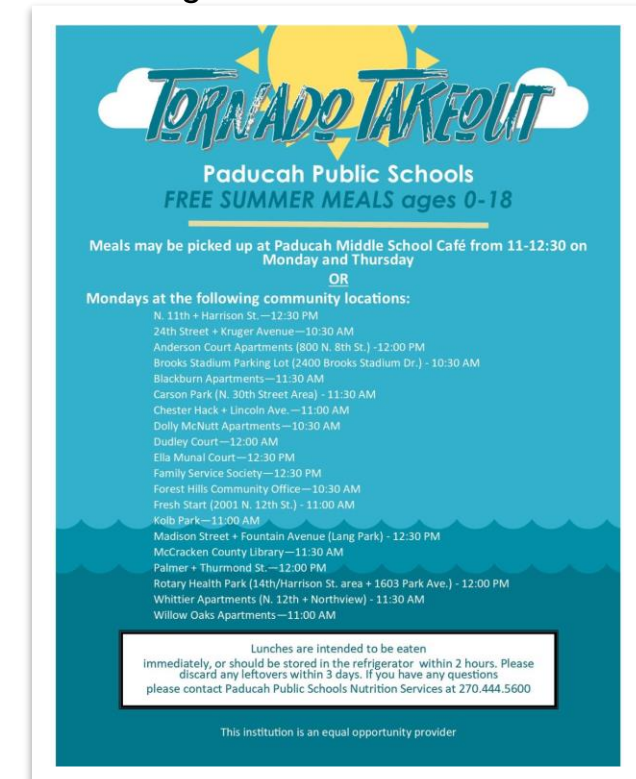
### LOCAL MEDIA

TV

Radio

Newspaper

Magazines



# RELATIONSHIPS REMOVE BARRIERS

- Trust
- Site Champion(s)
- Enrichment activities
- Consistency







## COMMON GOAL

Health and Well-Being of youth when school is out.



# THANK YOU

Lynsi Barnhill

270-444-5600 ext. 1030

[lynsi.barnhill@paducah.kyschools.us](mailto:lynsi.barnhill@paducah.kyschools.us)

 STAY at Paducah Public Schools





**Sara Seelmeyer**  
United Way of King County,  
Washington





# United Way of King County

## Summer Meals Promotion in Washington State





United Way of King County

## **Quick United Way background:**

- **Based in Seattle, WA**
- **Lead statewide work to increase access to federal child nutrition programs**
- **Working in the Summer Meals space for 10+ years**
- **Partner with our state agency to conduct outreach each summer**



**Our perspective: moving the needle on Summer Meals participation requires increased program access AND increased program awareness.**



# We use three strategies to promote Summer Meals sites to families:

- Mass marketing
- Word-of-mouth communication through trusted messengers
- Engaging, fun sites



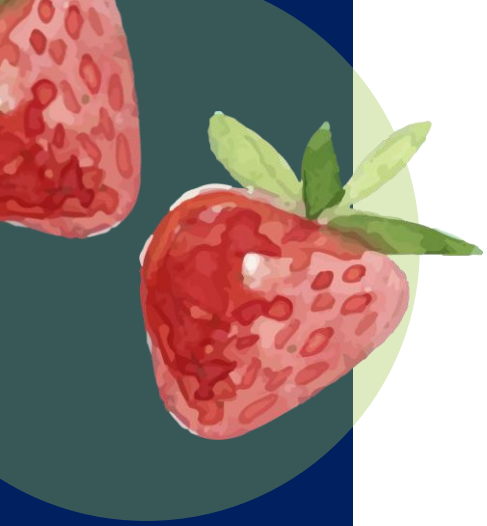


# Mass Marketing

We partner with our state agency (OSPI) to widely distribute co-branded materials:

- 100,000+ direct mailers + flyers
- Digital flyers
- Radio ads
- Digital ads
- Messaging via school districts (robocalls, PeachJar, newsletters)
- Housing authority rent statements

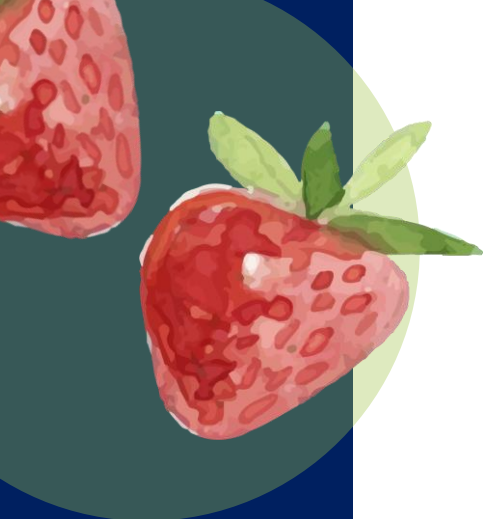




# Why this works:

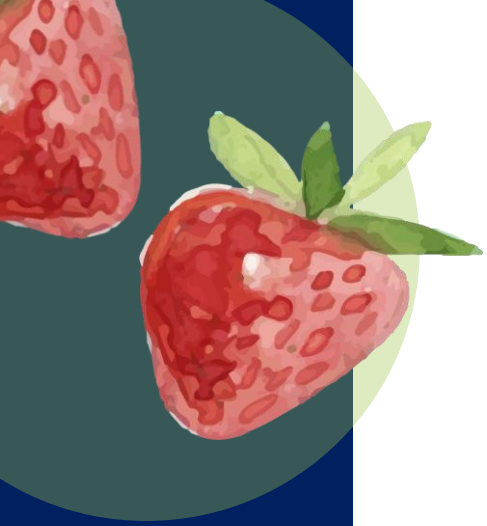
- Requires limited staff capacity
- Allows us to reach communities across the state with limited effort
- Strategies can be recycled from year to year
- Partnership with our state agency ensures that marketing materials across the state are consistent





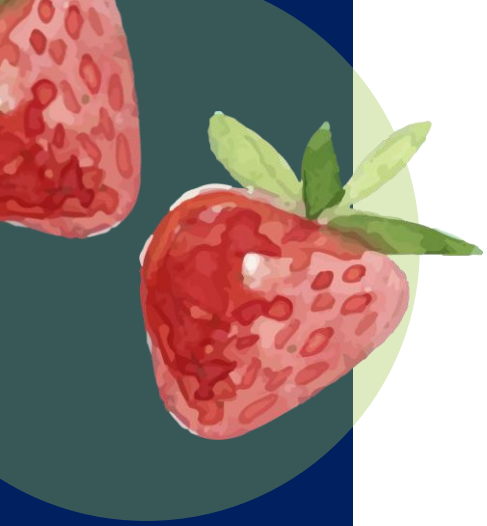
# Word-of-Mouth

- Mass marketing isn't enough – many families visit Summer Meals sites because they're referred by a trusted messenger
- We do significant outreach to:
  - Religious leaders
  - Neighborhood groups
  - Teachers + school principals
  - Healthcare providers
  - Other nonprofit agencies
  - Social workers/case workers
- Outreach is specific and aims to equip community leaders with information that they can provide to families



# Why this works:

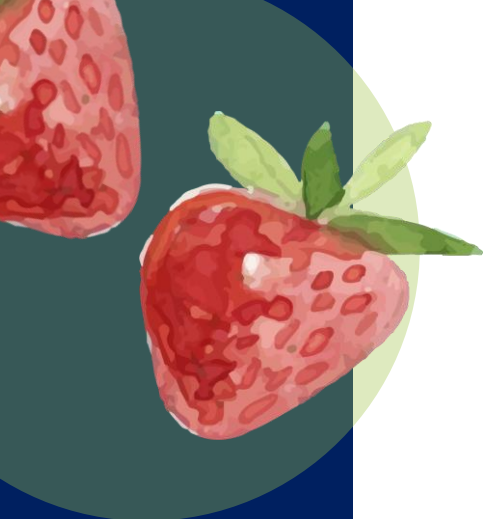
- Outreach is relational!
- We spend time customizing our outreach by sharing information about specific sites + program offerings
- Ensures that outreach is appropriate for individual communities and families
- Creates feedback loops with community members to better serve families in future years



# Engaging, Fun Sites

- We want families to visit meals sites consistently – and we know that kids often come to meals sites for more than just a meal.
- We invest in providing low-cost enrichment activities for sites and heavily promote them:
  - Library bookmobile
  - Sports equipment
  - Low-cost crafts
  - Sprinklers and water balloons
- Some sponsors have developed ongoing relationships with activity vendors who donate time/resources





# Why this works:

- Offering activities alongside meals destigmatizes Summer Meals participation
- Kids get excited about the promise of fun – not the promise of a meal
- Families return to meals sites consistently and have more positive experiences
- Creates opportunities for partnership with local schools and youth program providers to support summer learning



United Way of King County

# What's on the horizon for this year?

- Making sites feel extra welcoming as COVID-19 program flexibilities expire
- Ensuring that trusted messengers are equipped to talk about program rule changes
- Reminding families that Summer Meals exist every year – not just during a pandemic



---

# Q&A



# New Resource!

## Feeding a Crowd – Tips for Congregate Meal Service

Available at: [bestpractices.nokidhungry.org](https://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org)

Click “Latest Resources” on the orange navigation bar!



### FEEDING A CROWD – TIPS FOR CONGREGATE MEAL SERVICE

Requiring children to eat meals onsite can be a challenge in the summer meals program, but it doesn't have to be! This resource provides strategies to make congregate meal service easier for site staff and improve the experience for children and families.

#### Location, Location, Location

Select a desirable location for your site. Consider where kids, teens, and families gather naturally during the summer months. Some ideas:

- Parks and pools
- Recreation centers and playgrounds
- Splash parks
- Libraries

You can also consider places where parents or caregivers might already be going with their children. Be sure to work with managers or owners wherever you consider. If they do not allow an open meal site, consider an adjacent parking lot. Some ideas:

- Pediatrician offices and WIC clinics
- Laundromats
- Popular shopping and grocery stores

**Tip! Have incentives for families that regularly attend. Punch cards with a prize are a great way to maintain participation.**

#### Don't Forget to Decorate!

Make the space welcoming and comfortable for all.

If outside, set up a tent if there is no shade, offer picnic tables or blankets, and provide cold water to all. If inside, let your creativity run wild. Streamers, posters, and balloons add fun to your site. Bean bag chairs? Why not?!

**Tip! Now that your site is camera ready, why not create a photo booth? Encourage families to share photos and include your site information – a fun activity and a promotional opportunity in one!**

# New Resource!

## SFSP & SSO Requirements - Comparison Chart of Usual vs. COVID-19 Waiver Operations

Available at: [bestpractices.nokidhungry.org](https://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org)

Click “Latest Resources” on the orange navigation bar!

### Comparison of Usual Summer Meal Program Provisions vs. Expired Flexibilities Permitted in Response the COVID-19 Pandemic



USDA issued a suite of nationwide waivers in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. **These waivers will not be available for summer 2022 SFSP/SSO operations.** Please follow the link to see the waiver language or review our [nationwide waiver summary chart](#) for the nationwide waivers referenced below. Contact your state agency for more information. This resource was last updated 3/29/2022.

Program	Provision	Usual Program Provisions	Expired COVID-19 Flexibilities
USDA	Waiver Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cannot issue nationwide waivers</li> <li>Cannot approve waiver requests that increase federal costs</li> <li>Cannot approve waiver requests related to the meal pattern / nutritional quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allowed to issue nationwide waivers</li> <li>Allowed to issue or approve waivers that increase federal costs</li> <li>Allowed to issue waivers from the meal pattern requirements if related to supply chain issues caused by COVID-19</li> </ul>
SFSP / SSO	Congregate (Group) Meal Service	Congregate meal service required (children must be served & eat each meal on site in a supervised setting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-congregate meal service allowed (waiver <a href="#">COVID-19 #75</a>)</li> <li>Parent meal pick-up on child's behalf was allowed with verification of eligible child (waiver <a href="#">COVID-19 #76</a>)</li> </ul>
	Meals Reimbursed	Per child per day, up to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breakfast + lunch/supper OR</li> <li>Any one meal + snack</li> </ul> *Different for camps and migrant sites	<b>SAME, except</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sites permitted to serve meals for multiple days at the same time (within usual per child per day limits)</li> </ul>
	Days of Operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows for weekend service and service up to seven days per week</li> <li>Allows for service on holidays during summer break or intersession breaks for students attending year-round schools</li> <li>Service during planned school closures or non-school days during the regular school year (like spring break) is <b>not</b> permitted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Spring 2020 when operators were utilizing SFSP/SSO under the unanticipated school closure provision, service during planned school closures and non-school days was permitted</li> <li>In School Year 2020-2021, serving meals through SFSP/SSO was permitted on any day regardless of school operating status</li> <li>In School Year 2021-2022, schools were permitted to serve meals through SSO on school days and during unanticipated closures. Use of SFSP was limited to unanticipated school closures</li> </ul>

# In Case You Missed It!

## Summer Meals 101: Back to Basics & USDA Update

*Webinar Recording & Slides*

Available at: [bestpractices.nokidhungry.org](https://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org)

*Click “Latest Resources” on the  
orange navigation bar!*





## Additional Resources

[Staffing Up: Strategies for Working Through Labor Shortages and Challenges](#)  
(resource)

[Tips for Staffing Summer Meals Programs](#) (resource)

[Tips for Navigating Supply Chain Disruptions](#) (resource)

[Materials for Communicating with Your School Community](#) (sample language in English and Spanish)

[Rural Communities Leading the Way: Introducing Local Foods to Meal Service](#)  
(resource)

From SNA: [Supply Chain Resources](#) (website)

From USDA: [Planning for a Dynamic School Environment](#) (website)

# School's Out, Food's In!

## *Summer Webinar Series*

**March 30 @3pm EST** – Planning for Summer Meals: Strategies to navigate no-waiver operations

**April 13 @1pm EST** – Reaching Hard to Reach Communities: Leveraging Innovation and Partnership

**May 17 @2pm EST** – Promoting Your Summer Meals Program: Strategies and Tips to Promote Your Summer Meals Program

**June 9 @3pm EST** – **Evaluating and Incorporating Feedback into Your Summer Meals Programs: Tips and Promising Practices**

**July** – Thinking 365: Transitioning Your Summer Meals Program to an Afterschool Program through CACFP At-risk

# School's Out, Food's In!

*Summer Webinar Series*

June 9 @3pm EST

**Evaluating and Incorporating Feedback into  
Your Summer Meals Program**

*Register Today!*





## Stay in Touch!

**Sign up for our newsletter:**

[www.bestpractices.nokidhungry.org/subscribe](http://www.bestpractices.nokidhungry.org/subscribe)

**Visit the CBP website:**

[www.bestpractices.nokidhungry.org](http://www.bestpractices.nokidhungry.org)



**THANK YOU**

**Paige Pokorney, MPH**  
Program Manager,  
Center for Best Practices  
[ppokorney@strength.org](mailto:ppokorney@strength.org)