

## WORKING ACROSS GENERATIONS:

# Connecting Senior Nutrition and Summer Meals

The [Summer Food Service Program](#) (SFSP) provides reimbursements for meals served to kids in low-income areas while school is out. The program is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), administered by state agencies, such as state departments of education, and implemented by public and private organizations, including schools, nonprofits and faith-based organizations. The program is underutilized – only one in seven children who receive a free or reduced price meal during the school year receive summer meals.

As vulnerable populations, seniors and children can both benefit from greater connectivity of nonprofit and government resources. And as government, school and community leaders have worked to expand the program, many communities have engaged the senior nutrition community in a number of ways:

- Partnering with Meals on Wheels programs to provide meals as a summer meals sponsor or vendor
- Promoting summer meals programs to seniors with children in their lives
- Expanding current senior congregate meals programs to include children with SFSP funding

To help define the opportunity for collaboration and promote integration between senior and child hunger, [Meals on Wheels America](#) and [No Kid Hungry Center for Best Practices](#) developed a [Case Study](#) about a Meals on Wheels program that also sponsors Summer Meals.

For senior programs considering expansion to Summer Meals, start by:

- Identifying the level of involvement that builds on your existing strengths and fits within your capacity
- Keeping costs down by using volunteers to the greatest extent possible
- Aligning meal components across the programs to avoid waste
- Looking for opportunities to serve kids on your own, and seeking other partners that can help coordinate efforts and activities (e.g. United Way)
- Connecting to Parks and Recreation Departments for opportunities to reach kids through open sites
- Collaborating with programs that do summer activities (e.g. Americorps or summer school programs) to find places to serve meals at enrolled sites

For child nutrition advocates looking to expand access to Summer Meals, consider:

- Reaching out to your local [Meals on Wheels](#) program and statewide associations to start the conversation
- Identifying senior nutrition programs through your local [Area Agency on Aging](#)
- Enlisting Meals on Wheels programs as a vendor or sponsor
- Leveraging senior nutrition directors' expertise and experience in food service delivery and lessons learned
- Recognizing the time, resource and capacity restraints of your local program

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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