

Share Our Strength Summer Planning Resources

This document contains information about the tactics and activities Share Our Strength recommends for summer programming. It also includes guiding questions and links to online resources to help support summer planning.

Key Acronyms

- CBP – Center for Best Practices
- SFSP – Summer Food Service Program
- SOS – Share Our Strength
- SSO – Seamless Summer Option

Collaborative Planning

Help lead collaborative summer planning meetings with state or local stakeholders (e.g. state agency, sponsors, community organizations, school districts, etc.) to develop and carry out a shared plan for increasing access to summer meals.

Questions to Guide Planning	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are we creating the space to foster local collaboration, engage new and existing champions, and build the community will for increasing access to summer meals? • Does the state agency currently engage sponsors in planning or debrief sessions? Are there opportunities to build-on or further develop these initiatives? • Are there existing collaborative planning or collective impact workgroups active in the community? If so, can we elevate summer meals as a focus area of that group's work? • If no existing group is available, how would we go about establishing a collaborative workgroup for summer meals? Who has the skills and capacity to lead this effort, and who needs to be at the table? • How can we make sure our team has the skills and resources needed to implement a collaborative plan, and to support partners who would seek to do the same? 	
Tactics and Activities	Resources (No Kid Hungry unless stated otherwise)
Survey the community for existing collaborative planning or collective impact coalitions or workgroups. Integrate summer meals planning into existing groups or develop new ones, as appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No Kid Hungry Summer Meals Collaborative Planning Toolkit
Identify or develop individuals or organizations with the skills and capacity to lead a collaborative process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Johns Hopkins University Federal-Local Partnerships Playbook (especially useful for campaigns seated within or closely aligned with state agencies)
Convene a group of diverse stakeholders to engage in collaborative planning to support summer meals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite a diverse group of stakeholders to the table to participate in developing and implementing a collaborative plan. • Develop and affirm a shared purpose for the workgroup • Define a limited number of program goals to achieve stated purpose, and decide upon specific action items to achieve those goals. • Adopt metrics to measure progress toward goals. • Assign specific, time-limited tasks to group members that reflect agreed-upon action items in support of program goals. • Project management (ongoing): Follow up with individuals and organizations re: their assigned tasks between meetings. Goal: Provide support and accountability to group members. • Evaluate progress based on established metrics: Use findings to affirm or modify existing goals as a basis for future planning and action. 	Related literature: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stanford Social Innovation Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Collective Impact ○ The Power of Convening for Social Impact ○ Evaluating Community Change ○ No Kid Hungry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Collective Impact Case Study

Support and Retain Strong Program Sponsors

Questions to Guide Planning	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can we do to support and retain strong sponsors in the program and increase their overall satisfaction? • How can sponsors learn from each other to improve their summer programs? • What resources do we (or the community) have to build sponsor capacity? • What organizations that serve kids could become sponsors, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Schools, At-Risk sponsors, and local governments that don't currently offer summer programs? ○ Long standing sites that could become sponsors? ○ Other trusted, high-capacity organizations that have a mission to serve kids? 	
Tactics and Activities	Resources (No Kid Hungry unless stated otherwise)
Contact program sponsors individually to share resources and offer support (optimal timing: spring and fall).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strategies for Sponsor Retention ○ Proactive Planning for Sponsors
Host a state summer meals webinar series and/or promote the Center for Best Practices "School's Out, Food's In" webinar series and other trainings presented by USDA and the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ USDA Summer Food Service Program: Webinars & Videos ○ Subscribe to the CBP 'What's New' newsletter to receive updates about the 'School's Out, Food's In' webinar series and other trainings provided by partner organizations
Support the state agency in providing a high-quality training for sponsors (optimal timing: late winter or early spring).	
Convene quarterly regional sponsor council meetings to share best practices, distribute technical assistance resources, develop shared goals, and promote opportunities for mentorship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>NEW: No Kid Hungry Regional Sponsor Council Toolkit</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ask your Field Team representative for a copy of this resource
Encourage existing sponsors, especially schools, to operate all federal Child Nutrition Programs for which they are eligible; especially CACFP afterschool meals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Schools As Nutrition Hubs: The Business Savvy Strategy ○ Make Your School A Nutrition Hub (video)
Work with sponsors to identify administrative barriers to program participation, and with the state agency to alleviate those barriers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Afterschool Meals & Summer Meals Comparison ○ Streamlining & Cross-Promoting SFSP & CACFP
Recruit new organizations to become SFSP and/or SSO sponsors, especially school districts. If school districts are unable or unwilling to become sponsors, consider other community partners with the institutional and administrative capacity to sponsor programs, including: healthcare facilities, municipal government, and senior centers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Engage Community Partners ○ USDA: Recruiting Sites & Sponsors

Increase Participation at Existing Sites

Questions to Guide Planning	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we improve existing sites to better meet the needs of families and encourage greater and more frequent participation? • What are the right messages and messengers to help kids and families understand and choose to take advantage of the opportunity to attend a site? • What roles can schools play to increase awareness of programs and encourage participation? • What more can sponsors and sites do to extend the length of programs or help kids identify new sites when one closes? 	
Tactics and Activities	Resources (No Kid Hungry unless stated otherwise)
Encourage program sponsors and sites to increase the number of operating days and/or the number of meals served each day. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the service of two meals during each operating day (breakfast and lunch/supper). • Encourage sponsors and sites to operate on weekend days. • Encourage sponsors and sites to add additional days or weeks of meal service. • Explore opportunities to leverage volunteers to increase capacity at sites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ United Way California Capital Region: How to Recruit, Train, and Manage Volunteers to Support the SFSP
Encourage sponsors to optimize meal service and improve meal quality to boost interest and satisfaction in the program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Optimizing Summer & Afterschool Meal Service ○ FRAC: A How-to Guide for Summer Food Sponsors on Purchasing High-Quality Summer Meals

Tactics and Activities	Resources (No Kid Hungry unless stated otherwise)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share best practices information with sponsors to improve meal quality at sites. • Challenge sponsors to commit to one or more of the following actions to improve meal quality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Transition from cold to hot meals. ○ Conduct and evaluate taste testing. ○ Introduce local foods and highlight local producers. ○ Increase fresh fruit and vegetable offerings. ○ Conduct a survey or focus group to evaluate child and/or parent satisfaction with meals. • Encourage sponsors to work closely with vendors to enhance the quality of food served at meal sites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Vermont FEED: A Guide to Taste Testing Local Food in Schools</i> ○ <i>FRAC: Fresh From the Farm: Using Local Foods in the Afterschool and Summer Nutrition Programs</i> ○ <i>USDA: Tools for Schools: Offering Fruits & Vegetables</i>
<p>Get kids excited about attending SFSP sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that activities are offered alongside meals at all sites. • Implement a media strategy to promote SFSP sites and events. • Provide kids with incentives when they come to the sites for meals (e.g. punch cards for prizes after a certain number of visits). • Identify opportunities to engage youth and elevate their perspectives to support program design and implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation and Share Our Strength's No Kid Hungry Youth Engagement Toolkit</i> ○ <i>Support Program Excellence</i> ○ <i>Recruit and Retain Sites and Sponsors</i> ○ <i>USDA: Innovative Strategies for Increasing Participation</i> ○ <i>USDA: 'Summer Food, Summer Moves' Resource Toolkit</i>
<p>Make sure that children and families know where summer meals sites are located.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market the locations of existing SFSP sites at places where families spend time: community centers, health clinics, supermarkets, houses of worship, and through community canvassing. • Engage schools as partners in promoting SFSP site locations and meal service times to children and families (e.g. robo-calls, backpack flyers). Schools have a legal requirement to conduct outreach promoting sites. • Mail postcards to families participating in other social assistance programs (e.g. SNAP, WIC) advertising tools to find a nearby SFSP site. • Encourage sites that cease operation during the summer to provide information to children and families about additional sites that continue to operate in the area. • Engage elected leaders, superintendents and local personalities to promote summer meals through multiple channels, including public service announcements (PSAs). • Promote texting and other site locator resources in all materials and announcements. • Explore opportunities for local retailers and public utility providers to help promote the availability of summer meals to families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Promote Summer Meals</i> ○ <i>Summer Message Playbook</i> ○ <i>Summer Meals Outreach Resource Toolkit</i> ○ <i>Mayor's Checklist</i> ○ <i>Legislator's Checklist</i> ○ <i>Governor's Checklist</i> ○ <i>National League of Cities: Five Ways Cities Can Promote Afterschool & Summer Meals Programs</i>

Increase the Number of SFSP and/or SSO Sites

Questions to Guide Planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well are low-income children served by the program in its current state? • Where are the kids in need who we are not yet reaching – and how can we use data to answer this question? (use findings to prioritize expansion efforts) • Of these underserved areas, where can we expect to see the greatest return on investment (ROI) for each dollar spent to increase the number of meals served at a new site? • What community assets (human, financial, or capital) are available to support summer meals programming in communities that are currently underserved? How can we leverage those assets to increase service? • If existing assets aren't sufficient to expand services, what steps can we take to procure additional resources?

- Is there an opportunity to implement one or more mobile meals strategies (fixed route, Hub & Spoke, demand response) to reach children in underserved areas?

Tactics and Activities	Resources (No Kid Hungry unless stated otherwise)
<p>Use data and targeting to identify underserved areas in need of new sites. Specifically, consider adding sites at the following locations: libraries, healthcare facilities (e.g. hospitals, WIC and community care clinics), public housing (HUD & USDA Rural Development) and faith-based organizations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Averaged Eligibility Map ○ USDA Capacity Builder ○ Engage Community Partners ○ Medical University of South Carolina: Kids Eat Free <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Landing page with multiple resources for healthcare institutions seeking to implement summer meals ○ USDA: Summer Meals and Libraries ○ USDA: Summer Meals and Rural Development ○ USDA: Summer Meals and Faith-Based Organizations
<p>Identify community assets needed to support successful site development, and conduct an environmental assessment of potential site locations (e.g. access to water, bathrooms, shelter, etc.). Work collaboratively with new or existing partners to leverage assets needed for expansion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Collaborative Planning Toolkit: Engaging Key Stakeholders ○ USDA: Building Partners for Summer Food
<p>Challenge existing sponsors to take on new sites or support site expansion. Specifically, look to schools as natural partners in sponsoring community programs (Schools as Nutrition Hubs).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Schools As Nutrition Hubs
<p>Provide equipment necessary to open or expand summer meals sites (e.g. coolers, hot boxes, etc.) and implement a mobile meals strategy (as needed).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mobile Meals Toolkit ○ USDA: Mobile Meal Delivery