

Developing an Afterschool Meals Outreach Plan

Increasing participation in the Afterschool Meal Program requires proactive planning and partnership. Developing a strong and cohesive outreach plan is an important way to increase participation, and the summer months are the perfect time to recruit afterschool sites, ensure existing sites will be returning, engage new partners, and increase awareness. Detailed below are things to consider when developing an afterschool meals outreach plan, as well as best practices shared by Florida Impact, Children's Hunger Alliance, and the City of Seattle.

This resource is a recap of a previous Meals Matter series event. Listen to the recording [here](#).

Things to Consider:

- The Afterschool Meal Program operates through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), which allows schools, local government agencies, and private nonprofits to serve a meal and a snack to children after school, on weekends, and during school holidays. Meals and snacks can be served to children up to age 18 (and 19 if their birthday is during the school year) at sites offering educational and enrichment activities, such as schools, recreation centers, YMCAs, and Boys & Girls Clubs.
- Thousands of afterschool programs located in low-income communities provide food after school through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Many are just serving a snack, even though they are eligible to serve supper. One of the simplest strategies to expand participation in the Afterschool Meal Program is to transition programs currently only serving snack to serving suppers. If the program extends long enough, both supper and a snack can be offered.
- Many afterschool programs serve essentially the same group of children during the school year as they do during the summer months. To ensure consistent access to nutrition all year long, targeted outreach should be conducted to bring summer meal sites into the Afterschool Supper Program when the school year begins, and afterschool sites into the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), when the school year ends.
- There are many types of organizations within communities that would make great afterschool meal sites, such as libraries, parks and recreation centers, faith-based organizations, and more. In developing an outreach plan as a sponsor or an anti-hunger advocate working to expand access to afterschool meals, identifying those groups and reaching out to them is an important way to increase sites and by extension increase the number of children receiving afterschool meals. Statewide afterschool networks also can help sponsors and anti-hunger advocates identify and connect with afterschool programs that receive state or local funding that may be eligible to participate in the Afterschool Meal Program.

Making it Work: Children's Hunger Alliance (Sponsor)

Children's Hunger Alliance (CHA) sponsors over 250 afterschool meal program sites across Ohio and is the only sponsor providing meals to unaffiliated sites — meaning programs that are legally distinct from the sponsoring organization — in the state. Serving meals at unaffiliated sites is an important expansion strategy because it allows sites that have limited administrative capacity to participate. Children Hunger Alliance's outreach plan includes:

- **Targeting federal and state afterschool program funding sources:** In order to expand the number of meal sites it serves CHA targets outreach to programs receiving funding from the 21st

Century Community Learning Centers Program (CCLC). Many 21st CCLC programs receive a decision regarding funding in the summer, so it is the perfect time to reach out. Advocates and sponsors should research the federal and state funding in their state to ensure all publicly funded programs are being connected to the Afterschool Meal Program.

- **Staying in touch with existing sites:** As the school year wraps up, CHA distributes [Memorandum of Intent](#) forms to all existing sites. These forms allow CHA to track sites satisfaction with their experience, and determine if they will participate again in the fall. This allows CHA to focus their outreach on new areas and reduces the amount of administrative work required to track returning sites.

Making it Work: The City of Seattle (*Sponsor*)

While the City of Seattle has been a sponsor of the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) for many years, they recently began operating the Afterschool Meal Program. The successful launch can be attributed to two tactics:

- **Using city mapping and data tools:** Many cities have access to extensive data and mapping resources. In Seattle, the city uses their available data and GIS resources to target expansion efforts to the most underserved areas.
- **Working with libraries:** Libraries are a great fit for serving both summer and afterschool meals, as they often provide programming and a safe place for children and teens to gather when the school day ends and on weekends and school holidays. The City of Seattle launched their Afterschool Meal Program by onboarding three libraries to participate and continues to recruit additional libraries to participate.

Making it Work: Florida Impact (*Anti-Hunger Organization*)

Florida Impact is a statewide organization focused on providing advocacy, policy, training, outreach, and technical assistance. Florida Impact's afterschool meals outreach work focuses on two areas:

- **Peer mentoring:** Recognizing the value in having peers connect with each other on the program, Florida Impact developed an Afterschool Meal Program project that pairs experienced school districts providing afterschool meals to school districts that would benefit from more mentorship. After connecting the two school districts based on experience, Florida Impact provides facilitation and technical assistance before the districts begin to work together on their own.
- **Creating resources and providing technical assistance:** Florida Impact supports sponsors efforts to expand participation by working to reduce administrative burdens, expanding awareness, tracking and analyzing data, and by sharing information on the Afterschool Meal Program at state conferences and partner meetings. Florida Impact also created a [website](#) dedicated to afterschool meals expansion.

Additional Resources

- Listen to the *Afterschool Meals Matter: Developing an Afterschool Meals Outreach Plan* recording [here](#). (May 16, 2019)
- FRAC [Afterschool Nutrition Programs Page](#)
- USDA Food and Nutrition Service [Afterschool Meals Program Page](#)
- Florida Impact's Afterschool Meals Matter [website](#)
- Afterschool Alliance – [State Out-of-School Time Networks](#)