



## February: Setting the Stage for Success

### As a sponsor...

Now is the time to plan for the logistical operations of your sponsorship for the Summer Nutrition Programs. Consider the factors impacting your site staff and their trainings, the meals you will be serving, and the programming and activities you will be offering the children who come to your sites.

Things to consider:

1. **Site Staff Training** – It is important to offer comprehensive and continuous training to your site staff. Be sure to have all logistics planned ahead of time, including meal count requests, reporting methods, and site maintenance. Express your expectations to each site and the value of their work in bringing summer meals to your communities.
  - Consider: How will I train my site staff? Will you offer one-on-one trainings for site supervisors? Will you offer multiple training dates? How will you address individual questions and concerns? Will you schedule check-ins with your site staff throughout the summer?
2. **Meal Production and Delivery Methods** – Establish early where your meals will be produced and how they will be delivered to each site. Consider whether there will be any flexibility in delivery times. Some of these factors should be included in your agreement with your vendor.
  - Consider: Will my delivery and production methods of the food be different or the same from last year? Consider the delivery and production methods you used last summer and whether any changes will be implemented for this summer. Discuss these options with your vendor and include in your agreement, if applicable.
3. **Meal Quality** – The availability of higher quality and appealing food will most likely be more nutritious for the children you will serve, and also can help attract the children and families to your site.
  - How can I focus on improving meal quality by writing it into my bid and working with my vendor? Review your evaluation of your meal quality from last summer and decide how the meals can be improved upon. If you are finding a new vendor, write into your invitation for bid the specifications you wish to achieve in the food you will purchase from the vendor. Review your vendor's menus early to ensure variety and the availability of culturally appropriate foods.
4. **Programming and Activities** – Review your evaluation of the programming and activities offered at your sites last year. Consider their popularity with the children



participating and whether they helped maintain the participation at your sites and keep the children engaged in the programs. Always plan on introducing any new and exciting activities to keep the children interested in the programs.

- What programming from last year do I want to repeat? Consider repeating any programming or activities that were especially popular. Did you have any contests or tournaments the children were involved in? Did you have special guests from the community come visit the site and engage or entertain the children, such as local fire fighters or police officers? Some children may already be planning on returning to your sites because of the activities they enjoyed last summer.
- What new programming would I like to introduce? What ideas have you brainstormed since last summer? Are there any ideas you heard other sponsors or sites in the community were doing that were particularly successful? Have you offered any field trips or special family events in the past?
- Will I be incorporating nutrition education this year? The Summer Nutrition Programs provide excellent opportunities for nutrition education. You may be planning on incorporating new, healthier foods into your meals this summer. By offering nutrition education, children can learn about the foods they are eating and the importance of maintaining a healthy diet. Nutrition education also can help encourage children to try new foods.

### **As a supporter...**

With summer quickly approaching, time is running out to get new sponsors on the program, intervene to prevent previous sponsors from dropping out, and ensure that all eligible communities in your area will have sites. Your advocacy efforts should be focused on all of these areas at this time to ensure a successful summer with the Summer Nutrition Programs.

**Eligible Areas** – Review your gap analysis and determine whether the gaps in service you previously identified will be a part of the programs this summer. Consider where you should now target your efforts to ensure that sites will exist there.

- Have I identified eligible areas that need additional sponsors or sites? Are there any sponsors planning on serving those areas? Do they need assistance in managing multiple sites? Are there groups in those areas who have not yet considered becoming a sponsor?

**Returning Sponsors** – Contact the state agency to request a list of returning sponsors who have contacted them and confirmed that they will be sponsoring again.

- Have I contacted previous sponsors to determine whether they are returning? If you previously worked with sponsors that you do not see on the list provided by the state agency, contact them and inquire whether or not they will be returning. If they are still deciding or have decided not to sponsor again, immediately engage them. Find out the reason for them choosing not to sponsor this summer and suggest ways that you can



assist them in addressing any barriers or concerns they have based on their experience from previous summers.

- What assistance can I provide to returning sponsors in their planning for this summer? Connect with returning sponsors who you previously worked with or are interested in working with and determine how you can assist them in their planning. Offer to be a part of their outreach plans and site recruitment.

**New Sponsors** – Whether you directly recruited any new sponsors or you have found out about new sponsors in your area, connect with them to see how you can help.

**Have I contacted potential sponsors and are they applying to become a sponsor?** Offer to assist new sponsors with their application and work with your state agency to address any technical concerns they may have in setting up their program. Make sure new sponsors are aware of your state agency's trainings and its deadlines.