



January: Start Developing Action Plans for Summer Nutrition Programs

As a sponsor...

Now that you have evaluated last summer and set your goals for next summer, it is now time to start preparing for this year's Summer Nutrition Programs. Creating an action plan for each step you must complete during your preparation will keep you on track towards a successful summer and help you in achieving your greatest impact yet. Convene meetings with all relevant stakeholders for your plan to incorporate their ideas into its development and secure their participation for the upcoming months.

State Sponsor Training – New and returning sponsors must attend the training offered by the state agency. This training provides critical information and any changes to the program from the previous year. It is also the ideal time to ask questions and get clarification on program policies.

- When is the state sponsor training? Find out when the training is offered. Often several dates will be available so plan which training you and your team will attend.

Returning Sites – Communicate with your sites from last summer about whether they are interested in participating again this summer. Discuss any operational changes, staffing or volunteer plans and key dates such as site training.

- When will I know which sites from last summer will be available for this summer? Establish a process for how sites will commit to participating this summer under your sponsorship. This is especially important if you plan on adding additional sites throughout the summer so you can track the growth of your sponsorship and ensure your capacity to manage the number of sites coming onto the program.

Finding a Vendor – Whether you plan on using your vendor from last summer or have decided to find a new vendor, allow yourself plenty of time to complete this process. Engage your state agency to determine if you have to put the contract out for bid. Consider whether or not you were pleased with the nutrition quality and appeal of the meals that you received from your vendor. If you were not pleased, you can add in more requirements around quality and appeal. Remember if you put out an invitation to bid, you must choose the lowest price and most responsive, so it is crucial to be clear about what you want. If looking for a new vendor, work with your state agency to prepare your invitation for bid. If you are using your vendor from last summer, you should review your previous contract and agreement and decide what changes can be

implemented this summer. If you have a multi-year contract, consider what changes you may want to implement for future summers based on your current experiences.

- When will I put out my invitation for bid and sign an agreement with my vendor? Work with your state agency to determine an appropriate timeline for when you will put out your invitation for bid to find a new vendor or when you will have completed your contract negotiations and be ready to sign an agreement with your previous vendor.

Conducting Outreach– Establish a plan for how you will advertise your sites, bring awareness to the availability of meals to the communities you will be serving, and to enlist any community partners you will be using to provide programming and activities.

- When will my outreach materials be ready? If you are ordering special fliers or door hangers to be printed, set a date for when these will be ready for dissemination. Determine how long it would take to order additional materials if you need them.
- When will I start disseminating materials? Establish a deadline for when your outreach will begin. Plan your outreach activities in phases so that momentum around your sites and the Summer Nutrition Programs in general builds the closer you get to the start of summer.
- How will I disseminate the materials? Will I use volunteers? Will we go door-to-door or give information to local businesses and schools to disseminate? Will we advertise in local newsletters and post on local online communities? Consider all methods possible when deciding how your materials will be disseminated.
- Which organizations will I partner with? Will you be working with the schools to get information to families? Can the local community centers and libraries advertise your sites? Will local health clinics, social services agencies, or other business help give out your materials to their clients or customers?

As a supporter...

After evaluating last summer and setting goals for this summer, begin to put your plans into action. Establish deadlines for when each of your tasks associated with the responsibilities you are committing to will be completed. Plan on continuously assessing whether or not each role you are committing to is being fulfilled (i.e. conducting outreach, coordinating trainings, recruiting sponsors and sites, etc.).

Building Partnerships – Partnerships are essential to providing effective advocacy around the Summer Nutrition Programs. By partnering with a variety of state and local agencies and organizations, your efforts will reach a much wider audience and the results could be a tremendous expansion of the programs throughout eligible communities.

- Who is currently working on the Summer Nutrition Programs and how can I help coordinate our efforts with them? Many groups may already be working on the Summer Nutrition Programs in your area. It is imperative to connect with these groups early to coordinate your efforts to produce the greatest impact possible. For California, consider especially connecting with the California Summer Meal Coalition, the California

Association of Food Banks, California Food Policy Advocates, the Partnership for Children and Youth, and the California After School Network. Ask these state partners who is working on the programs in your area and how to contact them. Also ask how you can help assist in any expansion plans the state agency might be working on and how you can help any local groups recruit new sponsors and sites. Find out when any outreach materials will be available from these groups and if you can help distribute them locally.

- Who is currently working with or serving the families and children who could benefit from the Summer Nutrition Programs? Connect with health and social service agencies to target your outreach and cross-promote one another's services. Work with local housing authorities to help assess the need in communities and where sites should be located to be easily accessed by the children of the communities.

Conducting Outreach – Beyond coordinating efforts with state groups, you can also assist in the outreach efforts of local sponsors and sites. Ask the state agency which organizations are planning on sponsoring the program this summer and see how you can be a part of their outreach plan.

- When will my outreach materials be ready and when will I start disseminating them? If you are making your own outreach materials to bring awareness to the availability of the programs in general or if you are assisting sponsors in advertising their sites, establish a deadline for when your materials will be ready and when you will begin distributing the materials throughout the communities you serve.