

ALASKA



FOOD COALITION

February 2013

Thanks to the strong support of our partners from state agencies, schools, advocacy groups and faith- and community-based organizations, access to healthy meals during summer is a reality for millions of children in need.

- Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack

Child Nutrition Programs

Federal Child Nutrition Programs provide healthy and nutritious meals to kids across the country. Alaska's Child Nutrition Programs – including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) - commit to help school districts and other program sponsors provide quality nutrition programs assuring that our families are well-nourished, healthy, and our children are ready to learn.¹ This whitepaper highlights the history and key legislation associated with the Child Nutrition Programs, as well as offering information on how organizations can get involved and help feed kids.

Key Legislation in Child Nutrition Programs

- Congress created the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) after an investigation into the health of young men rejected in the World War II draft showed a connection between physical deficiencies and childhood malnutrition.²
- Congress enacted the 1946 National School Lunch Act as a “measure of national security, to safeguard the health and well-being of the Nation’s children.”³
- In 1968 a pilot program was created, which covered meal gaps for kids in child care and during the summer. In 1975 this program was separated and authorized as the Child Care Food Program (later CACFP) and the SFSP.⁴
- In 1998, Congress expanded the NSLP to include cash reimbursement for snacks served in certain afterschool educational and enrichment programs.⁵
- The 2010 Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act authorizes funding and sets policy for USDA's core child nutrition programs, including NSLP, School Breakfast Program, Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), SFSP and CACFP.⁶

Opportunities with the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

The SFSP for children is a federally funded program operated nationally by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and administered by the State of Alaska Department of Education & Early Development. The state agency reimburses sponsors for meals served at approved feeding sites

¹ Child Nutrition Program, State of Alaska. <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/cnp/>

² Program history and data, School Nutrition Association. <http://www.schoolnutrition.org/Content.aspx?id=1872>

³ National School Lunch background and development, USDA. http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/lunch/AboutLunch/ProgramHistory_5.htm

⁴ Program history and data, School Nutrition Association. <http://www.schoolnutrition.org/Content.aspx?id=1872>

⁵ Child Nutrition Programs: Legislative History Highlights, School Nutrition Association. <http://www.schoolnutrition.org/Content.aspx?id=2374>

⁶ Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, USDA. http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/Legislation/CNR_2010.htm

(such as a school, a park, or a non-profit center) in low-income areas to children 18 years and under. Meals are either prepared on-site or purchased from a vendor. Sometimes school districts agree to provide meals to sites for a fee.

There are many ways that organizations can help income eligible children gain access to nutritious meals in the summer. Interested organizations do not need to have any type of organized summer program, and may operate strictly as a sponsor that just feeds kids at an approved feeding site. Some other possibilities for organizations to be involved in SFSP include:

- Becoming a program sponsor
- Becoming a program site under an existing sponsor
- Preparing and selling meals to other sponsors
- Providing activities, volunteers, and nutrition education materials to local sites
- Sharing information on the SFSP with others in your community
- Escorting small children to and from feeding sites

Requirement to Participate:

- Serve meals that meet minimum meal pattern requirements
- Follow meal counting and claiming procedures
- Complete required paperwork requirements
- Attend mandatory training in March
- Deadline for 2013 SFSP applications is June 15

The SFSP Program is very flexible and can be very easy to implement; that said, many sites find it more convenient to be sponsored by another entity offering this program, such as Food Bank of Alaska or The Children's Lunchbox. These organizations sponsor sites interested in feeding kids through the SFSP program and assume a large portion of the paperwork and other responsibility for the program. If going through a sponsor, the best part is that most sites don't have to take individual income applications; any child or teen (up to age 18) that shows up gets served. As a sponsored site, very minimal paperwork is required by the site manager, and no paperwork for participants is required.

For more information about the SFSP, contact:

- Veronica Lietz, Program Specialist, SFSP, State of Alaska: veronica.lietz@alaska.gov, 465-4788

-or-

- Dynasti Otis, Child Nutrition Manager, Food Bank of Alaska: dotis@foodbankofalaska.org, 222-3107
- Lynette Ortolano, Program Director, The Children's Lunchbox: tcl.lynette@yahoo.com, 297-5625

For more information about the CACFP, contact:

- Ann-Marie Martin, Alaska CACFP Specialist: annmarie.martin@alaska.gov, 465-8711

For more information about the NSLP, contact:

- Beth Seitz, National School Lunch Program Specialist, State of Alaska: elizabeth.seitz@alaska.gov, 465-8709

Copies of Alaska Food Coalition White Papers are available online:

<http://www.alaskafood.org/whitepapers.shtml>

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