

Community Champions Guide for
**AFTERSCHOOL & SUMMER
YOUTH MEALS**

through the USDA Food
and Nutrition Service Programs

TOOLKIT:



2018

BECOMING A COMMUNITY CHAMPION

ARE YOU:

- Looking for ways to help improve your community?
- Passionate about ending child hunger in your community?
- Interested in connecting a youth group to free afterschool or summer meals?

*If you checked any or all the boxes above, you can become a **Community Champion** and help make a difference in your community!*



Anyone can Become a Community Champion!

Parents, guardians, teachers, students or concerned community members can help bring and expand afterschool meals (CACFP) or summer meals (SFSP) for youth ages 18 and under.

The **Community Champions Guide** provides the following information to help empower community members in the fight against child hunger by implementing or increasing access to afterschool and summer meals.

To be eligible for **CACFP**, an afterschool program must provide care for children after school, on weekends, holidays, or school vacations during the school year. This program must operate in your community where 50% of children are eligible for free or reduced-price meals, and provide

regularly scheduled enrichment or educational activities (e.g., homework tutoring, music lessons, arts and crafts, etc.).

To be eligible for **SFSP**, the site must provide supervision for children during meal service throughout the summer months when school is out (e.g., June-August). The site must also be located in a community where 50% of children are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Summer meals can take place at playgrounds, parks, churches, recreation centers, or other places where youth congregate.

For additional information about how community organizations can become a meals site or sponsor afterschool and/or summer meals, please refer to the toolkits that accompany the San Diego Hunger Coalition's Hunger Free Kids Report.



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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Across the U.S., more than 13 million children live in food insecure households. This means 1 in 6 children live in a family that does not always have enough food for an active and healthy life.¹ Unfortunately, the number of children who live in food insecure households in San Diego County is 1 in 5, with 505,381 children (2016-2017) receiving free or reduced-price meals (FRPM) at school.² Out of the 505,381 children enrolled in FRPM, 69% of them are children of color.³

1 in 6 children live in a family that does not always have enough food for an active and healthy life

Ensuring that all households with children in underserved communities have access to healthy and nutritious food is especially important during their early years of childhood. Numerous studies show nutrition to be crucial for a child's physical and social-emotional development. Without consistent access to healthy and nutritious foods, children are at risk of developing anemia, asthma, and a weaker immune system, among many other physical-related issues.⁴ Food insecurity can also impact a child's social-emotional development by deteriorating their mental health (e.g. depression and anxiety) and increasing their risk of developing behavioral and emotional problems.⁵

In addition to physical and social-emotional issues, a lack of consistent access to healthy and nutritious food impacts a child's ability to be fully engaged and focused on daily activities. Throughout the day, many of these children may depend on free or reduced-price meals served at school to relieve their hunger and focus on their schoolwork. However, when school is out, hunger is not. Whether it's after school hours or the summer months, children need consistent access to healthy and nutritious foods to ensure healthy development.

Fortunately, increasing access to nutritious foods during after school hours or the summer months can be made possible through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service Programs. To fill in the hunger gap for youth living in underserved communities, the USDA has developed two federal nutrition programs, the **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)** and the **Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)**. To be eligible for CACFP, or afterschool meals, the afterschool program must provide care during afterschool hours, on weekends, holidays, or school vacations during the school year. The program must also operate in a community where 50% of children are eligible for FRPM, and provide regularly scheduled enrichment or educational activities (e.g. homework tutoring, music lessons, and arts and crafts).⁶ To be eligible for SFSP, or summer meals, a meal site must operate in a community

where 50% of children are eligible for FRPM, and have the ability to supervise children during meal service.⁷

This Community Champions Guide provides information to help empower community members in the fight against child hunger by implementing or increasing access to afterschool and summer meals. The guide sheds light on the different ways a Community Champion can get involved in their local afterschool or summer programs, and encourage support for reimbursable meals. This document also provide step-by-step information on how Community Champions can determine if their neighborhood is eligible for afterschool and summer meals, and how to introduce these meal programs into their community. Lastly, this document highlights information and resources that can further help community members champion afterschool and summer meals in their communities. Overall, this guide is part of a collaborative research and planning effort to end hunger in San Diego County through the Hunger Free Kids Report. The report is a first-of-its-kind analysis of the region's implementation of federally funded child nutrition programs by both school districts and nonprofits. For additional information about how community organizations can become a meal site or sponsor afterschool and/or summer meals, please refer to the toolkits that accompany the San Diego Hunger Coalition's Hunger Free Kids Report.

II. INTRODUCTION TO KEY TERMS



Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP): A federally funded program by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) that provides nutritious foods to children and adults.

At-Risk Afterschool Meal Program: A type of afterschool child nutrition program under CACFP, that provides reimbursements for snacks and meals served by educational or enrichment programs in areas where at least 50% of students are eligible for free and reduced-price meals.

Community-Based Organization (CBO): Nonprofit groups that work at a local level to improve life for residents.

Community Champion: A person who builds on the knowledge of their local community to help improve it.

Community Stakeholder: Refers to anyone who is affected, or could be affected, by a new program or service. Stakeholders can be individuals, groups, organizations, government officials, businesses, or anyone with a stake or interest.

Free and Reduced-Price Meals (FRPM): A federally reimbursable school meal served to children who meet the income eligibility guidelines.

Meal: An afterschool or summer meal can be a reimbursable breakfast, lunch, or supper meal. A lunch or supper meal is similar to the nutritional content and calories of school lunch and include these five components: milk, grain, protein, and two servings of fruit and vegetables. A breakfast meal includes the following three components: milk, fruit or vegetable, and grains. It is common for meal sites to offer one reimbursable meal afterschool, and two reimbursable meals during the summer. *(For more details, see appendix A)*

Meal Site: An afterschool or summer program located at a school or community site that provides organized educational activities and care for youth. Examples may include: schools, recreation centers, playgrounds, parks, churches, community centers, day camps, housing projects, migrant centers, and on Indian reservations.

◆ **Open Meal Site:** Are meal sites that serve snacks and/or meals to all children in the community who drop-in.

◆ **Closed Meal Site:** Are meal sites that only serve snacks and/or meals to enrolled children.

◆ **Camp Meal Site:** Are summer meal sites that only receive payments for the meals served to children who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals.

School Food Services Director: A professional who possesses knowledge of child nutrition and among many tasks, oversees menu planning and operations for meal programs within a school district.

Snack: A snack is an alternative source of nutrition for afterschool programs that is also reimbursable through the federal CACFP. The nutritional content and calories of a snack is less than that of a full meal, and only requires two of the following five components: milk, grain, protein, fruit, and vegetable.

Sponsor Agency: Public or private institutions that handle the financial, administrative, and operational aspects of the federally funded program. Examples of CACFP sponsors include public or private nonprofit school food authorities, public or private nonprofit colleges or universities, units of local, county, municipal, state, or federal governments, or any other type of tax-exempt private nonprofit organizations.⁸

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP): A federally funded program by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) that provides nutritious foods to youth ages 18 and under during the summer months (June–August).

III. REDUCING CHILD HUNGER IN YOUR COMMUNITY

As a trusted resource in your community, you are the perfect champion to introduce and expand the **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)** and **Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)** to your area! CACFP and SFSP are federal nutrition programs that help provide healthy meals and snacks to children who are at risk of hunger. The availability of free meals

is also an incentive for children to participate in enrichment programs, which means children are not only well-fed, but in a safe environment and engaged in educational and recreational activities.

Recognizing that no one knows their community better than the community members themselves, we want you to have the tools necessary to increase

access to healthy food in your neighborhood. The purpose of this toolkit is to inform you about CACFP and SFSP and the different ways you can connect your local afterschool and summer programs to free meals. We hope you will join us in the fight against hunger by becoming a partner of the San Diego Hunger Coalition and a Community Champion for afterschool and summer meals!

IV. CONNECTING WITH YOUR LOCAL AFTERSCHOOL / SUMMER PROGRAM

As a champion, there are many ways you can connect with your community's afterschool and summer programs. Below is a list of action items and opportunities to encourage support for reimbursable meals. *(To find information about how to find local afterschool programs see appendix B)*

VOLUNTEER

If there is an afterschool or summer program in your community that doesn't have at least 25 youth in their program, you can help the program qualify for free meals by helping them organize enticing activities to bring more youth to the program.

Examples of youth enrichment activities may include but are not limited to:

- ◆ Tutoring
- ◆ Student interest clubs
- ◆ Dancing troupe
- ◆ Athletics
- ◆ And more!

SPREAD THE WORD

Promote CACFP and SFSP meals in your community

- ◆ Put up flyers and posters with information on summer and afterschool programs to help families find nearby sites.
- ◆ Possible places to promote youth meals include: schools, nearby clinics, libraries, community centers, PTA meetings, and places of worship

Apart from promoting information in print, you can also promote it online via email or social media. *(for social media templates, see appendix C)*

FUNDRAISE

Visit your local meal site and ask how you may help with fundraising efforts.



V. INCREASING PARTICIPATION FOR AFTERSCHOOL / SUMMER MEALS

If an afterschool or summer meal program already exists in your community, there may be an opportunity to increase meal participation by many different strategies. Here are a few suggestions that have been successful:

- ◆ Move from snacks to supper for afterschool meals through CACFP (Afterschool meals)
- ◆ Become an open site to all children in the community (Afterschool/Summer meals)
- ◆ Serve on the weekends and/or holiday breaks (Afterschool meals)
- ◆ Expand the program to additional places where youth congregate (Afterschool/Summer meals)
- ◆ Improve marketing and outreach strategies (Afterschool/Summer meals)
- ◆ Expand to after school youth athletic programs (Afterschool meals)
- ◆ Incorporate culturally appropriate foods into the menu (Afterschool/Summer meals)

Once you have identified a suggestion that can help increase meal participation at your community's afterschool program, reach out to the supervisor, team lead, and/or manager. If your local afterschool program takes place at a school, contact the school's food services director.



SCENARIO 1: Moving from Snacks to Supper through CACFP

Imagine that the school bell has finally rung and you, a 16 year-old boy, are ready to dash towards the cafeteria to grab your snack before heading to your afterschool robotics club. The last time you had a full meal was around 11 am so you quickly devour your snack – yogurt, pretzels, and an apple. However, one hour into robotics, you begin to feel your stomach growl and start daydreaming about your next meal instead of paying attention to the instructor.

How can Community Champions help?

Most children in an afterschool program had their last meal around lunchtime and need more than a snack to keep them focused and engaged. If your afterschool program is already part of CACFP but only serves snacks, consider encouraging them to provide supper as well. Here are a few reasons why serving supper is a better alternative:

- ◆ The nutritional content and calorie amount of a meal is higher than that of a snack. In addition, the program doesn't have to choose one over the other because under CACFP, the program can provide both a snack and a meal!
- ◆ The program will be reimbursed for the extra cost of meals as long as they meet the federal nutrition guidelines.
- ◆ The process for serving meals is as quick and easy as serving snacks. Tasks for program staff consist of keeping a student attendance roster, handing out the meals, and counting the meals that have been distributed.
- ◆ For further details about moving from snacks to supper, please visit: http://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/moving_snack_to_meal.pdf

VI. ADDING MEALS TO YOUR COMMUNITY

STEP 1: Check if your area is eligible (local school must have at least 50% FRPM enrollment).

You can find the Free and Reduced-Price Meal enrollment and percentage rate for your school district by referring to the San Diego Hunger Coalition's Hunger Free Kids by District Report:

<http://www.sandiegohungercoalition.org/hunger-free-kids-report>

~ OR ~

You can find the Free and Reduced-Price Meal percentage rate for your school on California Department of Education's website: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sd/sd/index.asp>.

STEP 2: Identify a potential meal site

This meal site can take place at your local school, community center, library, church, recreation center, or another place in your community where youth congregate that is near the eligible school. In order to qualify as an open meals site, the afterschool program must:

- ◆ Serve children ages 18 & under
- ◆ Operate in your community, where 50% of children are eligible for free or reduced-price meals
- ◆ Have the ability to receive and serve snacks and/or meals
- ◆ Meet state or local childcare licensing and health and safety requirements



- ◆ If CACFP, it is ideal to have at least 25 children who regularly attend the afterschool program. Must provide care for children after school, on weekends, holidays, or school vacations during the regular school year. In addition, must provide organized, regularly scheduled enrichment or educational activities (e.g., homework tutoring, athletic programs, music lessons, computer lessons, arts and crafts, etc.). Lastly, it should take place in a school or community site that is operated by a public or private non-profit organization.
- ◆ If SFSP, must provide supervision for children during meal service throughout the summer months when school is out (e.g., June-August). Summer meals can take place at playgrounds, parks, churches, recreation centers, or other places where youth congregate.

STEP 3: Develop a statement to share with the supervisor of the site or afterschool/summer program

Create a list of talking points that highlight essential information. Creating this list will allow you to clearly communicate your goals.

- ◆ Introduce the concept of afterschool and/or summer meals
 - ◇ You can use information presented in this guide and from additional websites listed below:
 - United States Department of Agriculture (USDA): <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/afterschool/programs>
 - Your State's Department of Education – For CA, click here: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/cc/>
 - No Kid Hungry: <https://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org/afterschool-snacks-meals>
- ◆ Explain why it is important to address child hunger by adding an afterschool and/or summer meals program in your community
 - ◇ Include data about your community (refer to Step 1)
 - ◇ Describe why the potential meal site that you have chosen would be the ideal place to provide meals (refer to Step 2)
- ◆ Direct them to the San Diego Hunger Coalition's toolkits for organizations and school districts interested in becoming a meal site or sponsor

Once you have developed a statement, meet with the supervisor, team lead, and/or manager in charge of the afterschool and/or summer program you previously identified. For additional support or information, please contact the San Diego Hunger Coalition at info@sdhungercoalition.org

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VI. ADDING MEALS TO YOUR COMMUNITY (CONTINUED)

SCENARIO 2: Children Bring their Own Snacks

Imagine you are a 12 year-old child receiving tutoring at your community recreation center. It's 4:00 pm in the afternoon and you feel your stomach growling from hunger. As you pull out the homemade snack your parent had packed in the morning, you discover that your apple slices turned into mush and your crackers have crushed into bits.

How can Community Champions help?

Several afterschool programs may require their youth to bring their own snacks or meals from home. However, this isn't always the best option because by the time children are ready to eat their packed snacks, it may no longer be fresh enough to eat. Other times, children may not bring snacks because their parents could be facing financial constraints that may make it difficult to pack their child an afterschool snack every day.



As a Community Champion, you can help children in your community receive supper by introducing your local afterschool program to CACFP. Following the steps above, click on a link under Step 1 to check if your neighborhood is eligible for afterschool meals. If it is, proceed to Step 2 and check that your

chosen afterschool program meets the qualifications to become a meal site. Lastly, following Step 3, be sure to compile information explaining why it is important to serve afterschool meals and share them with the program's supervising team.

SCENARIO 3: Snacks are Purchased by Program at Retail Costs

Imagine you volunteer at your community's local cultural center over the summer where a program teaches children about music and dance. In one room there are 15 children dancing Mexican folk dance, while in another room there are 15 children learning about music from East Africa. You notice that although the program offers snacks to the children during break time, they're often small and have little nutritious value. Upon further inquiring, you learn that the snacks are paid out of the program's limited funds. The program coordinators have also expressed that they need more money to buy new music equipment and traditional attire for the dancers.

How can Community Champions help?

Paying for snacks out of pocket can be quite expensive over time. Whether it comes from you or the program, it's best to save that extra money to help enhance the quality of the program itself – such as purchasing new equipment and

supplies. In this case, since the program is teaching 30 children music and dance during the summer, the program may qualify for SFSP. By becoming part of SFSP, not only would the program be reimbursed for snacks, but also for meals. This in turn would allow the program to feed more children in the community while minimizing out-of-pocket costs. In order to make this happen, the first step would be to check that the cultural center is in an area where there is at least 50% FRPM student enrollment (*see Step 1*). Afterwards, it is necessary for the community member to check if the program satisfies all of the requirements listed above (*see Step 2*) to become a meal site. Lastly, the Community Champion can help inform the program directors about SFSP and connect them to the necessary resources to serve free summer meals.

In addition, following are two optional steps that may help you bring afterschool and summer meals to your area:

VI. ADDING MEALS TO YOUR COMMUNITY (CONTINUED)

Optional Step A: Gathering Support

If the person in charge of the afterschool program is not interested in providing reimbursable meals to their youth through CACFP, consider reaching out to other community stakeholders for support. Regardless of whether the afterschool program takes place at a school or CBO, you should make sure to have the support from these key people:

- ◆ Other Community Members
- ◆ Parents
- ◆ School Principal
- ◆ School Food Services Director
- ◆ School Office Personnel
- ◆ School Site Council
- ◆ School Wellness Team
- ◆ Afterschool Program Team Leads (oversee specific activities with youth)

Note: Be conscious of who your audience is so you can tailor the information you gather to their interests and concerns. For example, if you are presenting to a group of parents and community members, you may want to focus on the ability to feed more children in the community. On the other hand, if you are presenting to the school food services director or school office personnel, you may want to focus on the financial costs and reimbursement opportunities of the program.



Optional Step B: Suggest Creating an Advisory Group

Once a meal site is up and running, you can continue to be involved by organizing an advisory group. The purpose of an advisory group is to conduct program evaluation and integrate community feedback. An ideal group would include about 6-10 people with diverse professional and educational backgrounds who are connected to the program. An example list of key people and groups you can include are:

- ◆ Cafeteria Manager
- ◆ Custodians
- ◆ Playground supervisors
- ◆ Representatives from your school's parent and teacher group

The purpose of an advisory group is to conduct program evaluation and integrate community feedback.

- ◆ Representatives from the afterschool program (e.g., volunteers, program coordinators, program director)
- ◆ Students
- ◆ Community Champions

Topics of discussion may include food recovery systems, conducting surveys, and finding ways to improve the current program.

VII. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following websites include further information and outreach materials about CACFP and SFSP for Community Champions:

CACFP	SFSP
United States Department of Agriculture (USDA): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• English• Spanish	United States Department of Agriculture (USDA): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• English• Spanish
California Department of Education	California Department of Education
No Kid Hungry Outreach Tactics	No Kid Hungry Outreach Tactics
Food Research and Action Center (FRAC)	Food Research and Action Center (FRAC)

If you would like more information about nearby afterschool or summer programs that serve free meals for youth in San Diego County, please call 2-1-1 or visit their website at: <http://211sandiego.org/>

VIII. APPENDIX

A. Additional details about meal types:

MEAL TYPE	WHEN IT IS PROVIDED	DESCRIPTION
Breakfast	Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reimbursable through SFSP Includes these 3 meal components: milk, fruit or vegetable, and grains.
Lunch	Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reimbursable through SFSP Similar to the nutritional content and calories of school lunch Includes these 5 components: milk, grains, protein (meat or meat alternative, and two servings of fruits and vegetables)
Supper	Afterschool/Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reimbursable through CACFP or SFSP Similar to the nutritional content and calories of a school lunch Includes these 5 components: milk, grains, protein (meat or meat alternative), and two servings of fruits and vegetables
Snack	Afterschool/Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reimbursable through CACFP or SFSP Nutritional content & calories is less than that of a full meal Only requires 2 out of these 5 components: milk, grains, protein (meat or meat alternative), fruit, and vegetable.

B. Opportunities to get involved in an afterschool meal program may already exist in your community!

To search for an afterschool meal site in California, simply follow the steps below:

- ◆ **STEP 1:** Go to your state’s department of education website:
 - ✦ CA’s Dept. of Education website: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sh/sn/cacfpcentermap.asp>
- ◆ **STEP 2:** Click on your County
 - ✦ San Diego

- ◆ **STEP 3:** Go to “Filter Records” and type in your zip code or city of interest
 - ✦ **Note:** Focus only on programs that are labeled as “AT RISK SITE (ATR)” under Program Types column heading
- ◆ **STEP 4:** Contact the person listed under “Contact Name” by phone. If the listed contact person does not respond, consider contacting an

alternative person by phone or going in person during program operation hours:

- ✦ If your local meal site is located at a school, contact the school’s food services director.
- ✦ If your local meal site is located at a community-based organization (CBO), contact the person in charge of the CBO program

(continued)

VIII. APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

C. Template social media posts

- ◆ For afterschool meals, template social media posts can be found [HERE](#) on No Kid Hungry’s website under “Online Outreach”. In order to make it more specific to your online audience, don’t forget to tailor the information to your community!

Sample Facebook Post from No Kid Hungry:

“FREE food, friends and fun! Many sites in the community offer fun learning and recreational activities so kids and teens can eat a healthy, free meal while staying active and spending time with friends. To learn more, call 1-XXX-XXX-XXX or visit: *(insert meal site’s webpage)*”

Sample from No Kid Hungry for San Diego Residents:

“FREE food, friends and fun! Many sites in the community offer fun learning and recreational activities so kids and teens can eat a healthy, free meal while staying active and spending time with friends. To learn more, call 2-1-1 or visit: *(insert local school district webpage)*”

- ◆ For summer meals, template social media posts can be found [HERE](#) on No Kid Hungry’s website under “Online Outreach”. In order to make it more specific to your online audience, don’t forget to tailor the information to your community!

Sample Twitter Post:

@USDA funds #Free
#SummerMeals 4 kids & teens!
Find a site near you by calling
1-XXX-XXX-XXX or visit:
(insert webpage)

Sample Twitter Post for San Diego Residents:

@USDA funds #Free
#SummerMeals 4 kids & teens!
Find a site near you by texting
FOOD to 877-877

IX. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This toolkit integrates information provided by leading national nutrition and hunger relief organizations. All information included in this toolkit is intended to provide educational and technical assistance to support communities and **Community Champions** seeking to implement the most promising solutions to child hunger.

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Food Research and Action Center

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X. ENDNOTES

- ¹ Share our Strength's No Kid Hungry. Hunger Facts. Retrieved February 7, 2018, from <https://www.nokidhungry.org/who-we-are/hunger-facts>
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- ⁵ Center for the Study of Social Policy. Food Insecurity in Early Childhood. Retrieved from <https://www.cssp.org/publications/general/document/Food-Insecurity-Early-Childhood.pdf>
- ⁶ U.S. Department of Agriculture. (2017). CACFP Afterschool Programs. Retrieved February 7, 2018, from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/afterschool-programs>
- ⁷ U.S. Department of Agriculture. (2017). Summer Food Service Program: Serving Summer Meals. Retrieved February 7, 2018, from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/serving-summer-meals>
- ⁸ California Department of Education. (2017). Child Care Component of the CACFP. Retrieved from February 7, 2018 from <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/cc/cc.asp>

