

# Take Action for Summer Food

If you are unable to sponsor a Summer Food site in your community, there are a variety of steps you can take to support existing programs and help more children access free summer meals.

## Involve the Entire Congregation

Helping hungry children access healthy food when school is out is a project that everyone in your congregation will likely support. There are several ways to educate and involve people at your church in outreach efforts.

- Mention the Summer Food Program during the announcements portion of your worship service or in the bulletin along with ways that members of the congregation can help promote the program.
- Set up an information table about Summer Food during the coffee hour between worship services and recruit volunteers for outreach activities.

## Help Get the Word Out

All too often families in need do not know that there are places in the community where their children could eat for free during the summer months. Church members can play an important role in connecting eligible families to Summer Food sites.

- Hang Summer Food outreach posters at churches, schools, laundromats, grocery stores, public assistance offices, child care centers, apartment buildings, and bus shelters.
- Talk to the community members that utilize your local food shelf about Summer Food and include flyers about the program with a list of nearby sites in every food box.
- Ask members of the congregation to spread the word about Summer Food by talking with other parents at work, in their community organizations, or at their children's school and activities.
- Organize groups of volunteers to canvass high-need neighborhoods and tell families about the Summer Food Program. Bring brochures or door hangers to leave behind if no one is home.
- Encourage area schools to send out information about the Summer Food Program to their students' families.



## Support Existing Sites

Summer Food is almost always more successful when the meal service is combined with activities. Providing activities also decreases the stigma many families feel about a free meals program. Think about ways you could help make sites more attractive to children.

- If there is no programming at a site, you can help organize and lead arts and crafts, games and physical activities.
- Invite firefighters, police officers, pastors, the mayor and other "local celebrities" to sites to increase their visibility and encourage more children to participate in Summer Food.

***For more information please visit: [www.gmcc.org/foodshare/summerfood](http://www.gmcc.org/foodshare/summerfood)***