



Office of Children and Family Services

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

SHEILA J. POOLE
Acting Commissioner



July 9, 2018

Dear Provider:

Summer should be a carefree time for children and families. School is out, and the sun is shining! Time to relax, and enjoy a break from the routine, right? Unfortunately, for many working families in New York State, summer brings with it increased stressors: additional child care costs, higher gasoline prices, and an increase in their food budget. For children who rely on school nutrition programs, summer often becomes the hungriest time of the year. When the school doors close, two critical meals a day are literally taken off their table. Fortunately, when school is out, New York's Summer Meals program is in!

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's No Child Goes Hungry Initiative



This is a comprehensive program aimed at providing all students healthy, locally-sourced meals from Kindergarten through college. The initiative expands access to free breakfast, puts an end to lunch shaming, and helps ensure students receive farm fresh foods. The Summer Meals Program serves free lunches to kids Monday-Friday at sites across the state. Not enough families are aware of these programs. Currently, five out of six children who rely on free and reduced-priced school meals are not getting free meals during the summer. What can you do to help? It's simple! Enclosed you will find a color flyer (in English and Spanish) that explains three ways to find a summer food site in your community. For more information on this topic visit: <https://www.nokidhungry.org/>

- Call: 211 or 1-866-3-HUNGRY
- Text: "food" to 877-877
- Visit: <https://hungersolutionsny.org/get-food-help-0/summer-meals-ny/>

PLEASE, HELP SPREAD THE WORD BY POSTING THIS FLYER IN YOUR PROGRAM!

Filling in The Gaps

Do you know? Over 2.5 million NYS residents are food insecure. Food insecurity means you do not regularly have enough food to eat. Nearly half of all people in New York who suffer from food insecurity and hunger are employed. When working parents need help making ends meet, there are programs available to help. The New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) provides a prescreening tool allowing residents to easily find benefits they may be eligible to receive. By going to <https://mybenefits.ny.gov/mybenefits/begin>, individuals can explore options for assistance, which may include: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Women, Infants and Children (WIC), and Temporary Assistance (TA).

Reap the Benefits of Healthy Foods

As a registered/licensed child care provider, you are eligible to participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and be reimbursed for the nutritious meals and snacks you serve to enrolled children. Providers receive regular training about nutrition, and children develop healthy eating habits that last a lifetime.

On October 1, 2017, a new meal plan went into effect. The new meal pattern offers a greater variety of vegetables and fruits, more whole grains, and less added sugar and fat. It is now required that children be offered water to drink throughout the day, even if they do not ask for it. For more information regarding CACFP, go to: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/meals-and-snacks>.

Think Healthy *and* Local



Farmer's markets provide a wonderful opportunity to buy fresh fruits, vegetables, and other healthy foods directly from the farmers who produce them. As you know, proper nutrition is critical for a child's growth and development. Children need a variety of nutrient-rich foods. Offer them a rainbow of colorful and naturally sweetened foods. To make water more enticing to children, add fruit slices, or a sprig of fresh mint. Did you know that many farmer's markets in New York State accept SNAP benefits? For a list of markets in your area go to the following link:

https://www.agriculture.ny.gov/AP/farmers_markets.html



Summer Safety Tips

OCFS has created safety guides on a variety of topics such as field trips, playgrounds, and transportation. To view the entire series, go to our website at: <https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/infoforproviders.asp>.

Below are some additional tips to help you keep children safe:

- Provide competent supervision to children in your care especially in or around water.
- Be mindful of the temperature: as it rises, ensure the children stay adequately hydrated.
- Prevent sunburn by covering up, wearing sunglasses/hats, and using sunscreen. Remember to review the OCFS regulations regarding applying sunscreen on children in your care.
- Never ever leave a child in a hot car – for more information go to <https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/emergency/weather/hot/>.
- When coming in from outside activities, check children for ticks to prevent Lyme Disease. For more information on Lyme Disease, go to <https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/lyme/>.



Children are our most precious resource. By securing access to healthy food all year and maintaining a safe environment, our children can grow to their full potential. Wishing you all a fun-filled summer!

Sincerely,

Janice M. Molnar Ph.D.
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Child Care Services

Si necesita leer esta carta en español, visite el portal de la División de Servicios de Cuidado Infantil: Si no tiene acceso a <https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/letters.asp> la Red o Internet, contacte al encargado de licencias o registros para recibir ayuda.



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