



## Ending Child Hunger at your library with the USDA Summer Food Service Program

### State Library of Ohio

has supported library participation in the Summer Food Service Program with education, publicity, and technical assistance since 2015.

### 95 Ohio Libraries

served as Summer Food Service Program sites in 2020 for grab-and-go meals during the COVID-19 emergency.

### 1 Out of Every 10

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sites statewide in 2019 was in a library.

- 139 libraries sites
- 1381 total sites  
(data from Ohio Department of Education)

### 87.8% Increase

in libraries serving as SFSP sites: increased from 82 in 2012 to a high of 154 in 2018.



The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

The USDA works with states and community sponsors to provide summer meals for children in communities with high rates of poverty. As many as 90% of **kids who depend on free or reduced price school meals go hungry** during the long weeks of summer. By participating in the SFSP, public libraries can play an important role in combatting child hunger in Ohio.

### Why Libraries?



**Children are going hungry in your community.** In Ohio, one in five children struggles with hunger, and **only 10.4% of students who receive free or reduced price school meals also participate in SFSP** or other Summer Nutrition Programs. Transportation, awareness, and unavailability of local sites are all significant barriers to participation in the SFSP. (See <https://frac.org/research/resource-library/summer-nutrition-report-2020> and <https://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/ohio>).



**There is funding available to feed them.** Participating sponsors are reimbursed the cost of providing this valuable service. In some of the counties suffering the greatest economic hardship, no one is utilizing these funds to **fight food insecurity and feed hungry children during the summer.**



**It really is simple.** Libraries don't need to prepare food, design or adapt new or unwieldy programs. SFSP is a longstanding program administered by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE). Initial involvement is as simple as contacting a local sponsor or the ODE.



**It aligns with the mission of the public library** to connect community members with the information and resources they need. Summer reading programs have long been a pillar of libraries' literacy support for young patrons. But **hungry kids don't read.** They can become trapped in a cycle of poor school performance and ill health that can have lifelong literacy and learning consequences.

### Get Started!

[library.ohio.gov/summer-food](http://library.ohio.gov/summer-food)

Visit the State Library website to learn more about the SFSP, how your library can become a sponsor or site, and other ways to support SFSP discover ways to bring enrichment activities to existing sites.

#### Want to know more?

Libraries are collaborating with food banks and other community partners to address food insecurity through referrals, direct distribution of groceries, pantry shelves, and other initiatives to improve the well-being of children and families. For more information about SFSP or about the role of libraries in fighting food insecurity, contact Janet Ingraham Dwyer, Library Consultant at 614-644-6910 or [jdwyer@library.ohio.gov](mailto:jdwyer@library.ohio.gov).