



CHILD NUTRITION REAUTHORIZATION

NRPA POLICY POSITION

- Support passage of the Reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act/Healthy, Hunger- Free Kids Act, which would continue funding for Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) initiatives managed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). These programs provide free meals to low-income children while school is out of session.
- Park and recreation agencies serve approximately 560 million meals per year making them the largest public provider of meals and snacks outside of schools.

BACKGROUND

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

SFSP provides free meals and snacks to low-income children ages 18 and under when school is not in session. Local park and recreation agencies use this program to provide healthy meals and snacks to children who might otherwise go hungry in the summer months. When children are served healthy meals, park and recreation agencies are not only helping to address the immediate need of hunger, but are also engaging these children in other educational and enrichment activities. Many local park and recreation agencies use the SFSP to serve meals to children enrolled in summer camps and other programming at their facilities. Philadelphia Parks and Recreation serves almost 3 million meals each summer and operates “playstreets” in conjunction with its meal program. “Playstreets” are small, residential streets that are blocked to traffic weekdays between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Food is delivered to the site by the meal program.

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

CACFP pays for nutritious meals and snacks for eligible children who are enrolled in after-school programs at local park and recreation agencies. It also requires that sponsors provide enrichment activities for children who receive meals and snacks through this program. Local park and recreation agencies are ideally suited to provide this service, as they are accessible and trusted within the community and have the services, facilities and staff to offer the enrichment component. These enrichment components include a wide variety of options, such as healthy cooking classes, community gardening, outdoor physical activity opportunities, homework assistance, and arts and crafts. Houston Parks and Recreation Department in Texas offers its After School Enrichment Program free of charge to children between the ages of 6 and 13. Children registered in the program take part in a broad range of activities during

after-school hours under the guidance of park staff at community centers across the city. These activities include arts and crafts, sports, nature instruction, games and cultural and special events. Registered children also receive a snack and homework assistance.

WHY CONGRESS SHOULD ACT

Park and recreation agencies are located in almost every community across the country and serve as sponsors for USDA meal and snack programs, providing healthy food to children during out-of-school times. Park and recreation agencies are trusted community organizations and fulfill a critical need when children are not in school. These programs provide a valuable resource to individuals with the greatest need. It is vital to these communities to join NRPA in supporting funding for the Summer Food Service Program and Child and Adult Care Food Program in the reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act.

THE FACTS

- **16.2 million kids in the U.S. face hunger.**
- **560 million meals served by park and recreation agencies annually.**
- **50% of park and recreation summer camps offer meal programs.**
- **50% of park and recreation agencies offer before or after-school meal programs.**