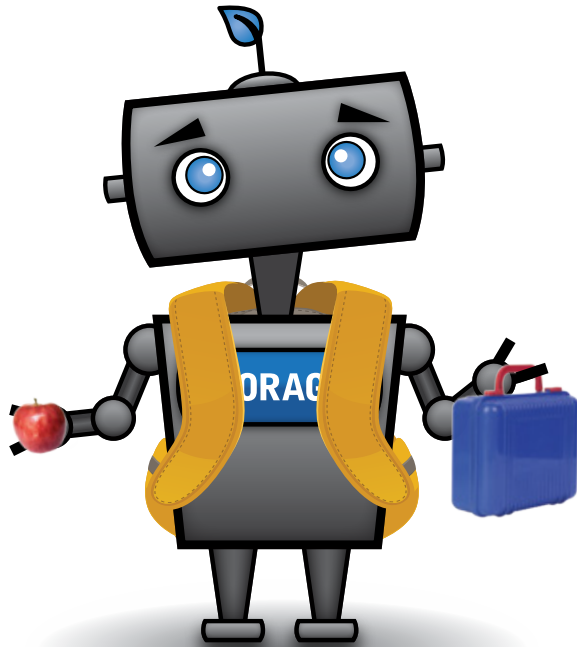


PRORAGIS™

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THE ROLE OF PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES IN FIGHTING CHILDHOOD HUNGER ISSUES



16.2 million kids
in the U.S. face hunger

In 2012,
31.6 million kids
were fed daily by the National
School Lunch Program.

**Who feeds these kids
when school is out?**

HOW DO PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES FILL THIS GAP?

Summer Camp Feeding Programs

76% of park and recreation agencies offer summer camps.

9 weeks

Average length of camps offered by these agencies.

50%

of these camps offer feeding programs for participants.

These agencies serve an average of

133

campers per week.

After-School Programs

50%

of agencies offer before- or after-school programs that feed children.

These agencies feed an average of

250

participants per week.

WHAT'S THE IMPACT?

U.S. park and recreation agencies serve approximately **560 million meals per year**, making them the largest public provider of meals and snacks outside of schools.

COMBATING HUNGER THROUGH PARKS AND RECREATION

By Travis Smith, Ph.D., and Rishma Parpia

Despite our society's efforts, childhood hunger remains a reality in the United States. In fact, 16.2 million children struggle with hunger in America¹. During the school year, school lunches often feed children in need. The Food and Research Center reports that in 2012, 2.8 million children received free and reduced-price school lunches during the school year through the federally funded Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and 31.6 million children were fed daily by the National School Lunch Program². However, when the school year ends and summer begins, millions of low-income children lose access to school breakfasts and lunches. For many of these children, these may be the only nutritious and healthy meals they enjoy on a normal day. So when school is out, who feeds these kids?

In many communities, the answer is the community park and recreation agency. Park and recreation agencies also participate in the federal Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and are the largest public provider of healthy meals and snacks outside of schools. Data from PRORAGIS™ illustrates that almost 50 percent of park and recreation agencies that offer summer camps are sites for feeding programs.¹ Research estimates that park and recreation agencies serve 560 million meals to children through summer and after-school programs each year.³ The SFSP is designed to replace regular school-year feeding programs by providing low-income children access to the nutritious meals they need to prevent hunger and remain healthy throughout the summer. Furthermore, summer nutrition programs offered at park and recreation sites play an important role by involving children in educational and recreational programming to keep them engaged, active and safe during the summer months.³

In recent years, federal summer nutrition programs have struggled to meet the need because of budget cuts to state and local programs that support underlying summer programs for children.³ NRPA continues to work with national partners to address children's hunger during out-of-school times. As the largest public provider of children's meals during the summer months, our agencies have clearly shown the capacity to effectively reach children in need of nutritious meals.

Go to www.nrpa.org/PRORAGIS and enter your agency's data to help demonstrate the impact of parks and recreation!

¹ No Kid Hungry. *Facts on Child Hunger*. Retrieved on August 6, 2014: www.nokidhungry.org/sites/default/files/2011-childhood-hunger-facts.pdf.

² The Food Research and Action Center. 2013. *Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation: Summer Nutrition Status Report 2013*. Retrieved on August 6, 2014: www.frac.org/pdf/2013_summer_nutrition_report.pdf.

³ National Recreation and Park Association. *Serving Communities*. Accessed on August 6, 2014: www.nrpa.org/feeding.