

# SACRAMENTO SUMMER LUNCHBOX



## Marketing Tips for Promoting Your Summer Meals Program

### GENERAL TIPS

#### DEVELOP YOUR MESSAGE

**Know your audience:** Who are they? Where do they get their information from? What community activities are they already taking part in? Once you know these answers, you can craft the best way to reach them. Reaching parents versus teens might require different tactics.

**Craft your message:** Using the word 'free' doesn't get everyone's attention or isn't enough for them to want to participate. It's important to make sure people know about the activities you have planned at your summer meals site.



#### SACRAMENTO SUMMER LUNCHBOX RESOURCES ONLINE

Go to [yourlocalunitedway.org/sacsummerlunchbox](http://yourlocalunitedway.org/sacsummerlunchbox) for sample flyers, newsletter copy, calendar listings, parent letters and social media posts you can use to craft your unique message that fits your audience(s).

**Share your message:** Keep in mind that people often trust those closest to them. Establish relationships with other community organizations, churches, after-school programs, teachers, and principals. They will often be happy to share news that helps their community.

Work with volunteers and students to distribute flyers to schools, churches, and community organizations to raise awareness about the meals programs in your community.

Location Ideas:

- Schools
- Grocery stores
- Parks and recreation centers
- Libraries
- Community health centers
- Public transportation centers
- Public housing complexes
- Places of worship
- Convenience stores
- Government services offices (ESL, adult literacy, vocational training, WIC, Medicaid, Social Services)



Presented by the Sacramento Summer Meals Collaborative

[yourlocalunitedway.org/SacSummerLunchbox](http://yourlocalunitedway.org/SacSummerLunchbox)

## TYPES OF OUTREACH

### ONLINE OUTREACH

The use of social networks and putting information on websites are great ways to reach a large audience. According to the Pew Research Center, 74% of adults use social networking with numbers increasing daily.

How you can spread the word online:

- Create a FAQ section on your website. Make sure there is a presence on the homepage.
- Post information about summer meals and site visits on social media sites and encourage local leaders and community organizations to share your posts.
- Use the sample social media posts and images located in the → **Sacramento Summer Lunchbox**. Remember that often sites see their numbers decrease in the middle of the summer. Utilize the activity ideas located in the toolkit to help keep things fresh and fun.
- QUICK TIP: The use of photos and other graphics will get more attention on social media than just text. You can find images to use in the toolkit as well.
- Use Facebook ads to spread the word faster and farther, including the website, phone number, texting information and a link to more information.

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Working with local government agencies, elected officials, and community organizations can help you reach more people in your community and spread the word about Summer Meals.

- Ask elected leaders in your community and state to highlight your program in their constituent outreach tools (social media, newsletters, etc.)
- Coordinate with other local agencies and organizations interested in the health and safety of low-income children. Creative partnerships can result in new advertising resources and funding sources. For more tips on developing partnerships in your community, see <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Summer/library/Partners.pdf>.
- Explain your program to tenants, security staff, and other clients of the facilities where your summer meals are served.
- Work with local business or local business associations like the Rotary Club to distribute flyers for posting in business windows.
- Connect with grocery stores, as well as thrift stores to place postcards on windshields in parking lots or work with your local grocery store to set up an information table at the door to hand out flyers.



- Partner with local radio and TV stations to visit summer meals sites through the summer to generate excitement for kids to come to sites. Consider having drawings or give-a-ways of donated items include tickets to local events, t-shirts, sunglasses, stickers and other items.
- Connect with local organizations, newspapers and community newsletters to add summer meals to June, July and August calendar listings. This template calendar listing found in the [→ Sacramento Summer Lunchbox](#) can help you get started.

## SCHOOLS-BASED OUTREACH

Parents trust schools as an important source of information and count on teachers and educators to provide them with information that will help their kids do better inside and outside school. Many schools have robo call systems to inform parents about closings or schedule changes, or send out newsletters or letters to parents/guardians. Coordinate with schools near your meal sites to have robo calls around summer meals at the end of the year.

Ideas to engage with schools:

- Coordinate with schools to send a flyer home with students in backpacks. See the [→ Sacramento Summer Lunchbox](#) for customizable flyers.
- At the end of the school year, suggest that schools post on their signs a message about summer meals like the following: School's Out, But Summer Meals Are Served! Text "FOOD" 877-877 or call 211 to find a site near you.
- Connect with school leaders to see if their school might be willing to serve as a summer meals site.
- Provide schools and school districts with information about the program in registration packets at the beginning of the year so parents know about the program right when school lets out.
- Provide schools with a customizable flyer to hang in common areas where both parents and students can see them. See the [→ Sacramento Summer Lunchbox](#) for customizable flyers.
- Offer materials and information for schools to provide parents during parent-teacher conferences.
- Work with your local PTA to get out the word to other parents.
- Provide schools and school districts sample Facebook posts that they can post to Facebook pages. See [→ Sacramento Summer Lunchbox](#) for sample posts.

Resources compiled from NoKidHungry.org, Summer Meal Coalition, CA Department of Education and USDA.

