ACTIVITY GUIDE PROVIDING ENRICHMENT THROUGH COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Written by Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon

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Welcome to the Summer Meal Activity Guide!

Kids look forward to the warm, restful, school-free days of summer, but they also thrive on nutritious food for their bellies and fun activities for their brains. This resource offers ideas for collaborative programming and activities that are sure to engage the children at your meal site beyond the meals you serve them.

By hosting a summer meal program with activities, you can help prevent hunger, address the educational opportunity gap faced by many of Oregon’s kids, and have a lasting impact on children’s lives. Offering regular activities also attracts new participants and keeps participation up all summer long.

We encourage you to provide enrichment and education opportunities for the kids at your site. In the following pages, you will find ideas to partner with organizations in your community, as well as a brief list of youth enrichment organizations in Oregon that are available to visit your site.

These are just a few tips to help you get your program going. There are endless possibilities for providing your kids with an exceptional extracurricular experience, and each community has a unique set of partnerships to tap into. Feel free to reach out if you would like some one-on-one help in adding activities to your site.

We hope you expand upon the ideas listed here to make your summer meal program successful. Happy planning, and have fun!

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Why Activities Are so Important

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is an important tool to combat childhood hunger. There are numerous benefits to providing enrichment activities at your site as well, both for increasing participation and meeting the needs of the families in your community.

Summer Slide and Summer Slump
Educational activities have the potential to reduce learning loss.

Incorporating educational and physical activities into summer meal programs helps combat learning loss that occurs over the summer months. Research consistently shows that all kids experience a learning loss when they do not participate in enrichment activities during the summer. (White, 1906; Heynes, 1978; Entwisle & Alexander 1992; Cooper, 1996; Downey et al, 2004)

Achievement Gap
Activities can help reduce the educational achievement gap.

Educational achievement gaps across socioeconomic and racial and ethnic lines are a persistent problem nationally, as well as in Oregon. These gaps only increase over time as kids continue to face unequal opportunity. Research has shown that access to summer and other out-of-school-time activities is a key factor in achievement during the school year. In fact, seventy-five percent of the achievement gap can be explained by unequal access to out-of-school-time activities, with the summer months being a critical part of kids staying on track. (Alexander et al, 2007)

Healthy Mind and Body
Physical activities help combat childhood obesity and keep kids healthy.

Kids need to stay active during the summer when they may not be engaged in the same level of physical activity that they are used to during the school year. Research shows that students gain weight more rapidly when they are out of school during summer break. (Von Hippel et al, 2007)

Community Need
Parents are interested in affordable summer enrichment for their kids.

A survey of parents in California found that 3 in 10 parents did not enroll their children in any summer program; over half cited a lack of affordable programs as the reason why. The survey also found that this issue was particularly problematic among low-income, rural, African-American and Latino families. (Public Agenda 2010) A nationwide study on the same topic found that 23 million parents are interested in enrolling their children in a summer learning opportunity. (After School Alliance, 2010)
BUILDING SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Strong, collaborative relationships between summer meal sites and partnering organizations is often the key to successful and sustainable summer meal programs. Although it is excellent to partner with organizations for a one-time event or activity there is considerable value in developing long-term relationships with other organizations in your community.

STEPS FOR BUILDING SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

1.) Identify the needs of the kids and families your site is intending to serve.

2.) What services are already available? What kinds of opportunities are missing or are inaccessible due to barriers?

3.) Establish your target activities and parameters. Once you establish what it is you want to achieve you can reach out to organizations that can help you reach those goals.

4.) What are the goals of other organizations in your community? What other organizations are trying to engage youth and families? Good partnerships exist when both organizations have something unique to offer and can better achieve their goals by working together.

5.) Reach out to potential partners early. If it is too late for partnership this summer, start planning ahead to next summer.

6.) Have clearly defined roles and tasks. If you are developing a long-term collaboration around summer meals, compose a written Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) together and have both parties agree on the terms. If you need assistance drafting an MOU, let us know!

7.) Advertise around your summer meal sites and through your networks when an organization will be at your site. Ask the partner organization to advertise as well.

8.) Find a way to publicly thank and acknowledge your partners. If possible and appropriate, help promote their organization at your summer meals sites and on written and digital materials.
LOCAL PARTNERSHIP AND ACTIVITY IDEAS

Working with other organizations in your community is an excellent way to increase participation in your program, keep kids engaged, and build stronger communities. It may feel intimidating to reach out to an organization and ask for their time, but keep in mind that often times people and businesses to share their expertise, talents, hobbies, and passions with families in their community and may feel honored and excited to get involved.

SUBJECT
WHO: Ideas for organizations and individuals to reach out to for activity partnerships.
WHAT: Potential activities and events to coordinate with activity partners.

AGRICULTURE
WHO: Local farmers, 4-H clubs, farm corps, farm collectives, co-ops
WHAT: Organize a mini farmers market geared toward kids, farming education activities, farmer and future farmer appreciation day, farmer career day

ART
WHO: Art/design college, recycling center, art studio, artist, art collective, gallery
WHAT: Art show, arts and crafts activity, paint a mural or involve kids in another type of “big art” project, get donated materials from a recycling center or local art studio.

DANCE
WHO: Local dance studios, dance or Zumba instructors, high school dance teams
WHAT: Host a kid’s dance party, dance class, competition, or performance by a local dance group

ELECTED OFFICIALS
WHO: Mayor, school board or city council member, state representative, governor
WHAT: Ask an elected official to attend a big event or kick-off party, lead an activity related to civic engagement, or have lunch with kids during mealtime

FINANCIAL SERVICES
WHO: Local credit unions/banks, non-profits, financial service organizations
WHAT: Hands-on financial education, games, and advice geared toward kids, teens and/or parents

FIRE & SAFETY
WHO: Fire department, police department, Smokey the Bear
WHAT: Fire & safety activities, forest fire prevention, opportunities for kids to interact with police and/or firefighters (ex: reading, basketball), tour a fire truck

FITNESS
WHO: Local gyms or fitness centers, yoga studios/instructors, running clubs
WHAT: Host an aerobics, yoga, pilates, or other fitness class, organize a race

FORESTRY
WHO: US forestry, local naturalist or forest expert, conservation organization
WHAT: A guided hike, learn to forage for wild edibles, plant or tree identification, plant a tree

HEALTH
WHO: Local hospitals, nursing students, community colleges, health and wellness groups, dentists
WHAT: Activities/games that promote health wellness, outreach, health/wellness fair, dental hygiene outreach with free kid’s toothbrushes/toothpaste

LANGUAGE & CULTURE
WHO: Culturally specific organization, language club, college/university groups
WHAT: Ask an elected official to attend a big event or kick-off party, lead an activity related to civic engagement, or have lunch with kids during mealtime

MILITARY & VETERANS
WHO: Veterans and current members of the military
WHAT: Host a veteran appreciation day, invite active military and their families to an event, have kids read to a veterans/active military or vice versa

MUSIC
WHO: Local children’s band or musician, music store, choir, music school
WHAT: Rent musical instruments from some local organization/business or school, learn a new song with a choir, arrange for a special performance during mealtime

NUTRITION
WHO: Health food store, grocer, nutritionist, WIC representative, master gardener, chef
WHAT: Taste test new fruits and veggies, nutrition games and activities, WIC outreach, recipe challenge, design cookbooks, cooking demonstrations, new food passport

READING
WHO: Libraries, bookstores, national reading/book organizations (ex: First Book, Open E-book), senior centers, community groups/members that are excited to read to kids!
WHAT: Book drives, book club, reading challenges, themed reading days (ex: read with a firefighter, police officer, grandparent, etc)

SPORTS
WHO: YMCA or other youth sports association, college or high school athletes/coaches
WHAT: 3-on-3 basketball tournament, kickball games, soccer match, lunch with mascot

SCIENCE
WHO: Museums, research hospitals, college/university, professional scientists
WHAT: Host a science career day, do an archaeological dig, explore space with telescopes, conduct fun experiments

THEATER
WHO: Children’s theater, an acting/theatre/improv group
WHAT: Improv workshop (great for teens!), drama games, watch or perform plays, puppet shows

VOTER OUTREACH
WHO: Non-profits who focus on voter education/outreach, community organizers
WHAT: Voter registration aimed at teens and parents, voter education/outreach, mock elections
ORGANIZATIONS READY TO PARTNER WITH YOU!

The organizations listed below have already been in contact with staff at Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon and have expressed interest in providing activities and/or developing other types of partnerships with summer meal sites and sponsors.

Organizational Partners, Activity Description, Contact Info - Location

**BUS PROJECT - STATEWIDE**
The Bus Project can come to your summer meal site to lead activities related to voter education and civic engagement. Contact Amy Kessler, amy@busproject.org, to arrange a visit to your site this summer!

**CHILDREN’S EDUCATIONAL THEATRE - STATEWIDE**
The Children’s Educational Theatre may have fun costumes and other theatre props available to donate to your site so that kids can let their imaginations run wild this summer! Contact Robert Salberg, 503-399-3398, cetsalem@gmail.com, for more information.

**FINANCIAL BEGINNINGS - STATEWIDE**
Financial Beginnings is a non-profit that is able to come to your summer meal site and provide free, accessible financial education programming to youth and adults. For more information, visit www.financialbeginnings.org or contact Priscilla Wagner, pwagner@financialbeginnings.org

**GROWING GARDENS - GREATER PORTLAND METRO**
Gardeners from growing gardens may be able to come out and do workshops about gardening and nutrition with your group of kids this summer! Contact Sarah Canterberry, sarahc@growing-gardens.org, 503-284-8420 x 109, to arrange a visit to your site!

**MULTNOMAH COUNTY LIBRARY BOOKS2U - GREATER PORTLAND METRO**
During the summer Books 2 U staff bring high-interest paperbacks and books for kids of all ages to summer meal sites. Staff register students for library cards and promote reading games. For more information, contact Cathy Schneider, cathys@multcolib.org.

**O HEROES - EUGENE AND SPRINGFIELD**
The student-athletes at the University of Oregon are committed to giving back and serving their community. The focus of the O Heroes is concentrated in three key initiatives: Education, Service, and Health. To arrange a visit to your site, contact Resa Lovelace, rlovela9@uoregon.edu.

**PORTLAND STORYTELLERS GUILD - HILLSBORO AND CORNELIS**
Storytellers are able to come out and tell stories this summer to your site at no cost! This is an excellent way to bring some exciting entertainment to your summer meal site. To arrange a storyteller to come to your site, contact Holly B. Robinson, rohhollyb@gmail.com.

**PORTLAND TRAILBLAZERS - GREATER PORTLAND AREA**
The Blazers are very involved in the community and would be happy to support summer meals. Possible activities include free basketball clinics and a visit from Blaze, the Trail Blazers mascot! To arrange a visit, contact Annie Klug, 503-797-9747, annie.klug@trailblazers.com.
DO IT YOURSELF ENRICHMENT: ONLINE RESOURCES

BILL NYE LABS - www.billnye.com
Access fun, easy science experiments from Bill Nye the Science Guy!

DRAMA TOOLKIT - www.dramatoolkit.uk/drama-games/a-to-z
Fun, interactive, easy-to-lead games used by children’s theatre and drama groups

FREE KIDS CRAFTS - NATURE - www.freekidscrafts.com/materials/nature-craft
Projects involve materials like twigs, leaves, acorns, shells, and many more readily available materials found in nature

FUEL UP TO PLAY 60 - www.school.fueluptoplay60.com
Free ideas for games, activities, and lessons that promote healthy eating and physical activity, as well as numerous links to other great resources

GREAT GROUP GAMES - www.greatgroupgames.com
Educational games that are great for groups, such as building towers out of newspapers and an origami boat race

HANDS ON AS WE GROW - www.handsonaswegrow.com
Ideas for “big art” projects that involve the creation of large pieces of art through movement

JUMP START ACTIVITIES - www.jumpstart.com
Access a variety of educational activities and games in the parent resources database. Recommended for kids K-5.

KIDS.GOV - www.kids.usa.gov
Printable and online resources on topics such as history, math, science, government, money, & jobs.

MY PLATE - www.choosemyplate.com
Online and printable resources are easily accessible, as well as tips and tools for supporting healthy living habits

NOURISH INTERACTIVE - www.nourishinteractive.com
Great resource for fun nutrition games, as well as interactive nutrition tools and tips to promote healthy living for kids

OPEN eBOOKS - www.openebooks.net
Open eBooks is an app with thousands of popular books that are free for children from households with limited incomes

OREGON DAIRY & NUTRITION COUNCIL - https://odncouncil.org
Great ideas for nutrition education – printed materials, tasty recipes, fun activities, curriculum, and practical nutrition lessons for all ages

PLAYWORKS - www.playworks.org
Playworks has a wealth of information related to the importance of play for kids. You can download a FREE electronic copy of their 348-page gamebook.

SCIENCE BOB - www.sciencebob.com
Easy-to-follow instructions for science experiments for kids of all ages using everyday household items

SCIENCE KIDS - www.sciencekids.com.nz
Science and technology activities including experiments, games, fun facts, and projects
Other Summer Meal Activity Resource Guides
OregonASK Summer Meal Activity Guide
Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon Summer Meal Program Guide
www.oregonhunger.org

Additional Resources on Summer Meal Program Partnerships
USDA Webinar: Utilizing Grants and Unique Partnerships to Serve More Meals
www.fns.usda.gov - Highlights case studies of collaborative partnerships
Presents ideas and tips for partnering with organizations in a condensed, flyer format.

References

Summer Food Service Program in Oregon