

## Tips for Planning a Summer Meals for Kids Celebration



**What:** What kind of event will be held? Make it fun and memorable!

- Define the purpose: Promote summer congregate or rural non-congregate meals (NCM) or both?
- Focus on a fun event that celebrates and includes children!
- Consider activities to include at the event based on its purpose.
- Entertainment: Performance by kids? For kids: Games, music, mascot?
- Choose a summer meals site or NCM pick up site as a location for the event.
- Determine event budget. Consider the cost of printing, signage, props, food.
- If serving food to promote NCM, consider inviting vendors to provide tasty samples of their food items that will be available in your meals program or in the NCM food boxes.

**Where:** Select location and consider these options.

- Capacity: Does the space accommodate the number of children and guests you hope will attend?
- Indoors or outdoors? (If outside, include an inclement weather plan.)
- Will you have presenters? Place for presenters to speak/stand.
- Space for guests and activities.
- Determine layout/seating/tables arrangements.
- Visuals and props. Balloons, signs, fruit and veggie costumes for staff, inflatables, games.
- Ample parking.
- Document authorization to capture images of children present. Take lots of photos to post on social! Photograph backs of heads and avoid faces if no permission has been provided.
- Registration table/sign-in (capture names, titles, emails) and name tags.

**When:** Determine the ideal date and time.

- Tues., Wed., Thurs. may be preferred. Limit to 1-2 hours.
- For a congregate site, consider holding event before kids have their lunch (invite guests/media to stay and see first-hand)
- If families are invited, especially for promoting NCM, plan event outside of work hours.

**Who:** Who will attend?

- How many children will attend?
- Will press be invited?
- Emcee? Presenters? (Limit to 4-5 people; keep in mind that kids are restless!)
- Invite local school/district and government officials. Recognize VIPs in the audience.

**How to Promote:** Materials and resources.

- Request a Ray appearance by completing the [Ray Request form](#).
- Save the date, invitation, and reminder/RSVP
- Media: send advisory to invite press; distribute press release with program details.
- Promote via social media, robo calls to families, flyers, emails (help from marketing staff?)
- Post flyers at nearby places of worship, businesses, neighborhoods, and parks.
- Suggested remarks/script for presenters and emcee
- Event handouts: Agenda, overview of summer meals program, list of nearby meal sites, QR codes to register families for NCM
- Follow-up (Send thank you messages, share links for any media coverage on social.)
- Visit [SummerMeals4NCKids.org](http://SummerMeals4NCKids.org) for resources, fun and educational crafts and activities for the children, sample materials and more ways to promote your program.