

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

Maximizing Participation



Today's Agenda

- Hunger Solutions New York
- Child Hunger in NYS
- Maximizing CACFP
 - Farm to CACFP
 - Family Style Meals
 - Connecting with your representatives
- Additional Resources
- Questions & Answers

Hunger Solutions New York is a statewide anti-hunger organization.

We increase **awareness** of, **support** for, and **participation** in federal nutrition assistance programs.

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- School Breakfast Program (SBP)
- Community Eligibility Program (CEP)
- Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
- Summer-EBT

How Do We Help?

- **Technical Assistance**

- Connect with us! We work one-on-one to provide assistance, answer questions, connect you with peers, other organizations and more.

- **Resources**

- Use and share our resources, information and best practices to help reach more providers with CACFP information.

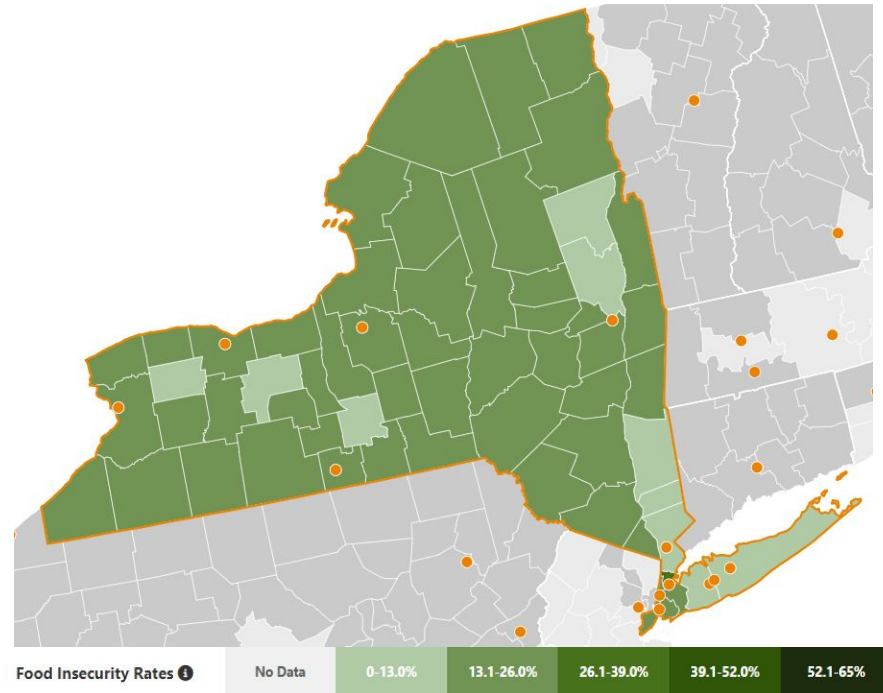
- **Advocacy**

- Working with partners helps us advocate for investments and inform improvements in child nutrition programs.

Child Hunger in New York State

Food insecurity is defined as a lack of consistent, dependable access to nutritious foods needed for an active and healthy life.

1 in 5 children are food insecure in New York.



Source: Feeding America (2022) [Map the Meal Gap, Child Food Insecurity in New York](#).

Consequences of Food Insecurity

Food insecurity has been shown to:

- Impede physical development.
- Impact social, emotional, and cognitive development.
- Contribute to poor health outcomes long-term.

Low-income and marginalized populations are disproportionately impacted.

Source: Food Research and Action Center (2018) [Research Brief: Connections Between Food Insecurity, the Federal Nutrition Programs, and Student Behavior.](#)

Childcare Meals

The Child and Adult Care Food Program:

- **Funded** through the United States Department of Agriculture.
- **Administered** by the NYS Department of Health.
- **Underutilized** across NYS and the nation.



CACFP In NYS

Participating centers served an average of **4,480,769**¹ meals each month in 2022 to children in care.

1,275¹ Day Care Centers claimed reimbursement for At-Risk Meals* in 2022.

Home based child care providers served an average of **2,970,160**¹ meals each month to children in care.

¹ Source: NYSDOH (2023): https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/prevention/nutrition/cacfp/ytd_fedfiscalyear_statistics.htm.

Benefits of CACFP

- Helps with development of lifelong healthy eating habits.
- Improves nutrition security.
- Offsets the cost of food for providers and families.
- Can lower the cost of care for families.
- Is an indicator of quality care.
- Providers can access additional trainings & support.

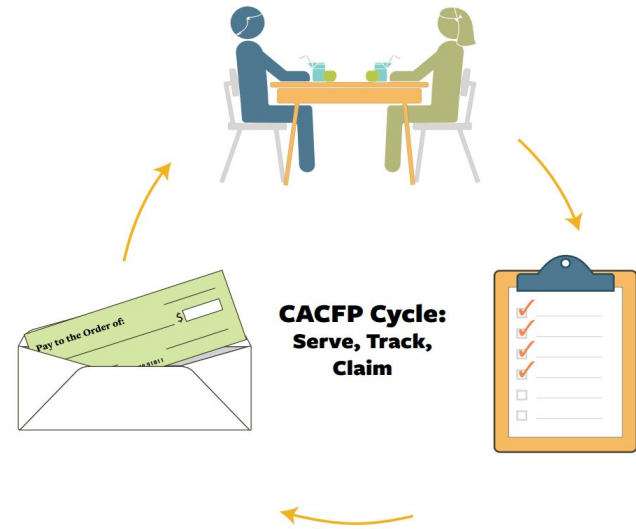
Indicator of Quality Care



PH4 - Provider promotes the consumption of meals and snacks that meet the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal pattern for the ages served.

How It Works

- **Serve** meals compliant with CACFP meal patterns.
- **Track** how many meals are served.
- **Request** reimbursement on a monthly basis.
- Participating programs **receive a per-meal/snack reimbursement.**



Farm to Early Care & CACFP



Farm to CACFP

- USDA is offering a funding opportunity for State agencies to access funds to purchase and distribute local foods for CACFP participants.
 - \$188.6 million specifically for institutions participating in the CACFP.
 - Centers & Homes (through local sponsors) will be able to access funding.
- NYS Farm to Early Care & Education Network is following closely and will share information as it becomes available.



Farm to Early Care & CACFP

- Helps children learn where food comes from.
- Supports local farmers & producers.
- May help lower the cost of food.



CORE ELEMENTS OF FARM to SCHOOL



EDUCATION

GARDENS

PURCHASING



NATIONAL
FARM to SCHOOL
NETWORK



LOCAL FOOD PROCUREMENT

- ▶ **PROCURING** foods for taste tests from a local farmers market
- ▶ **PURCHASING** local, culturally relevant foods for use in meals and snacks



GARDENING

- ▶ **PLANTING**, watering, and harvesting in an on-site garden
- ▶ **TASTE TESTING** foods grown in a garden



FOOD, NUTRITION, AND AGRICULTURE EDUCATION

- ▶ **VISITING** a local farm or community garden
- ▶ **CONDUCTING** a cooking demonstration using local food



Farm to CACFP

- CACFP does not define “local.” CACFP providers can decide what definition of local makes the most sense for their specific area.
- CACFP funds can be used to help purchase local foods from farmers markets, gardening supplies and more.
- Homes & centers can engage in farm to early care activities such as:
 - Gardening
 - Composting
 - Cooking lessons
 - Taste testing

Getting Started with Farm to CACFP

- Start small!
- Choose a snack to transition to locally grown items.
- Connect with local producers.
- Check out your local farmers market.
- Connect with community organizations that may be able to offer assistance.
- Talk with your peers!



Additional Resources for Farm to CACFP

- Family Childcare providers:
[Grow it, try it, like it!](#)
Connect with your local sponsor!
- Childcare Centers:
Connect with NYSDOH about the Eat well, play hard [initiative](#).
- For All:
[National Farm to School Network](#)
[USDA - Factsheet](#)
[ASPHN - Fruit & Veggie Snack Menu planning tool](#)

Family-Style Dining

- Not a requirement of CACFP participation.
- Helps children's development.
- Makes mealtime more relaxing and fun!
- May help reduce food costs and waste.



Tips for Implementing

- Give everyone a role.
- Have extra serving utensils and cleaning supplies ready for spills.
- Enjoying mealtime with children is a great way to model trying new foods.
- Don't expect perfection - building these skills takes time.



Tips for Implementing

- Consider allergies, religious and cultural practices, it may be safer to pre plate some components.
- You can implement some aspects of family-style dining if needed.



Additional Resources for Family Style Dining

- **NYSDOH**
 - [Serving Meals Family-Style](#)
- **USDA**
 - [Webpage](#)
 - [Family Style Meal Service Webinar](#)
 - [Implementation guidance](#)
- **National CACFP Association**
 - [Meal Pattern Minute: Family Style Dining](#)
 - [Family-Style dining tip sheet](#)

Connect with Elected Officials!



Photo courtesy of Jessica Dean:
Congressman Marc Molinaro visits Jessica's Daycare - Summer 2024

Connect With Your Local Representative

- Some are not familiar with the CACFP.
- Scheduling a visit is a great way to introduce representatives to the CACFP & educate them about the program.
- Local Representatives are more likely to be in their districts during breaks - usually, August is an ideal month.
- Visit House.gov to [find your representative](#), contact information & more.

Tips for Hosting

- When arranging a date:
 - Provide a few dates and times to their staff.
 - Invite during a snack or meal or prepare another activity.
- Prepare for the visit:
 - Let parents know - photo release forms.
 - Visit your representatives website to better understand their interest areas.
 - Have talking points ready to explain the impact and importance of the CACFP.
 - Provide some educational materials.

Take Action!

- Plan ahead - connect with representative staff 1-3 months in advance. You may need to reach out more than once.
- Follow up with your representative after hosting.
- Share your visit with your peers and on social media!

Additional Resources

- National CACFP Association
 - [Blog](#)
 - [Additional resources](#)
- [National CACFP Forum](#)
- Learn about and support current CACFP bills
 - [Senate: Child Care Nutrition Enhancement Act \(S. 3294\)](#)
 - [House: Child Care Nutrition Enhancement Act \(H.R. 5569\)](#)
 - [House: Early Childhood Nutrition Improvement Act \(H.R. 6067\)](#)



Additional Federal Nutrition Program Resources

- **WIC:** Help [spread the word](#) about WIC. Individuals can visit [WICHelpNY.org](#) to see if they are eligible **today!**
- **SNAP:** the Nutrition Outreach and Education Program (**NOEP**) offers **free & confidential** services to connect New Yorkers with SNAP. To find a local NOEP Coordinator, visit [FoodHelpNY.org](#).
- **Summer Meals:** Families can visit [SummerMealsNY.org](#) to find summer meal sites, outreach materials and more.

Additional Resources

- [NYSDOH - CACFP](#)
- [NYSDOH - CACFP crediting handbook](#)
- [USDA Food Buying Guide](#)
- [Child Nutrition Recipe Box: USDA Standardized Recipes](#)
- [USDA Recipes for Healthy Kids: Cookbook for Child Care Centers](#)

More ways to connect with CACFP

- **Subscribe to our newsletter**
 - Upcoming opportunities to get involved
 - CACFP research and updates
- **Share your story**
 - Help other providers understand how participating in CACFP adds value to programming.

Stay Connected!

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Visit us Online:

HungerSolutionsNY.org

ChildcareMealsNY.org

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