

Increased Participation in Summer Meals Proves it Takes a Village

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The Food Resource Action Center (FRAC) recently reported that in 2011 participation in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP, also known as Summer Meals) was down, nationally, compared to previous years. Summer Meals provides universal breakfast and lunch to all children age 18 and under at schools and other sites in low-income neighborhoods during the summer. Although nationally there was a decrease in participation in the program, New York City saw a 3% increase. Part of this increase may be attributed to a city-wide collaboration where governmental agencies, community-based organizations and hunger advocates, including the Food Bank For New York City, implemented a more grassroots approach by canvassing low-income neighborhoods with localized Summer Meals outreach materials.



Summer Meals provides universal breakfast and lunch to all children age 18 and under at schools and other sites in low-income neighborhoods during the summer.

In addition to its annual outreach initiatives around Summer Meals (including recruiting member agencies to become distribution sites and on-the-ground outreach) last year, for the first time, the Food Bank For New York City distributed over 100,000 flyers to families with children throughout the city through our approximately 1,000 member agencies.

Although there was an increase in participation in the program, the numbers are still relatively low; participation increased to only 28% last year. This means that we have a long way to go. This year Food Bank is expanding its Summer Meals efforts and continues to work with the larger city-wide initiative to further increase participation in the program.