

Enriching the Community by Providing Summer Meals and Snacks

Family Enrichment Network is pleased to report on its summer meal program. The Summer Food Services Program is run by the NYS Department of Education, and their goal is to serve nutritious meals and snacks that meet meal requirements and are appetizing to children.

All meals and snacks are prepared on-site and served by our staff. It is a remarkable program, as we are immediately aware that we've met our goal. Children and their parents or family members arrive, they are given a snack or lunch, and they eat! Parent/Guardian meals are paid for by the Agency, and we are pleased that we can offer them meals, too. They leave the site having an opportunity to eat a healthy meal. At a time when food dollars are tight for many community families, it's nice to be able to assist with a basic need in such a direct manner.

Children arrive with their parents, in a group, or sometimes on their own; but, however they arrive, whether it's as a member of a large group or a family, the goal is still the same...feed them, provide them with a high-quality, well-balanced hot and cold meals. For many, it may be their main sustenance for the day.

The Summer Food Services Program intends to provide children with nutritious meals during the summer months. Their tagline reads: "It's food that's in when school is out!"

We modified our menu mid-summer to encourage children and their families to continue attending; and we've spent time getting to really know the children we're serving. When the children miss even one day, staff wonder where they've

been, and when they return, the food services staff spends extra time interacting with them...telling them how good it is to see them. It's an amazing program because it benefits children, their families, and our staff.

In addition to the meals that are served, craft projects offered by our Summer Youth Services Program and a Book Lending program offered by the Johnson City School District round out our participants' experience while they are at our center for their summer snack or lunch.

In our first month of service, we served 684 meals to children and 160 meals to their adult family members. The program will operate this summer until August 31st. It is a wonderful resource for our community and families, and we look forward to its continued success with this year's program.