SUMMER MEALS
Activity Guide
Thank you for helping to bring summer meals to your community! With your work you are ensuring that children receive the nutrition they need, and the time you are giving is a gift to the entire community. In 2015 there were 2,066,023 free meals served in Oregon through the Summer Meal Service Program. This sounds like a lot, but only represents 1 in 5 children that utilize free or reduced price meals during the school year. With your help, we can try to reach the other 4 in 5 children and work to end hunger in Oregon.

This toolkit provides basic information about food safety, working with children, and includes some activities you can do at your site to attract more participants and create more fun. The activities and guidelines are only a snippet of available information though, and we encourage you to let your imagination run wild!

### Summer Meal Principles

1. Summer meal sites should be fun and safe community spaces for children and families where children can receive meals in a welcoming and stigma-free environment

2. At open sites, ALL children 18 and under are welcome to a meal regardless of whether they go to the local school or live in the area

3. Respect and dignity are as important as food and health. All people should be welcomed and treated respectfully. Food and culture are deeply entwined, including what is considered good food, how the food is prepared and the social experience of eating.

4. At the best summer food sites, food is a part of programming and activities, and the community considers the summer food site their own.

5. Rules, regulations and policies should be clearly understood, displayed and communicated, along with information on who to contact with concerns or requests. The system should be as non-judgemental as possible and leave room for both positive and negative feedback.

6. All children deserve access to good, healthy food that they enjoy. An “if they’re hungry enough they’ll eat it” attitude is disrespectful to children and their personal and medical needs.
Familiarize yourself with state and local food safety regulations that apply to summer meals. The local health department is often a good resource for food safety information and guidance. Your state agency may also have additional food safety requirements for summer meals, check with them to find out what they are.

**Fighting Bacteria**
- Wash hands and surfaces often
- Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds to send bacteria down the drain:
  - Before handling food
  - After handling food
  - After using the bathroom
  - After changing a diaper
  - After tending to a sick person
  - After blowing nose, coughing or sneezing
  - After handling pets
- Wash your cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and counter tops with hot water and soap after preparing each food item and before going on to the next food


While it is unlikely that you will be faced with an emergency during your summer meal services, it’s always important to be prepared. Below are some important things to know in case of an emergency event and some tips for interacting with children after a crisis. Make sure you talk to the manager of your summer food site about the list of things to know.

**Things to know:**
- Where is the closest First Aid Kit?
- What local emergency numbers are there (i.e. poison control, local hospital)?
- What is your evacuation site?
- Where is the closest hospital?
- Where is the closest public phone site?
- If you’re indoors- where is a fire extinguisher? Where are the exits?

**What to do post crisis:**
- Stay calm
- Help children feel safe
- Provide reassurance
- Encourage children to express their feelings
- Encourage children to ask questions
- Share important and factual information with kids
Getting the attention of a crowd can be difficult, below are some suggestions for how to get the eyes and ears of children focussed on you! Once you find a strategy that works well for you, stick with it. This will allow you to get kids attention more quickly.

“Hands up. Mouth closed. Show me that you’re listening.”
- This works well with large groups of all ages. It helps to repeat “Hands up. Mouth closed. Show me that you’re listening” as you raise your own hand until the kids all follow suit and quiet down

“1, 2, 3 Eyes on me... 1,2 Eyes on you”
- This is based on a simple call and response idea. When you say, “1,2,3, eyes on me” the kids should respond “1,2 eyes on you” repeat as needed until you have their attention

Clapping patterns
- Clap once. See if anyone claps. Clap twice. Clap patterns. Kids catch on slowly sometimes, but once you are doing the more intricate clapping patterns most everyone is with you.

Counting
- Put your hands up and do a countdown from 10, putting a finger down for each number to provide both audio and visual cues

“If you can hear my voice put your finger on your nose...”
- Repeat this with different directions like “finger on your ear... knee... tummy” until you have most people’s attention

Alert noise
- Use a bell or other musical instrument, or make an alarm noise using your voice

Quiet Coyote
- Create a coyote hand puppet by placing your middle finger, ring finger, and thumb together pointing out and pointing your pinky and index finger straight up. Hold up the quiet coyote and wait for kids to notice and copy you.
When resolving a conflict between two kids, follow the steps above so everyone has a chance to calm down before talking things over. This will make it much easier to find a resolution.

8 Steps to Conflict Resolution
• Cool down
• Have each party describe the conflict in their own words
• Have each party describe what caused the conflict, without assigning fault
• Describe the feelings raised by the conflict
• Listen carefully and respectfully while the other person is talking
• Have everyone brainstorm solutions to the conflict and share them, before you start setting ground rules that all ideas are okay and come up with as many ideas as possible
• Pick one solution from the brainstorm session and try it out
• If one solution doesn’t work, try another

Steps to an “I Message”
“I Messages” can help kids (or anyone!) describe how and what they are feeling without making accusations or placing blame on someone else
• Start with an “I” not “You” to put the focus on your feelings wants and needs and avoid putting the other person on the defensive “I _____”
• Clearly and simply say HOW you feel “I feel _____” “I’m________”
• State what the other person did, or is doing, that made you feel that way “I feel _____ when you _____”
• State why you feel the way you do “I feel _____ when you _____ because ______”
• State what you want the other person to do “I want you to ______”

Although it isn’t likely, you never know when a child will become frustrated. Below are some tips for helping a child calm down when they are feeling frustrated or upset by an activity or situation. Make sure that you react calmly, children pick up on the energies around them!

- Find a place the child can be alone
- Stay calm to provide a calm atmosphere
- Encourage them to take at least ten slow deep breaths
- Ask questions-- you want the child to feel heard and understood
- Accept feelings and redirect angry actions
- Practice problem solving- what would fix the situation?
- Find something for the child to squeeze, have them run, stomp or find another safe physical way for them to release anger

Tips for Maintaining Smiles

Tips for Keeping Peace

When resolving a conflict between two kids, follow the steps above so everyone has a chance to calm down before talking things over. This will make it much easier to find a resolution.
Transitioning between activities can be difficult for kids and adults when there’s a large group. To make it easier for everyone, make sure to tell children ahead of time what’s coming next and what behavior is expected of them. Below are some useful tips to make transitions easier, and some quick games that can be played during awkward breaks to make things go more smoothly for everyone!

- Eliminate unnecessary transitions. What will make the day flow most easily?
- Let everyone know ahead of time what the plan for the day is
- Plan in time for transitions so no one feels rushed
- If you’re using materials, have everything ready ahead of time

### Transition Games

Reassemble
- One person is “it”; the other children stand in a certain order. Have “it” leave the room or close their eyes and count to 20 while the other kids mix up. “It” then puts them back into order.

Machine
- Act out a machine and have the children guess what you are

Blob
- Pretend you are forming something in your hands out of a pliable blob and have the children guess what you made

Penguins
- This game works well for forming a line. Have kids stand in a line and be penguins, penguin shuffling as slowly as you can.

Find the leader
- One child closes their eyes, the others choose a leader to establish a pattern of clapping or stomping, etc. All the children copy the pattern. The one who had their eyes closed tries to guess who the leader is.

Three of a kind
- Pick three kids with something in common and see if the kids can guess what it is (i.e. all wearing a purple shirt, pigtails, have velcro shoes, etc...)
One way to attract more children to your lunch site- and make it more fun for everyone- is to host activities at your site. There are many easy and free activities you can host. Below is a list of ideas and the following pages include activities for observing nature, yoga poses for children, and several games. There is also a list of recommended online resources at the end- the internet is full of fun craft and game ideas and many free downloadable resources.

**ACTIVITIES**

- **Group games or sports**
- **Host a reading club**
- **Write and put on your own play**
- **Find a garden and ask if you can exchange labor for yummy treats**
- **Do a science experiment- or several!**
- **Arts and Crafts projects: Look online for activity ideas**
  - Check dollar or thrift stores for inexpensive supplies
  - Look for projects using the recycling from the meal
- **Find a way to let kids contribute: can they help prepare meals?**
- **Make your own scavenger hunt**
- **Look for local museums, libraries, or businesses within walking distance and ask if you could bring kids by for a field trip**
- **Invite local ‘celebrities’ such as firemen to come and share about what they do and eat lunch with everyone**

This list is only a beginning. Brainstorm more ideas with the kids who frequent your site!
There are many ways to interact with nature within the bounds of a city—every tree and blade of grass is a piece of the natural world. Here are some ideas of things to notice that highlight the nature found all around us.

Observations

- Observe or collect as many different kinds of leaves as possible
- Look for places bugs and animals could make their homes
- Look for signs animals have been nearby: droppings, half eaten leaves, tracks, etc.
- Sit quietly and listen for how many different sounds you can hear
- Look for as many different items that could be food for people or animals as you can find
- Look for as many different kinds of rocks as you can find
- Look for sources of water
- Observe how many different kinds of bark you can find
- Look for birds or nests
- How many different kinds of seeds can you find?
- How many different kinds of flowers can you find?

Nature Walks

- Opposites walk: make a list of opposites to gather as you explore—wet/dry, heavy/light, soft/hard… etc.
- Senses walk: find items that appeal to the 5 senses—sight, taste, touch, smell and sound
- Listening walk: listen to what you hear and keep track
Healthy Living: Yoga for Kids

- Tree
- Warrior
- Rag Doll
- Triangle
- Half Moon
- Dancer
- Frog
- Table Top
- Plank
- Cobra
- Down Dog
- Knee Stand
- Camel
- Hero
- Childs Pose
- Side Plank
- Bridge
Yoga for Kids

Poses for Partners

Double Tree

Warrior Friends

Twin Dragons

Salloot

Double Pretzel

Seesaw

Double Boat

Double Dancer

Lean on Me

Huddle Pose

Back-to-Back Twist

Back-to-Back Chair

Open Heart

Double Dog

Grab a Friend!
The games included in this booklet are all adapted from the Playworks Playbook. The Playbook is free to download online and includes countless more activities- a link to it can be found in the resource section. Children also are a great resource for games- ask what their favorite ones are, or make up your own.

ANIMAL FARM

- Group Size: 15-40
- Length of activity: 10-15 minutes
- Set-up: establish a playing area and have group stand in a circle

Before you start:
- Have kids number off from one to five
- Assign an animal for each of the five numbers
- Tell students what animal their number corresponds to and have them make that animal noise

How to Play:
- Kids must keep their eyes shut during the game
- They must find their fellow matching animals while walking slowly around the area with their hands up to act as a bumper
- The game is over when everyone has found their group

Variations:
- Depending on the size of your group you can add more or less animals
- Have kids imitate their animals in motion instead of making sounds, this variation is
PARTNER TO PARTNER

• Group Size: 10-20
• Length of activity: 5-10 minutes
• Set Up: none

Before you start:
• Warm-up with some basic stretches and a bit of cardio
• Form a circle
• Review rules and boundaries
• Review body parts and which ones are appropriate to call-out

How to Play:
• One player is chosen to stand in the center; everybody else partners up and stands in the circle with their partners next to them, making sure to leave space between pairs
• Player in the middle calls out commands such as “elbow-to-elbow”, “back-to-back”, “knee-to-knee”. Players take these positions accordingly.
• When the person in the middle calls “partner to partner” all the players have to find a new partner while the person in the middle tries to get a partner
• If they are successful the person left without a partner becomes the new person in the middle and starts to give commands

Variations:
• Instead of having everyone just switch body parts you can have them keep everything connected. For example, if you say “hand to hand” and then “toe to toe” they would have their hands and toes connected at the same time. If you then added “elbow to elbow” they would have all three body parts connected
• Turn this game into a tag game by calling out a body part (i.e. shoulder, elbow, toe, knee, etc) and their job is to tag their partner on that spot before their partners tag them
• Be sure to review safe tagging
• 1st person to be tagged must perform a task to get back into the game (i.e. jumping jacks, somersaults, etc)
SHADOW SHADOW

- Group Size: 2-100
- Length of activity: 5+ minutes
- Set Up: None

Before you start:
- Demonstrate how to move and how to be a shadow
- Choose a volunteer to help you
- Exaggerate and make funny movements to add fun to the game
- Designate a signal to begin moving and stop moving
- Emphasize the importance of awareness, to avoid contact with your partner and others

How to play:
- The object is to continuously follow a partner without running into him/her
- Identify what type of movement is possible (walking, fast running, etc)
- Designate signals for the pairs to:
  - Begin moving around the play area
  - Stop moving
  - Change roles after 2-3 minutes so both sides have the chance to lead

Variation:
- Add various movements: skipping, hopping, leaping, crawling, etc

ALL TANGLED UP

- Group size: 7+
- Length of activity: 15 minutes
- Set up: divide kids into small groups of up to 12 people and have them form a tight circle

How to play:
- Everyone puts one hand into the center of the circle and grabs the hand of someone else, except the people standing next to them
- Everyone puts their other hand into the circle and grabs the hand of someone else in the group except the people standing next to them and the person they are already holding hands with

Variations:
- Make the groups larger
- Add restrictions to communication methods (no talking, no names, etc)
SHARKS AND MINNOWS

• Group size: 10-100
• Length of activity: 10+ minutes
• Set up: clearly designate a playing area with visible boundaries

Before you start:
• Once children understand what the sharks will say, what the minnows do and when and where to run when ‘Shark Attack!’ is called they are ready to start

How to play:
• Choose a few students to be sharks and everyone else will be minnows
• The sharks stand in the middle of the play area and say “Fishy, fishy come out and play”. The minnows walk slowly towards the sharks.
• At any time, the sharks can yell “Shark Attack!!!”
• The minnows must run to the opposite boundary line without being tagged
• If a minnow is tagged, s/he also becomes a shark
• When there are only one or two minnows left; they become the sharks in the next round

Variations:
• Have minnows run back to the starting line when “shark attack” is called
• Choose different predators and preys (lions and zebras, cat and mouse)
• Have the sharks say “fishy, fishy come out and play, if...” and call out different characteristics (“if you are wearing the color green” or “if you have a sister” etc)

Indoor modifications:
• Instead of running, only heel-toe walking is allowed for both sharks and minnows
**BAND-AID TAG**

- Group size: 10-50
- Length of activity: 5+ minutes
- Set Up: Designate a clear playing area. Designate a ‘hospital’ outside the play area

Before you start:
- Talk about safe tagging: light touches like a butterfly’s wings, avoid hard contact that might cause the person being tagged to fall
- Review what to do when you get tagged
- Make sure everyone knows where the hospital is and how to get ‘healed’

How to play:
- Ask for a volunteer to be “it”
- If a child is tagged, s/he must take one hand and put it directly on the place where they were tagged. The hand is a “band-aid”
- S/he can continue to run around and avoid being tagged but they must keep their “band-aid” on, so they have only one free hand
- If s/he is tagged again, s/he must take the other hand and place it on the second spot where s/he was tagged. S/he can continue to run around with both “band-aids” on.
- If s/he is tagged a third time, s/he has to go to the hospital and do ten jumping hacks to get back in

Variations:
- Students can be “treated” at the hospital by counting to 20 instead of doing jumping jacks
- Students can go to the hospital at any time to remove band-aids. They do not have to wait until they get tagged a third or even second time.

**TOMATO**

- Group size: 3-25
- Length of activity: 10-15 minutes
- Set up: have the whole group stand or sit in a circle

How to Play:
- One person begins as the answerer
- Everyone in the circle takes turns asking appropriate questions. The answerer must answer every question with the word “tomato”
- If the answerer laughs or says something other than “tomato” the person asking the question becomes the new answerer

Variations:
- Change the word
Yoga Poses for Kids  
http://www.uaex.edu/health-living/health/youth.aspx

Playworks Playbook  
Great resource for accessible games for kids of all ages  
http://www.playworks.org/playbook

Tag games  
62 variations of the game tag  
http://www.ultimatecampresource.com/site/camp-activities/tag-games.page-1.html

My plate  
Nutrition education activities for kids  
http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/team-nutrition

Educational activities on many subject areas  
http://www.enchantedlearning.com/Home.html

Science activities  
https://www.bpa.gov/PublicInvolvement/CommunityEducation/CurriculumActivities/pages/default.aspx

All about water  
Educational resources for teaching about water systems and conservation  
http://www.conserveh2o.org/water-conservation-brochures-resources

Puzzles, crafts, games, printable activity sheets  
http://www.activityvillage.co.uk

Milk carton craft projects  
Projects using recycled milk cartons  
http://familycrafts.about.com/od/milkcartoncrafts/

Craft project ideas  
http://www.make-stuff.com/indexes/kidsindex.html

Recycled craft ideas  

Improvisation games for kids  
http://www.improv4kids.com/ImprovGames.html

Support for child hunger prevention  
https://oregonhunger.org

Information about the Summer Food Service Program and Resources  
http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/results/?id=208

Don’t forget to check with your local parks and recreation department and public library for the summer programming they offer!