



Providing Adult Meals at Summer Meal Sites



In pilots where adult meals were served at Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sites, sponsors, kids, and caregivers report many benefits. Surveys show that caregivers prefer programs that make meals available to adults in addition to children. Caregivers explain that eating together as a family is more enjoyable and more convenient. Kids are more excited to eat the meals when their caregivers are able to eat with them. When everyone can participate, site staff do not need to remind parents that the food is just for kids, which improves the experience for both staff and for families. Adult meals pilots also have shown that child participation in the program increases when adult meals are offered. This summer consider providing adult meals at your summer meal sites to create additional opportunities for families to eat together.

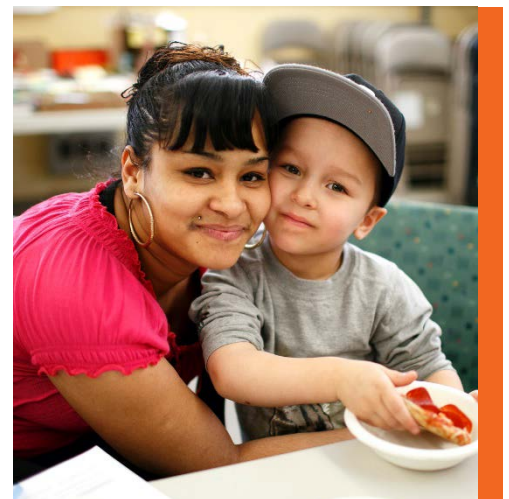
Check out our suggestions below related to covering costs associated with providing adult meals and maintaining program compliance.

Covering Costs

- **Grants:** While there are few grant opportunities exclusively for adult meals these funds will likely be the easiest way to cover costs. Consider framing adult meals as a tactic to improve the summer meals program or increase access in your request for funds.
- **Local Sponsorship:** Reach out to businesses located near your site locations to request sponsorship. Many businesses are eager to give back and might be especially interested knowing that their dollars will be invested back into their community.
- **Concessions Sales:** Some sponsors cover the costs associated with adult meals through concession and à la carte sales from the school year. This may be an easy way to secure funds without doing something new.
- **Paid Meals:** Rather than seeking additional financial support, you could also charge adults for meals served using either a pay-what-you-can model or a set price model.

“Because we could come as a family and all eat. It was convenient, and other families thought so too. So, we all came more often, and we created a little community of our own.”

— Caregiver and Program Participant





Maintaining Compliance

- **Counting and Claiming:** When you serve an adult meal, count that meal on the meal count form. Meals served to non-program adults should be accounted for independently from meals served to kids and program adults.
- **Financial Management:** You will not receive federal reimbursement for meals served to non-program adults. To be in compliance you must be able to show that you have access to funds that cover the true cost of meal production including labor, food, and the commodities value.
- **Menu Planning:** Think about developing modified meals that use the same ingredients as the youth meals but may appeal more to adults.

Tips and Tricks

- **Seek Feedback:** Reach out to your community and state agency to share your plans related to adult meals. Both groups might provide invaluable feedback as you think through where and how to provide adult meals.
- **Phased Approach:** Doing something new can be intimidating. If you are worried about what might happen when you start providing adult meals, consider a phased approach. It is okay to serve adult meals at only a few sites when you first start out.
- **Estimated Meal Counts:** Many sponsors find that providing adult meals can have a positive impact on participation. Be prepared to connect more kids with meals than you did last summer and expect to serve about one adult for every four kids.

