



Fueling Participation: Marketing and Outreach to Boost Participation

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Through grant-making, relationship development, policy and advocacy campaigns, and program awareness, she helps communities connect to critical nutrition programs including school meals, summer meals and SNAP.





Agenda

- Introduction
- No Kid Hungry Marketing Tools
- Outreach Methods
- Your Turn: Start Your Marketing & Outreach Plan
- Q & A

NO KID HUNGRY RESOURCE: OUTREACH TOOLKIT

- Social media posts
- Customizable flyers, banners, yard signs
- Website blurbs, template press releases
- Template faith bulletin excerpt

[Toolkit Link](#)



No Kid Hungry GA Summer Summit 2026

MESSAGES THAT WORK:

- Good messaging removes stigma or emotional barriers from participating.
- Reframe what the program is:
 - Avoid - “families in need”, “emergency help”
 - Instead - “community resource”, “benefit for all families”, “summer support for kids”
- Emphasize convenience, not need.
- Message the benefit:
 - Saves time
 - Reduces trips to the grocery store
 - Helps busy families
 - Makes summer easier

“One less thing to worry about this summer.”

MESSAGES THAT WORK:

- Use clear, plain language.
 - Avoid - technical program names, acronyms, formal language
 - Instead - “free summer meals”, “pick up and go”, “no questions asked”
- Make the caregivers the heroes. Frame meal pickup positively.
 - “Fueling kids for summer”
 - “Supporting healthy growth”
 - “Helping kids stay ready to learn”

When messaging focuses on community, convenience, and kids—not need—families are more likely to participate without stigma.

NO KID HUNGRY SOCIAL MEDIA TEMPLATES

- **Meal prep is work. Let us take care of that.** Join us at [PROGRAM] during [TIME FRAME] for free meals and fun for kids and teens 18 and under. To learn more, call 1-XXX-XXX-XXX or visit: WEBSITE.
- **Lunch is on us! Save time and money preparing meals for your kids and stop by** PROGRAM during [TIME FRAME] for free food and fun. To learn more, call 1-XXX-XXX-XXX or visit: WEBSITE.
- We're providing free meals for kids and teens 18 and under Monday through Friday at LOCATION. **Stop by with your family between [TIME] and [TIME] to enjoy lunch on us.** To learn more, call 1-XXX-XXX-XXX or visit: WEBSITE.

Outreach Events: Summer Meals Kickoff Event

- Community event to promote excitement about free summer meals.
- Draw media attention and other partner attention to summer hunger and resources for families.
- Promote summer meals as fun and community oriented – take away the stigma of receiving free meals.



Outreach Events: Summer Meals Kickoff Event

- Great way to clearly explain the program and familiarize families to the pickup process.
- Encourage families to return regularly.
- Makes a great first impression that welcomes families!
- Gives you a better understanding about awareness in the community and what outreach may need to look like in future weeks.



SUMMER KICKOFF EVENT: INVITE PARTNERS

- Invite other organizations that are invested in kids during the summer. They can promote their programs to families and provide enrichment activities:
 - Libraries
 - Sports league or rec club
 - Arts organization
 - STEM programs
- Families that are interested in free summer meals may also need other food resources. You could invite:
 - Food bank (mobile pantry)
 - Local WIC office
 - Extension or other nutrition education programs

SUMMER KICKOFF EVENT: INVITE PARTNERS

- Health and wellness organizations could bring value beyond meals and attract families.
 - Community health clinics / FQHCs
 - Children's hospitals
 - Mental health organizations
 - Dental or vision outreach programs
- Inviting sponsors is optional, but may be able to offset any costs you have putting on the kickoff event:
 - Grocery stores
 - Restaurants
 - Local businesses willing to donate giveaways, or activities
- Remember to bring the fun! That could mean:
 - Inviting a local radio station or dj to play music
 - Having activities from bubbles & chalk to a bounce house!

Summer Meals Kickoff Event: Keep in Mind

- Kickoffs can require extra hands, so make sure you have enough staff or volunteers in attendance.
- Promotion is necessary to make it successful. Consider how you'll share with families.
- Make plans for how to sustain participation when you don't have extra partners on site.
- Promoting summer-long free meals for kids is the main goal – how can you design your event so that's the takeaway for families?



Outreach Events: Summer Spike Event

- Small theme days or lower lift events that drive participation.
- Different team members can take on this project.
- Tap into events or resources that already exist in your community!
- Use small events to drive participation in July when we know numbers drop.



SUMMER SPIKE EVENT IDEAS

Community Heroes Drive-Through: “Touch a Truck”

- What it looks like: Fire truck, tractor, or other kid-friendly vehicle parked nearby.
- Why it works: Big visual draw, minimal time commitment.

Art & Activity Pack Pick-Up

- What it looks like: Crayons, chalk, craft kits included with meals.
- Why it works: Keeps kids engaged after they leave—no on-site setup needed.

Punch Card or Passport Program

- What it looks like: Each pickup earns a stamp. After 5 visits, kids get a prize.
- Why it works: Builds consistency without requiring daily attendance and encourages families to come back.

SUMMER SPIKE EVENT IDEAS

Fourth of July: Drive-Up BBQ Box Day

- What it looks like: BBQ-style meal. Kids get a “BBQ Day” sticker or mini flag.
Why it works: Feels special without requiring families to stay. Easy to promote: “BBQ meals available this Friday only!”

Storytime To-Go

- What it looks like: Invite your local library if they have a book mobile or include a free book or coloring booklet in the meal bag.
- Why it works: Perfect for families who travel far and can’t linger.

Back to School Event

- What does it look like: Couple your back to school supply drive with summer meals!
- Why it works: Pairing events that provide support families just makes sense.

Get the Word Out: Engaging Local Officials

- Local officials like a:
 - Mayor
 - City Council Member
 - County Commissioner
- Invite them to attend a kickoff or spike event. Their attendance can draw media attention!
- Ask their office to spread the word via social media.
- Invite local officials to hand out meals to increase their awareness.



Get the Word Out: Engaging Media

- Use the No Kid Hungry template press release to share with local media about summer meal distribution dates & times.
- Invite media to summer meal kickoffs and spike events.
- If you are delivering meals via bus, invite local press to follow the bus.
- If you're distributing meals at a site, use the press to help families understand how the process works.



Outreach: Local Champions & Getting the Word Out

- Where are you distributing meals?
- In a neighborhood or housing development you may find:
 - A trusty neighbor that helps get the word out
 - A staff member that helps organize resident communications
 - A group of people that are often home during food distribution, ex: retired folks, parents, teens



Outreach: Hitting the Pavement!

- If you're distributing meals in a new area, your staff may need to introduce themselves and make neighbors aware that they'll be there.
- Have staff that will be the primary contact that summer go out in pairs to knock on doors and share flyers with your distribution dates.
- Remember to wear a branded tshirt or some indicator of who you're with – people will want to know you're trustworthy.



WHO IS YOUR AUDIENCE?

- Children
- Parents and caregivers
- Community leaders

WHERE DO THEY GET THEIR INFORMATION?

- Social media - Instagram, TikTok, Facebook
- Word of mouth, radio, bus ads
- Schools, community centers, religious institutions

Your Turn: Identify Your Target Audience

- Who usually picks up meals?
 - Parents
 - Grandparents
 - Foster parents
 - Older siblings
- Where these caregivers already go:
 - Churches
 - Grocery stores
 - Clinics
 - Worksites



Your Turn: Who communicates with families?

- Who are trusted members of your community that can spread the word?
- Who or what entities are already speaking to families?
- Who can share the message without having to create new materials?



Your Turn: Choose Your Outreach Methods

Examples:

- Flyers
- Local radio
- Facebook community pages
- Churches or food pantries
- Word-of-mouth
- Roadside signs

Reflection question:

- What resources do you already have?
- Which channels actually reach families in your area?



Your Turn: What's your timeline? What messages work?

- After spring break
- Before school is out
- After school is out
- Mid-summer
- Back-to-school

Would messages be different during these times?



Your Turn: Share Out!

- Share with the group – what ideas do you have for outreach to kids and families this year?





Q&A





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Interested in a Summer Grant?

Fill out our inquiry form as a first step in
No Kid Hungry's summer grant
application process

Scan the QR code to access the form!

TEAM NO KID HUNGRY

WE ARE HERE TO HELP

Facebook: @NoKidHungryGA

Email Anastasia Tsekeris:

atsekeris@strength.org

Sign up for our Newsletter:

