



## WHAT IS CACFP?

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) provides nutritious meals and snacks to children, adults with disabilities, and seniors. The U.S. Department of Agriculture provides reimbursements for meals to family child care homes, child care centers, emergency shelters, afterschool programs, and adult day care facilities. In Maine, CACFP is administered by the Department of Health and Human Services.

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

- **Child Care Centers:** Children age 12 and younger are eligible to receive up to two meals and one snack daily at child care homes or centers.
- **Shelters:** Homeless shelters may be reimbursed for up to three meals each day for resident children age 18 and younger.
- **At-Risk Afterschool:** Afterschool meals and snacks are available in structured programs to children through age 18. Schools where more than 50% of students are eligible for free and reduced-price meals OR youth program sites within the attendance area of a school with 50% or more eligibility.

In Maine, over 300 schools and community programs are eligible to serve additional meals afterschool but only 24 sites are accessing funding. Currently 10,767 children access CACFP meals, which accounts for only 22% of eligible children under 18.

## AT-RISK AFTERSCHOOL OPTION - WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- **Enriching Environment for Children:** Many children arrive to afterschool programs hungry, and a small snack isn't enough for them. At-Risk afterschool care programs provide a much needed service to their communities. These programs offer children:
  - A safe place to go afterschool
  - Nutritious food that gives them energy they need to concentrate on homework
  - Time to join their friends in physical, educational and social activities
- **Covering Costs through Reimbursements:** Reimbursement for meals served in afterschool programs are an imm are able to offer a full meal if they operate CACFP in addition. Many schools

find it is easier to offer both a meal and a snack through CACFP instead of operating both programs. portant revenue source for sponsors. In addition to funding meals, 20% of the reimbursement can fund administration of the program. Funds allow programs to:

- Use higher quality foods
- Employ food service staff for longer hours with higher wages
- Increase quality of enrichment programs

- **Moving from NSLP Afterschool Snack to CACFP:** Schools that offer a snack through the National School Lunch Program


## WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS?


**Awareness:** Many people aren't aware of the program and the benefits it offers. The CACFP option for child care centers and shelters has been in place for many years, but the At-Risk Afterschool option was only implemented in 2010.

**Start-up and Additional Costs:** Some sites find they need start-up funds to cover food costs for the first month or necessary equipment. Others need ongoing funding for enrichment activities.

**Reimbursement rate:** There is a perception that the reimbursement rate is low compared to other programs, when in fact it is comparable with Summer Food Service Program and the National School Lunch Program Afterschool Snack.

## THE RESULTS!

 Good Shepherd Food Bank currently has a National Child Hunger Corps Member working on expanding CACFP participation in Maine. She has conducted an outreach campaign with schools and nonprofit afterschool programs across the state.

 Good Shepherd Food Bank is currently working with 30 potential sites that are interested in signing on to CACFP.