



# Child Nutrition Act Reauthorization

**Vision Statement:** Every young person should be equipped to make healthy decisions resulting in positive social, emotional and physical well-being.

## Background

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) are meal and snack programs managed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Boys & Girls Clubs across the country serve as sites and sponsors for the USDA programs, providing healthy meals and snacks to children during out-of-school time, while also supporting educational and enrichment programs that keep children learning, engaged and safe. Boys & Girls Clubs are trusted organizations in communities and fulfill a critical need when children are not in school.



**Every dollar invested in Boys & Girls Clubs returns \$9.60 in current and future earnings and cost-savings to their communities.**

 **In 2017, 90 percent of Clubs reported serving more than 88 million snacks and meals at no cost to members.**

These programs provide a valuable resource to individuals with the greatest need. 57 percent of Club members qualify for free or reduced-price school lunches. For many children, these may be the only nutritious meals they enjoy on a normal day. Especially during the summer these site-based meal programs serve a critical need in communities, in addition to providing healthy meals; they stop summer learning loss through educational programs, keep kids active and provide safety check-ins during the summer.

An estimated **14 percent of American households are food insecure**, a number that includes 15.3 million children. **When kids are hungry, it impedes their ability to learn.** More than 22 million children receive free or reduced-cost meals through the National School Lunch Program, but only 3.8 million of these kids continue to receive meals through the USDA's Summer Food Service program.<sup>1</sup>

## Improving Youth Food Security

The reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act would expand and further support meal and snack programs provided at Boys & Girls Clubs across the country. In order to ensure bolstered access to these programs, policy changes must include:



- **Streamlined Application Process** – Reduce red tape by allowing Clubs to complete one application in order to provide children meals after school and during the summer.



We ask Congress to **expand and support meal and snack programs** at Boys & Girls Clubs through the **reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act**, and include the following policy changes: a streamlined application process, improved area eligibility, start-up and expansion grants, third meal during summer and transportation grants.

- **Improved Area Eligibility** – Allow communities to participate if **40 percent of youth** in the area are eligible for free or reduced-price meals, the current requirement is **50 percent**.
- **Start-up and Expansion Grants** – Provide grants that would expand access by opening new meal sites, adding service days and offering additional meal types.
- **Third Meal During Summer** - Currently Clubs can serve a **maximum of two meals**. This would eliminate the need to skip a meal, providing the option of serving two meals and a snack or three meals so that children can continue learning throughout the afternoon.
- **Transportation Grants** – Improve nutrition in rural, underserved and hard-to-reach areas. This would provide grants to help **increase transportation** for these underserved regions. Transportation is one of the biggest barriers to meal participation for kids in these communities.



**Boys & Girls Clubs** are now the **2<sup>nd</sup> largest provider of afterschool programs in rural America**—second only to public schools. There are **990 rural Clubs** that serve nearly **290,000 registered members**, which is **1 out of every 3** young people in rural areas where Clubs operate.

## Success Stories

The **Boys & Girls Clubs of Kern County**, California are a shining example of what Clubs are able to do with funding from USDA Meal and Snack programs. During the school year, Boys & Girls Clubs of Kern County serve over **900 meals** each day to kids who need them, and in the summer serve over **700 meals** each day. Due in part to funding by the County of Kern Planning and Natural Resources Department, the Club opened a new commercial kitchen in order to increase the number of meals that can be prepared and how many kids can be fed. The learning kitchen will teach kids how to prepare healthy meals.



**Boys & Girls Clubs of Bulloch County**, Georgia serves **300 breakfasts and lunches** daily during the summer months as a Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). The program is administered by the GA Department of Early Care and Learning or “Bright from the Start.” Prior to becoming a sponsor, the organization struggled to provide nutritious meals on a consistent basis. The reimbursements from SFSP made it possible to operate the daily meal service, increasing average daily attendance and increasing community outreach possibilities.

The **Boys & Girls Clubs of Durant**, Oklahoma participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) at all four of its Club Sites and offers meals during summer months. As part of their summer lunches, BGC Durant started a Garden Club for their members and incorporates its harvest into the lunches. Club staff also utilize the meals to teach kids how food comes to their table along with the value of making healthy decisions. The newly expanded program serves **53,380 meals** and **20,500 snacks** per year with reimbursements from the Oklahoma Department of Education.

<sup>1</sup> Summer Food Service Program, USDA, <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/serving-summer-meals> (April 10, 2017)