



News Releases

If you have an event, special activity, or call for volunteers, submit a news release to your newspaper's local news editor, your TV station's local news assignment editor or producer, or your radio station's producer. It's very rare for the media to find you. Usually you have to make the first contact. Here's how!

Outreach to Media

- Contact the media when you have a newsworthy story. Only call a reporter when you have real news such as your kick-off event, the announcement of a large donation or partnership, or a story about your new site opening.
- When working with media, be prepared. When you call a reporter, be prepared to answer questions. When you submit a news release, make sure it is complete and free of grammatical errors. The easier you make their job, the more likely an editor or reporter will cover your story.
- Getting a story covered takes work and follow-up. Just because you send a news release, doesn't mean the media will cover it—no matter how great your Program is. Pick up the phone and make a follow-up call and offer to help set up a visit.
- Remember to post your events and special activities on community calendars. Most media have them on their websites. Ask permission to post information every day Summer Meals are served. Make sure to include as much detail as possible, such as menus and activities.

Writing News Releases

- Try to keep your release to one page, double-spaced.
- Always include your contact information in case the editor has questions.
- Put the most important information first in case the editor has limited space.
- Include photos and quotes if you can. Make sure you have each person's permission—or parent's permission for children—in writing.



11/01/20



Sample News Releases

1. Summer Meals Kicks Off on [insert date]

[Your city's name here in all caps]— With summer right around the corner, it's time to think about how children who receive free or reduced-priced lunch in school will eat healthy while school is out. [Your organization's name] provides free meals to children during the summer. You can come for a day of fun with your family to the kickoff event and learn more about Summer Meals.

[Event name] will be at [location] on [day of the week, date] from [start time] to [end time]. There is no cost to attend. More information is available at [phone number or website].

Each year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture partners with local organizations like [Your organization's name], to provide free meals to children when school is out for the summer. Anyone age 18 or younger may come and eat.

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2. You Can Help Feed Kids This Summer: Donations and Volunteers Needed!

[Your city's name here in all caps]— Summer is coming and you can help feed kids while school is out. [Your organization's name] provides free meals to children during the summer. Volunteers are needed throughout the summer to help serve meals, supervise children, and do outreach in the community.

This summer, meals will be served at [location] on [days] at [times]. Contact [your organization's name] at [phone number or website] for more information about volunteering or donating to the Summer Meal Program.

Each year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture partners with local organizations like [your organization's name], to provide free meals to children when school is out for the summer. Anyone age 18 or younger may come and eat.

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3. Summer Meals Feeds Good Nutrition to Our Kids for Free

[Your city's name here in all caps]— With summer right around the corner, it's time to think about keeping children healthy while school is out. [Your organization's name] provides free meals to children during the summer.

This summer, meals will be served at [location] on [days] at [times]. There are no income requirements or registration. Anyone age 18 or younger may come to eat. For more information, contact [phone number or website].

Each year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture partners with local organizations like [your organization's name], to provide free meals to children when school is out for the summer.

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For Additional Information

Review these ideas and adopt the strategies that seem reasonable to you and achievable for your Program. The Summer Meals Toolkit has even more creative ideas and resources at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/summer-meals-toolkit>

Do you have more questions? Sponsors and the general public should contact their State agency for answers. State agencies should contact their Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Regional Office.

List of FNS Regional Offices: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns-regional-offices>

List of State Agencies: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/sfsp-contacts>

USDA and its recipient institutions share responsibility for compliance and oversight to ensure good stewardship of Federal funds.

