



## First Book New Books for the Kids You Serve!



As a Summer Meal site, you can play an important role in feeding kids' bodies and minds over the summer. First book can help you access **free and low-cost new books for the kids you serve**. This guide will help you sign up with First Book and give you some ideas on how you incorporate books into your site programming this summer!



### About First Book

First Book is a nonprofit organization that provides access to **free and low-cost new books** for children in need. Since 1992, First Book has distributed more than 135 million books and educational resources to programs and schools serving children throughout the United States. First Book currently serves over 250,000 programs, schools and organizations serving kids from low-income families. <http://www.firstbook.org>

### How First Book Works

Registering with First Book is easy! Just follow these three steps:

1. **Sign up** at <http://www.firstbook.org/summermeals>. Signing up is *free* and takes just a few minutes.
2. **Share some basic information.** Provide some basic contact information, as well as some general information and estimates about the kids you serve, such as their age range and languages they speak. Some other tips for completing registration:
  - In Step 1: Select **I represent a USDA Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Meal Site.**
  - In Step 3: Additional School or Program Information: Choose **USDA, Food and Nutrition Service** for both *affiliation* and *how you heard about First Book*. You can choose others groups with which you are affiliated too.



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- In Step 3, Eligibility Specifics: Choose **USDA Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Meals Site** when asked, *what criteria did you use as the basis for this estimate?*

## Connect with First Book’s Resources.

Once you complete your registration, you will have immediate, ongoing access to new books and education materials through First Book’s resource channels.

**First Book Marketplace**, an online store, offers brand new books for kids ages birth to 18 at up to 90 percent off retail prices (average price is \$3.25 per book, including shipping). More than 5,000 resources are available for summer meal sites at libraries, camps and community programs – all in one place. Check these out:

- Summer reading: <http://www.fbmarketplace.org/summer-reading-2016/>
- Non-perishable food: <http://www.fbmarketplace.org/food/>
- Games and activities: <http://www.fbmarketplace.org/activities/>
- Site activities and programming:
  - Health and wellness: <https://www.fbmarketplace.org/health-and-wellness>
  - STEM: <http://www.fbmarketplace.org/stem>
  - Financial literacy: <http://www.fbmarketplace.org/financial-literacy>
  - \$2.00 and under: <http://www.fbmarketplace.org/two-dollars-and-under/>

**First Book National Book Bank (FBNBB)** is a national clearinghouse new books donated from publishers. Once registered, you will receive emails when books are available through the FBNBB, and you can go online and apply for titles you want to receive. Books through the FBNBB are free and available for an average of just 50 to 75 cents per book for shipping and handling to locations across the United States. Sign up with First Book at [www.firstbook.org/summermeals](http://www.firstbook.org/summermeals) to receive email notifications when these opportunities become available.



## Programming with First Book



First Book provides an easy, inexpensive way to incorporate reading into your Summer Meal site. With access to more than 5,000 brand new, high-quality books, you can provide access to great books and encourage the kids you serve to keep reading over the summer so they can improve their reading skills and find the fun in reading.

## How Summer Meal Sites Can Use First Book

Here are some ideas on how to incorporate First Book into your programming:

- **Establish a lending library.** When kids come to your site, have books available that they can read while they are on site, or that they can take home to read, then bring back when they visit.
- **Develop an incentive program.** Help encourage kids to keep coming back to your site throughout the summer. Establish an incentive program – for every day they attend, they earn points toward a book they can take home and keep.
- **Use books to help reinforce healthy eating habits.** First Book has great books on healthy eating and wellness available, as well as other resources that include fun activities. <https://www.fbmarketplace.org/health-and-wellness>
- **Encourage creative expression through books.** Have children read a book, then write, draw, or act out their reactions and feelings. Feature the books of a particular author or illustrator and encourage kids to write stories and draw pictures in that style.
- **Connect families to thousands of e-books for free.** Open eBooks is a brand new iOS and Android app that will give you and the families you serve 24/7 access to thousands of popular and award-winning children's eBooks for free. Teach digital literacy, encourage family engagement, and share the love of reading – all through millions of mobile devices already in the hands of young people and their families. Visit [www.fbmarketplace.org/openebooks](http://www.fbmarketplace.org/openebooks) to learn more.



## Event Ideas

### Host a Family Literacy Celebration!

Invite the caring adults in your kids' lives to attend a family literacy celebration. Talk about the importance of literacy while celebrating the fun of reading together. Some ideas for fun activities during the celebration:

- Have kids prepare performances or art based on their favorite books to present to adults.
- Encourage kids and parents to dress up as their favorite book characters.
- Set up different stations with books and associated activities or questions for parents and children to answer together.
- Invite local library representatives to share information on services the library provides and how parents and kids can get library cards.

At the end of the event, send every child home with a book from First Book to add to their home library, and provide tips for parents reading with kids. Tips in English, Spanish, and other languages are available from First Book's partners at Reading Rockets. <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/reading-tips-parents-11-languages>

### Throw a Reading Party!

Show the kids at your Summer Meal site that reading is fun with a Reading Party! Select a book to provide to the kids you serve and invite community members and local media for an afternoon of reading that the kids will never forget. These celebratory events are lots of fun and offer great volunteer and media opportunities. Simple steps for hosting a Reading Party include:

- Identify a location or locations for the event.
- Invite volunteers and special guests, including media.
- Arrange for each child to receive one or more books along with healthy snacks and treats.
- Invite guest readers – school principals, the mayor, local elected officials, television personalities, local children's authors, and other celebrity guests. Don't forget to think about local firemen, policemen, or other "celebrities" who might wow the kids!





- For the Reading Party, divide the students into a number of small “reading circles” centered around one celebrity reader.
- Order books from the First Book Marketplace. <https://www.fbmarketplace.org/>

## For Additional Information

Review these ideas and adopt the strategies that seem reasonable to you and achievable for your Program. 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>

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