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SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM SITES HELP HUNGRY NJ KIDS **Community FoodBank of New Jersey's Summer Sites Feed Children Across the State**

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Summer is the toughest season for New Jersey children facing hunger. It's a time when they don't receive meals during and after school, often their only reliable sources of nutritious food.

Hundreds of thousands of New Jersey kids depend on the food they get at school; nearly 429,000 New Jersey children qualify for free or reduced-price school meals. And thousands of food insecure children receive nourishing after-school meals through the Community FoodBank of New Jersey's Kids Cafes. That's why summer food programs are so important for kids in need.

The Community FoodBank of New Jersey is working with sites across the state – including Boys & Girls Clubs, recreation centers and libraries – to provide these children with breakfast and lunch through the USDA's Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). With 41 sites and counting, the FoodBank will serve thousands of New Jersey children from June 26 through September 1.

But when it comes to summer food programs, only 19.5 percent of eligible children participated in the SFSP last year. In 2016, the FoodBank served over 62,000 meals among New Jersey children – and the goal is to provide even more this summer.

"For hundreds of thousands of our neighbors, summer is not a time of sun and fun," said Debra Vizzi, President and CEO of the Community FoodBank of New Jersey. "It is a time of stress and fear, as families wonder how they will feed their children. We at the Community FoodBank of New Jersey are pulling out all the stops to reach as many of these children as we can. We have been strategizing in an effort to expand the summer food program so that we fill the nutrition gap food insecure children face during the summer months."

The Community FoodBank of New Jersey, a member of Feeding America®, provides people across the state with food, help and hope. The FoodBank distributed over 43 million pounds of food last year to its more than 1,000 community partners including pantries, soup kitchens, emergency shelters, mobile pantries, and child and senior feeding programs. More than 4.7 million times a year, someone in need is fed by the FoodBank's network of partners. For our neighbors, especially families, and for the volunteers and donors who support them, the Community FoodBank of New Jersey is the powerful change agent that fills the emptiness caused by hunger with the basic human essentials that people need to survive.