

CT Child Nutrition Outreach Program

What is the Connecticut Child Nutrition Outreach Program (CNOP)?

The Child Nutrition Outreach Program (CNOP) will increase participation in underutilized federal child nutrition programs, specifically the School Breakfast Program, Summer Meals Programs, and the Child and Adult Care Food Program's At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program ("Supper Program") for Connecticut.

CNOP is a community outreach grant program that would be administered by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE). CNOP formalizes the partnership with a proven statewide, nonprofit organization to support school nutrition directors, superintendents, principals, other school personnel, and community based organizations to close the gap between hungry kids and the underutilized, federally funded, child nutrition programs.

Why Does Connecticut Need a Child Nutrition Outreach Program?

1 in 5 Connecticut children often do not know when or where they will get a meal, yet federally funded child nutrition programs are underutilized, leaving hungry children and much needed federal funds out of our state.

CT teachers face hungry students unable to learn or focus on a daily basis.

- School Breakfast is an **antidote to CT's Achievement Gap**.
- Research shows that students who eat school breakfast on average **attend 1.5 more days** per year, **score 17.5% higher on standardized math tests**, and have a **20% higher high school graduation rate**.¹
- Focused outreach and technical assistance to schools **increased Free & Reduced Priced School Breakfast participation by 280% last year**, but it is not enough.
- **1 in 3 CT schools do not offer School Breakfast**, despite offering School Lunch.²

1. <http://www.nokiahungry.org/pdfs/school-breakfast-write-paper.pdf>

2. http://frac.org/pdf/School_Breakfast_Scorecard_SY_2012_2013.pdf

3. http://frac.org/pdf/2014_summer_nutrition_report.pdf

In the summer, when school is out, families with kids have an average of \$300 more in monthly grocery expenses.

- When school is out, USDA's Summer Meals Programs provide **needed nutrition while combatting summer learning loss**.
- Our children need both the **nutrition and learning opportunities** available through summer meals.
- **Only 1 in 4 of CT's low-income children receive nutritious meals in the summer** time at no cost to them or their families through the federal summer meals programs.³

Many students eat their lunch at school before noon and some do not eat again until the following school day.

- The Supper Program provides a **late afternoon meal to children in afterschool enrichment** programs to fill this gap and ensure children can **fully benefit from programs**.
- **Less than 40% of eligible towns participate**; missing out on federal funds and beneficial nutrition that **could help increase the impact** of their programs.
- Providing **nutritious meals at no cost** to participants in afterschool enrichment programs creates a **nourishing atmosphere in a safe, supervised environment**.

Evidence in Support of a Connecticut Child Nutrition Outreach Program

How CNOP Works. Through proactive outreach and support for the federal School Breakfast Program, Summer Meals, and the Supper program, the following will be employed:

Support	Resources	Partnerships
Individualized outreach, technical assistance, and community organizing to schools and community providers across CT.	Resources provided to program providers in the form of mini-grants, materials, and training opportunities.	Promotion of nutrition programs across state, regional, and local groups who serve children.

We Know it Works. The program model is based off of the strategies and results of the CT No Kid Hungry campaign, a five year, public-private partnership between End Hunger Connecticut!, the Governor’s Office, and the national anti-hunger organization, Share Our Strength. The Child Nutrition Outreach Program formalizes an existing and effective partnership between the CT State Department of Education and End Hunger CT! to provide technical assistance, outreach services, and resources to communities – a model also shown to be effective in other states.

Impact at a Glance for One Year of EHC!’s CT No Kid Hungry Campaign

	2013	2014	# of Additional Kids Eating Every Day
School Breakfast Program	72,545	74,045	1,500
Summer Meals Program	38,551	41,057	2,506
Supper Program	13,421	14,111*	690
<i>(*Not including 2 months data not yet available)</i>	Total:		4,696

It Pays. The federal Child Nutrition Programs provide federal reimbursement directly into the community for nutritious meals being served to children who need them most. There is a costly disconnect between communities eligible for the programs and those actually participating.

Ex. According to the Food Research and Action Center’s School Breakfast Scorecard, **in 2013, CT left over 9 million dollars in reimbursements on the table by not serving School Breakfast to 70% of low-income children already participating in School Lunch.**

It Pays Off. The success of the CT No Kid Hungry campaign shows that a small upfront investment nets a significant return in federal funds which go directly into CT communities and provide increased nutrition assistance for children when and where they need it most.

Ex. Funding: After four years of the Campaign, End Hunger CT! found that **for every .52 cents the campaign spends for summer meals outreach at least 1 additional meal is served and \$3.49 in federal funds are brought into the community** - a six-fold increase in dollars to local communities.

There’s a Ripple Effect. Recent research shows that participation in federal child nutrition programs increases food security, helps prevent overweight and obesity in children, increases academic achievement while decreasing behavioral issues in schools and other negative health outcomes.

Ex. End Hunger CT! and its partners were credited by the CT State Department of Education for having a **significant impact on narrowing the achievement gap** by bringing more schools on to the School Breakfast Program. **Since 2009, more than 270 schools have added school breakfast.**