

FOOD ACCESS FOR CHILDREN IN EARLY CARE

Reopening your early care facility can seem overwhelming, but there are many resources to help take some stress out of the process. Your local school may be able to partner to provide meals as children transition back to your care.

School Districts and Supervisory Unions are currently providing FREE school meals for *all* children 0-18 through temporary program extensions now through the end of the school year.

How to access free school meals:

1. The easiest way to access meals for young children through schools without additional paperwork is for parents/ guardians to pick up meals for kids, or for the child care center to bring the kids in their care to a meal distribution site. Caregivers can find their nearest distribution site by dialing 2-1-1.
2. Make a connection with your school to discuss additional options for accessing meals. This initial conversation is important to forming the relationship between your early care facility and your local school meal providers.

The school may make the choice to add your child care center as a site for the Summer Food Service Program if they have the capacity. If they choose to do this, they should contact the Agency of Education to update their information. These meals would not be claimed for reimbursement at your facility under CACFP.

Another option is for the school to sell meals to the child care through a vended meals agreement. If the school sells meals to the child care, the child care may be able to claim these meals under the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) if it already participates in that program. Please consult with child nutrition programs at the Agency of Education before entering into such an agreement.

Support Food Access At Home

Many of the families you serve may be newly-eligible for either WIC or 3SquaresVT- two programs available to help families stay nourished and stretch their food budgets!

For more information about WIC, dial 2-1-1 or text **VTWIC** to 855-11.

For more information about 3SquaresVT, dial 2-1-1 or text **VFBSNAP** to 855-11.

If you have any questions about how to operate the federal child nutrition programs, please reach out to the [child nutrition team at the Vermont Agency of Education](#).

For more information on how Hunger Free Vermont works to support food access in early care and education centers, contact Keely Agan at kagan@hungerfreevt.org or 802-448-4396