

OHIO ASSOCIATION OF FOODBANKS

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**Fewer Summer Food Service Sponsors, Sites Means Just One in Ten Eligible Kids
Accessing Summer Meals in Ohio**
2014 Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation report indicates many children not being reached

COLUMBUS – The [Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation report](#) released today by the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) indicates that many of the more than one in four children in Ohio living in food insecure households do not have access to adequate nutrition, especially during the summer months.

Although more than 633,000 children participated in free or reduced-price school meals daily in Ohio in 2013, just 66,015 children participated in federally-funded summer meals programs daily last summer.

“We have to work urgently to reach more children with nutritious meals during the summer months,” said Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, executive director of the Ohio Association of Foodbanks. “Research shows that even one experience with hunger can have a negative impact on kids for a decade or more. We must act now, community by community, to make sure no child goes without adequate nutrition.”

During the summer months, children who normally receive free or reduced-price school meals must rely on the federally-funded Summer Food Service Program and other privately funded child nutrition programs. In many cases, however, children can't access summer meals for a variety of reasons, including barriers like a lack of transportation or a lack of summer food sites nearby.

The FRAC report found that for every 100 children in Ohio that received free or reduced-price school meals during the 2013 school year, only 10.4 accessed summer nutrition programs. There was also a decrease of 13 sponsors (-7.3 percent) and 83 sites (-5.3 percent) from the previous summer.

For its part, the Ohio Association of Foodbanks is partnering on several initiatives to encourage increased participation in summer food programs. The association will be deploying 76 AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associates, in partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service, to strengthen the capacity of summer food programs to serve more children. The association will also again partner with Governor John Kasich, the Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives and the Ohio Department of Education to distribute take-home weekend meals and fresh fruits and vegetables to 10,000 children participating in summer food programs.

“We are extremely proud of the steps the State of Ohio has taken to reach more kids with the basic necessity of food during the summer months,” said Hamler-Fugitt. “Yet we know that there is no replacement for the value of federally-funded summer food programs, and we encourage every community to consider how they can collaborate to provide more meals to Ohio children.”

To learn more about the Summer Food Service Program in Ohio, visit the Ohio Department of Education's [website](#) or call 1-855-570-7377 to find a site near you. To view the full *Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation* report, visit FRAC's website at www.frac.org.

About the report

Data for Ohio come from the 2014 version of the annual report released by the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), the lead advocacy organization working to end hunger in America through stronger public policies. The FRAC report, Hunger Doesn't Take A Vacation, gives data for all states and looks at national and state trends. FRAC measures national summer participation during the month of July, when typically all children are out of school throughout the month and lose access to regular school year meals. The report is available online at www.frac.org.

About the Ohio Association of Foodbanks

The Ohio Association of Foodbanks is Ohio's largest charitable response to hunger, representing Ohio's 12 Feeding America foodbanks and 3,300 member charities including food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters. In SFY 2013, the association and its member foodbanks were able to acquire and distribute over 173 million pounds of food and grocery items. The association also serves as the home of The Ohio Benefit Bank and operates the state's largest navigator program for the Affordable Care Act. Follow the association on [Twitter](#), stay connected on [Facebook](#) and visit them on the web at www.ohiofoodbanks.org.

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