

NBC 10 Story Pitch

Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation

The Food Bank of South Jersey Increases Summer Meals Program For Low-Income Children by 25 Percent

Why This Story Matters

When schools are in recess and reduced-cost and free lunch programs are no longer available, low-income families struggle disproportionately. The Food Bank of South Jersey executes an annual program – **Summer Meals** – designed to address this “summertime hunger gap” for food-insecure children.

This year, FBSJ has committed to providing 1,600 children with nourishing meals daily – for all 10 weeks that schools are closed. Last year, FBSJ was able to reach 1,300 children with its Summer Meals program.

The children attend summer camps and enrichment programs that have been approved by the NJ State Department of Agriculture to receive nutritional assistance from authorized sponsors like FBSJ. The camps are located in Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Salem counties.

FBSJ executes all aspects of its Summer Meals Program, and it is an ambitious undertaking for a non-profit organization. FBSJ solicits and trains hundreds of volunteers, who help with food preparation and deliveries, to make this vital program possible.

While 1,600 children is a significant total to reach and feed, FBSJ always strives to do more. We benefit greatly when our efforts are highlighted by media that can create broad awareness of the summertime hunger issue and the remedy being provided in part by our Summer Meals Program.

Story Subjects

- As mentioned, several hundred volunteers are at the core of this story. They sign-up to work 3-hour shifts, making sandwiches assembly-line style, and packing snacks and lunches. They vary in ages and stations in life. Many of them volunteer more than one day per week.

Story Subjects (Continued):

Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation

- Corporations step up to donate services, products, and funding for our Summer Meals program. Virtua Healthcare, for example, donated commercial kitchen space in Camden, where the majority of sandwiches are made, Monday through Wednesday. Bimbo Bakeries USA is donating 400 loaves of wheat bread every week to offset our costs.
- Directors and administrators at the summer camps see the direct impact of FBSJ's Summer Meals Program; they can comment on the significance of FBSJ's Summer Meals Program and the impact it has on children when their most basic needs are met.
- The children – smiling, energetic, and unpredictable.
- FBSJ personnel who direct the Summer Meals program and FBSJ executives who foster it.

Recommended Locations (2)

1. Virtua Healthcare (Camden), 1000 Atlantic Avenue

- Shots of volunteers working side-by-side, preparing meals; interviews with volunteers
- One of the Summer Meals camps that FBSJ supports – Koinonia Family Life -- is hosted inside the same Virtua facility where the volunteers are working. An actual delivery of Summer Meals lunches being brought to the children can be captured, and an interview with the Koinonia camp site supervisor, Tamara Martin, can be arranged.
- An executive from Virtua can be available to comment on what this type of collaboration between a healthcare provider and a non-profit organization means to South Jerseyans. An executive from Bimbo Bakeries can be available to comment on why their corporation chose to support FBSJ's Summer Meals Program with its food donations.
- An executive from FBSJ can be available to comment on the on-going hunger crisis in New Jersey and the critical importance of programs like Summer Meals.

2. Martin Luther Christian School, 4601 Terrace Avenue, Pennsauken and the Food Bank of South Jersey (Pennsauken)

- Shot of volunteers assembling meals packs in FBSJ's distribution center; FBSJ staff loading vans for meal deliveries to camp sites; interviews with volunteers.
- Interview opportunities with FBSJ CEO Val Traore and Director of Programs and Services, Ujwala Samant.
- Visit to a nearby Pennsauken school utilizing our Summer Meals Program (Martin Luther Christian School). Site has 50 children who receive lunch at noon. Great children and great optics. Interview with the supervisor of the school's child care program, Pam Morlock.