

# WHAT DOES THE SUMMER MEALS COLLABORATIVE TELL US ABOUT THE ISSUE OF HUNGER IN THE CAPITAL REGION?

**United Way of the Greater Capital Region's (UWGCR) Summer Meals Collaborative** brings together health and human service organizations, community partnerships, advocates, researchers, and local governments to leverage resources and information and **advocate for kids to ensure they don't go hungry when school is out**. Hunger is often highest in the summer months for many Capital Region families without access to the school's breakfast and lunch programs.

**One of the ways UWGCR drives impact through advocacy** is by bringing issues that adversely and often disproportionately affect our neighbors to the attention of federal and state leaders poised to drive change for the better.

Temporary pandemic provisions at the federal level allowed allowed summer meals sites to be flexible in how they were able to serve their community with grab-and-go and mobile food options, ultimately serving more kids and families. The Summer Meals Collaborative and organizations like Hunger Solutions New York **are working hard to make provisions permanent and increase resources for child nutrition programs**.

We want to make sure that our donors and stakeholders are informed. This is just a snapshot of the data driving our work in food insecurity, along with some other trends we are noticing and how we're addressing them. **Providing a solid understanding of our work means that we can quickly mobilize the caring power of our donors and partners to take action and end summer hunger for kids and teens.**

**In 2021, this Collaborative served over 280,000 meals at over 100 sites – and most experts anticipate the need will increase this summer.**



## HOW YOU CAN HELP

### DONATE TO SUPPORT

Your gift goes directly towards supporting our goal to provide healthy, nutritious, and culturally appropriate foods, as well as providing fun programming at meal sites to nourish the mind and stay active.



### HELP US SPREAD THE WORD

Scan the QR below for a toolkit of flyers & social posts anyone can use to get the word out about Summer Meals.

### JOIN THE EFFORT

Let us know your involvement by joining Hunger Solution NY's statewide campaign, *Healthy School Meals for All NY Kids*. Visit [bit.ly/HealthySchoolMealsNY](https://bit.ly/HealthySchoolMealsNY) to stay up to date.

[unitedwaygcr.org/SummerMeals](https://unitedwaygcr.org/SummerMeals)



# THE NEED

Throughout the pandemic, families below the ALICE Threshold (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) with children consistently struggled to afford food.

## In the fall of 2021:

- 38% of New York families **BELOW** ALICE with children reported that sometimes or often, “children were not eating enough because we just couldn’t afford enough food.”
- 23% of respondents **ABOVE** ALICE also struggled to afford food for their children.
- 50% of students below ALICE picked up or ate a free meal at school, received an EBT card to help buy groceries, or had free meals delivered.

**Rising costs for food are not keeping pace with the federal and state dollars allocated for this program.** A recent USDA report notes that the expansion of benefits throughout the pandemic worked well, but the programs are ending. That means providers are struggling to provide the same quality of meals as they did in the past with shrinking budgets.

# ADDRESSING THE NEED

The Summer Meals Collaborative has three areas of focus for the summer of 2022:

**Come Together. Eat Together.**  
**Have Fun Together!**



### INCREASE PARTNERSHIPS

More partners in the Collaborative means more sites and greater participation across the entire Capital Region.



### MORE NUTRITIOUS FOODS

Create partnerships with local farms, community organizations and researchers because food is the fuel to make sure every child has the nutrition they need for success.



### FUN, ENRICHING ACTIVITIES

Many of our meal sites are centered around enriching activities in sports and the arts that increase participation and end the stigmas around ‘free summer meals’.

## NEW PARTNERSHIP ANNOUNCED

UWGCR, Albany Center Gallery, and C.R.E.A.T.E. Community Studios have teamed up to provide activities for children and teens at some of our Capital Region Summer Meals sites. In addition, UWGCR is giving away games and activities for meal-only sites that are more constrained with space to keep the kids active outdoors and engaging with other kids.



DONATE NOW

Scan the QR to support our Capital Region kids by making a donation to Summer Meals.

**Want to get involved as a volunteer?**

Find opportunities to give back at [UnitedToVolunteer.org](https://UnitedToVolunteer.org)

From the Community, For the Community



**LIVE UNITED**  
RESPOND. RECOVER. REIMAGINE. REBUILD.