



FRAC: Summer Nutrition Programs

Model Program

Local Hospital Makes Great Summer Food Sponsor **Mercy Hospital Summer Food Service Program, KS**

Overview

- Thanks to its mission to serve the community, partnerships with local organizations, and generous volunteers, Mercy Hospital has filled the need for the Summer Food Service Program in Independence, Kansas, for the past five years.
- Before the hospital stepped up to provide summer food, there was no Summer Food Program operating in Independence.

Process for Meal Service

- Feeding children fits in with Mercy Hospital's mission to serve the community, especially children.
- The need for summer meals is very high in the area.
- Approximately 1,000 Independence children are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals, including 300 elementary school-aged children.
- The program relies on teamwork from diverse community groups and volunteers.
- Mercy Hospital sponsors the program and prepares the food in its kitchen, while a public elementary school provides its cafeteria as the feeding site and the services of its custodian.
- Hospital auxiliary volunteers and local church youth groups help with food preparation at the hospital and site supervision at the school.
- The Summer Food Program provides the youth volunteers with a great opportunity to gain summer experience in the hospital kitchen and working with the children.

Creative Practices

- Despite the elimination of summer school this summer, Mercy Hospital hopes to increase summer food participation to 150 elementary school-aged children per day.
- As a result of a new partnership with the school bus company, this summer a bus will pick up children at three different sites in town to transport them to Mercy Hospital's summer program.
- In past years, the local Cooperative Extension Office provided enrichment activities every day at the SFSP site.
- Lessons included nutrition education, science and technology sessions, 4H Club activities, musical programs, speakers, and visits from the local fire truck.
- The Cooperative Extension Office also brought in college students to supervise and interact with the children.
- This year, the public school will provide these activities for the children.

For more information, contact: Amy Bain, Director of Nutrition Services, Mercy Hospital, (620) 332-3254, abain@kansas.mercy.net