

## **Rise to the Challenge: Empowering You To Succeed in the Changing World of CACFP**

Congratulations! 1,832,096,649 meals and snacks were served through the CACFP program last year. Nearly \$2 billion in CACFP reimbursements were distributed supporting good nutrition across the country.

### **Success Story**

In the last ten years the number of centers participating in CACFP rose by 44% (14,026 more centers now participate.) At the same time the Average Daily Attendance for CACFP centers more than doubled (57%): an increase of over three quarter of a million children.

### **Need For Change**

Since the implementation of the means test CACFP family child care home participation has dropped by 42,409 homes: a 22% decrease. There has also been a steady decline in number of sponsors. 273 sponsors dropped out of CACFP -- nearly a quarter (22%) of those participating in 1996.

### **Advocacy Action Plan**

It will be particularly important to push forward with a comprehensive advocacy action plan this year. The CACFP community needs to be organized to effectively deal with opportunities and challenges in three main arenas: Policy, the Administration, and Congress.

#### **Advocacy Action Plan: Policy**

The key policy goals will be to:

- ▶ Secure Reasonable Final Regulations and
- ▶ Paperwork Reduction Task Force Report and Action

#### *CACFP Regulations*

Goal: Secure effective final regulations that reflect lessons learned from implementation.

#### *Action Needed*

Communicate impact of implementation and make recommendations through sponsor survey results, sharing experiences at meetings, and writing comment letters.

#### *Paperwork Reduction Task Force Report and Action*

The USDA Paperwork Reduction initiative has been efficient and productive. A report will be forthcoming with recommendations for reducing paperwork in the following areas:

- Recordkeeping and Reporting
- Oversight and Monitoring
- Applications

### **Advocacy Action Plan: The Administration**

The key advocacy goal will be to:

- ▶ Minimize Damage From PART

#### *What is a PART?*

PART is a performance evaluation system that was started several years ago by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). OMB is a very powerful agency in the federal government that works closely with the President on the budget. Unfortunately, OMB has rated CACFP as a program without demonstrated results in some key areas: [www.expectmore.gov](http://www.expectmore.gov). This poor rating has negative implications for future budget decisions regarding CACFP.

#### *Action Needed:*

Sponsors need to make many friends for CACFP in Congress & the Administration. Good results from the CCAP & Income studies will be key.

### **Advocacy Action Plan: Congress**

The goal this year will be to:

- ▶ Stop Food Stamp, CSFP and WIC Cuts (For details on proposed cuts see [www.frac.org](http://www.frac.org))
- Preparation must be made this year to reach the goals for next year to:
- ▶ Secure Return of CACFP Audit Funds (scheduled to be restored next year)
- ▶ Extend CACFP Area Eligibility Pilot (scheduled to end next year)

#### *Action Needed:*

Communicate two clear messages to Congress: 1) Proposed cuts to the Food Stamps, CSFP and WIC programs are unnecessary and damaging and 2) CACFP supports good nutrition and quality child care.

Geraldine Henchy, FRAC