



## CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

### PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT

**AGENDA DATE:** June 26, 2013

**TO:** Parks and Recreation Commission

**FROM:** Recreation Division, Parks and Recreation Department

**SUBJECT:** Free Summer Meals for Kids

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Commission receive information on the free summer meals program.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

There are 20,000 children, or 23% of all children, in Santa Barbara County that are food insecure. Many of these children participate in the free and reduced lunch program provided by the Santa Barbara Unified School Districts (SBUSD) Food Services during school days. But during the summer, reliable access to food becomes more problematic, when less than 20 percent of kids who qualify will access free summer meals.

Under an awareness campaign called Food4Kids, the City of Santa Barbara has partnered with Share Our Strength "No Kid Hungry", Santa Barbara Unified School District, Foodbank of Santa Barbara County and the Community Action Commission (CAC) to reach and inform more families of locations where free healthy breakfast and lunch are available. The campaign kicked off on May 30<sup>th</sup> at McKinley Elementary School with "No Kid Hungry" spokesperson Jeff Bridges, local dignitaries, non-profit providers, and local youth bands.

Along with traditional methods of media outreach, the community partners also implemented a texting program to bring the information literally, into the hands of families. By texting "food4kids" to 877-877, then entering your address, a text response lists meal sites offered in a nearby neighborhood. There are over 36 locations county-wide, with four locations hosted through the SBUSD/City of Santa Barbara collaboration from June 17<sup>th</sup> to August 9<sup>th</sup>. Daily breakfast (8-9:00 am) and lunch (11-1:00 pm) will be served free to anyone 18 years of age or younger at the Parks and Recreation Department's Summer Drop-in program sites; McKinley and Franklin Elementary Schools and the Westside Neighborhood Center. Lunch will also be served at Parque de los Niños. It is anticipated approximately 700 children will be attending the four meal sites daily. Additional sites sponsored by the Foodbank and CAC are also located throughout the City.

Along with our collaborators, the City takes great pride in assisting with the coordination of this important service. Staff will return in fall, to share statistical information on meals served and anticipated program success. We invite you to stop by a meal site, and observe for yourself the healthy meals provided and smiling faces of children with full tummies.

**SUBMITTED BY:** Sarah Hanna, Recreation Programs Manager

**APPROVED BY:** Nancy L. Rapp, Parks and Recreation Director