

# SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM 2018

ILLINOIS HUNGER COALITION

OCTOBER 2018

## OVERVIEW OF IHC'S ROLE IN SFSP

### HUNGER HOTLINE

The Illinois Hunger Coalition (IHC) Hunger Hotline serves as a bilingual, multi-purpose resource for the entire state. It has been the only statewide resource since 1989, and serves an average of 10,000 households per year. Hunger Hotline services regarding the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) are twofold:

- (1)** It connects families to the closest available open sites via information sent to the IHC from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and site sponsors.
- (2)** It serves as a resource to troubleshoot problems encountered by families and site operators. The Hunger Hotline number was posted on all Illinois SFSP outreach (flyers, billboards, etc.).

In order to provide accurate information to families about open summer meals sites, the IHC verifies the information on the site lists. If there is inaccurate information (i.e. wrong dates, times, zip codes), the IHC corrects it by contacting the sites, site sponsors and ISBE directly with daily updates.

When problems are encountered by families and site operators, such as the mobile food trucks not arriving at their designated time or a site running out of meals, IHC contacts the sponsors immediately to get the issue addressed as quickly as possible, and serves as a liaison for sites, sponsors, and families.

### OUTREACH

The IHC utilized the USDA Capacity-Builder and SFSP lists to target low-income Illinois counties that had few or no sites. The IHC contacted churches, schools, libraries, townships and other agencies in these identified communities that might have the ability to participate in the SFSP. This outreach started in March and continued during the month of June.

**47** potential sites contacted the IHC via the Hunger Hotline in 2018, and we connected them to sponsors. The IHC staff also conducted outreach with over 300 community-based organizations (including immigrant and refugee services organizations) via our statewide Community Quality Councils.

The IHC also created **25** area-specific flyers in English and Spanish for legislators, food pantries, DHS offices, townships, and community organizations that we updated throughout the summer with SFSP site information such as addresses, times, and dates.



## HUNGER HOTLINE: SFSP CALL DATA (PREVIOUS YEARS)

**2015**

**YEAR TOTAL (JAN-DEC): 1,689**

- May: 65 calls
- June: 1,005 calls
- July: 443 calls
- August: 110 calls
- September: 3 calls

**2016**

**YEAR TOTAL (JAN-DEC): 1,248**

- May: 132 calls
- June: 705 calls
- July: 281 calls
- August: 90 calls
- September: 6 calls

**2017**

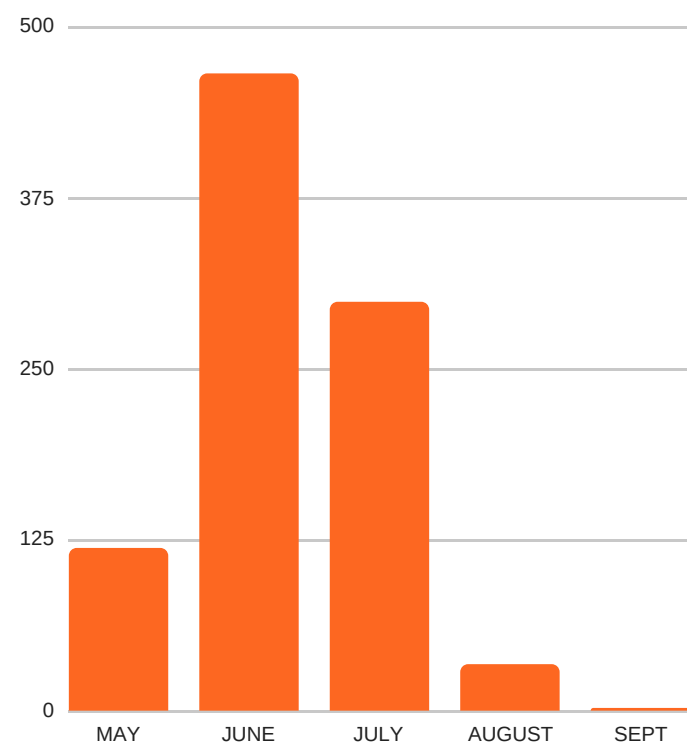
**YEAR TOTAL (JAN-DEC): 1,214**

- May: 147 calls
- June: 489 calls
- July: 362 calls
- August: 68 calls
- September: 2 calls

# HUNGER HOTLINE: 2018 SFSP CALL DATA

SO FAR, THE IHC HUNGER HOTLINE HAS RECEIVED 955 SFSP CALLS IN 2018:

## CALLS BY MONTH



The IHC received **119** SFSP calls in May, **466** calls in June, **299** calls in July, **33** calls in August, and **2** calls in September. The increase in calls in June and July 2018 accounts for the program primarily taking place during those months. The calls towards the end of August and into September and the fact that the IHC received calls as early as January highlight a need for improved communication relating to the timing of the SFSP program and a need for year-round program planning.

As stated above, **47** calls received were from agencies wanting to become SFSP sites. Most of these calls occurred in June and early July, but some also occurred in August, September, and October. Due to the time it takes to go through site training, there is a need for increased outreach to potential sites earlier in the year to get as many sites established as possible.

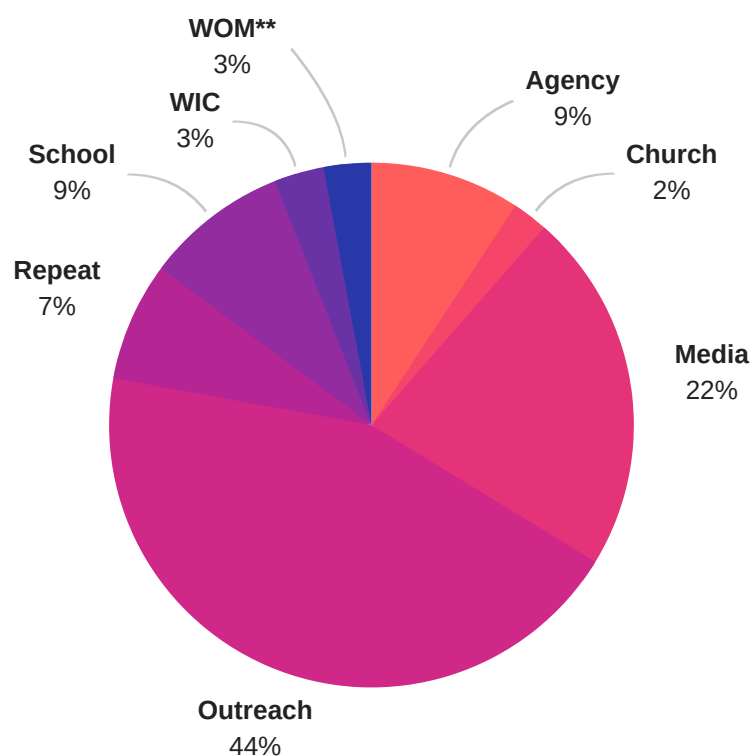
The majority of referrals to the Hunger Hotline, **44%**, came from traditional outreach methods (i.e. billboards, flyers, public transit, etc.), with media (internet, social media, television, radio, and newspaper) accounting for the second highest amount of referrals, **22%**.

WIC sites, churches, and agencies such as libraries and parks accounted for **14%** of referrals. Schools (referred **9%** of the calls).

Repeat callers accounted for **7%** of calls to the Hunger Hotline. Repeat callers often were calling to follow up after they had reported a site issue.

\*\*Word of mouth (WOM) represents all calls referred by family and friends: 3% of the calls were referred through word of mouth.

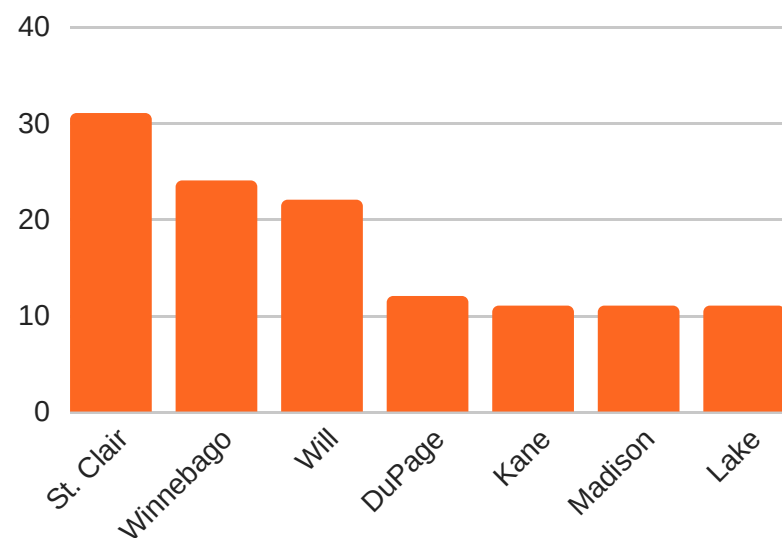
## CALLS BY REFERRAL\*



\*EXCLUDES MISSING DATA

# HUNGER HOTLINE: 2018 CALL DATA (CONTINUED)

## CALLS BY COUNTY\*



The majority of calls came from Cook County: **64.4%\***. The chart at left shows the 7 next highest counties by number of calls.

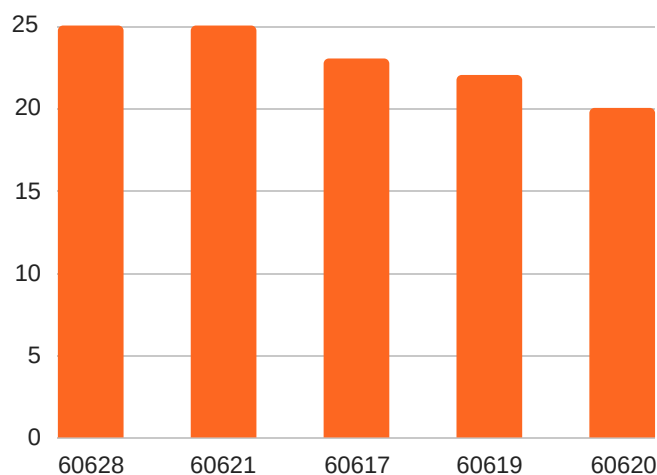
We also received calls from **10 counties** that did not have any open sites this summer, highlighting a crucial gap in service:

- Christian
- Lawrence
- Effingham
- Marion
- Fayette
- Massac
- Ford
- Morgan
- Johnson
- Woodford

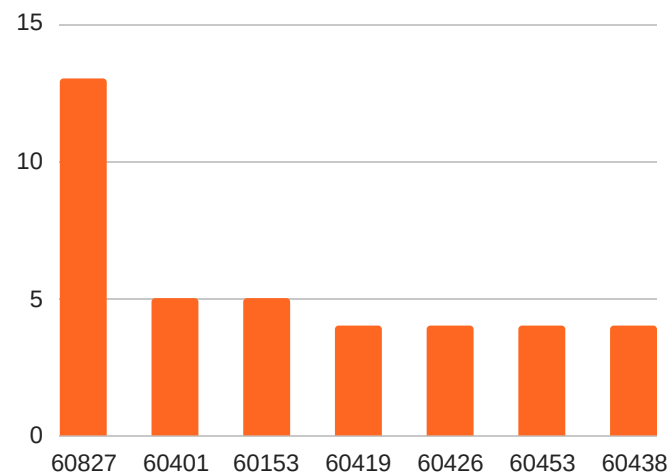
THE HUNGER HOTLINE RECEIVED CALLS FROM **55** OUT OF THE 102 ILLINOIS COUNTIES IN 2018.

## COOK COUNTY: CALLS BY ZIP CODE\*

### CHICAGO



### OUTSIDE OF CHICAGO



The majority of calls in Cook County came from Chicago (**80.4%\***). There were 88 calls from **63 Cook County zip codes** that did not have sites, again highlighting gaps in SFSP reach.

## TROUBLESHOOTING CALLS

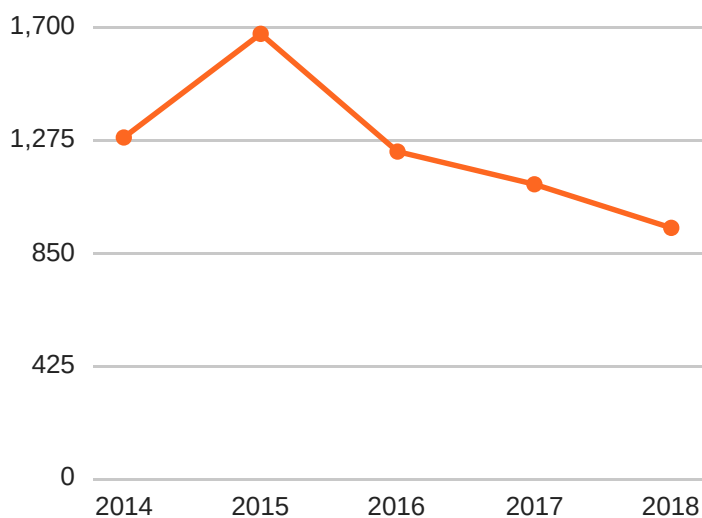
The IHC received calls during May-August from families reporting problems with **15** SFSP sites. The most common issues raised included:

- Wrong time/dates/location listed on the site flyers
- Mobile sites: trucks not showing up at time listed or at all
- Sites running out of food
- Incorrect site information on website or texting service

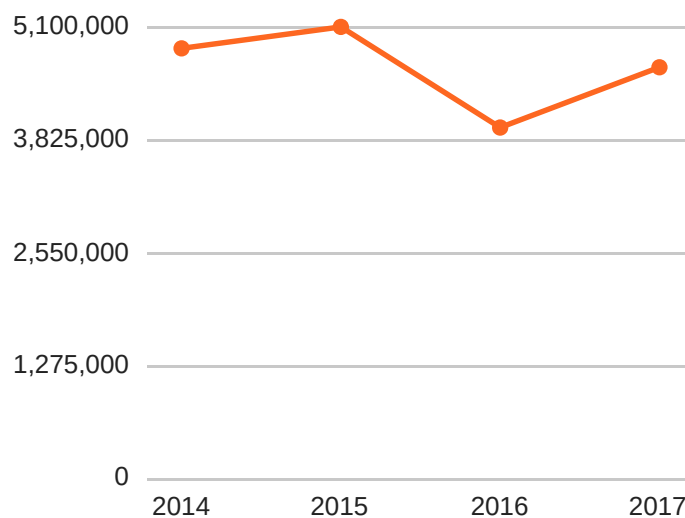
\*EXCLUDES MISSING DATA

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SFSP 2019 AND BEYOND

## TOTAL SFSP HOTLINE CALLS APR-SEPT



## TOTAL SFSP MEALS SERVED IN IL



According to the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), the ratio of Illinois children participating in summer nutrition programs to the children participating in the National School Lunch Program 2016-2017 was **11.6**, a **2.5%** decrease from the previous year (FRAC, 2018). The graphs above show the total calls received and addressed by the IHC from April to September in 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017; and the total SFSP meals served in Illinois in 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017 (USDA, 2018). While overall meals served in Illinois did increase, the IHC Hunger Hotline staff continue to see decreases in calls throughout the summer, and that decrease was reflected in the FRAC participation data.

SFSP has helped bridge the hunger gap for some low-income children in Illinois. However, there is still room for growth as the program is not reaching all children in need. The IHC Hunger Hotline, while helping connect families to sites, also provided the IHC staff with the opportunity to hear from families and site staff when problems occurred. These problems may have been preventable with improved outreach strategies, year-round planning, and streamlined communication between Hunger Hotline staff, site sponsors, and site operators.

Drawing from the analysis of the SFSP Hunger Hotline call data from 2018 and data from the previous years, the IHC has the following recommendations for 2019 and beyond:

- Increased traditional outreach methods, such as billboards, flyers, and public transit signage
- Year-round outreach for potential SFSP sites and sponsors about how to get involved and the application process
- Streamlined communication between Hunger Hotline staff, sponsors, and sites
- Communication with Hunger Hotline staff when problems at a site arise and when sites may be closed (i.e. inclement weather, holidays)
- Increased detailed information in publications and outreach:
  - No documentation required of families to participate in a site
  - The start and end dates of SFSP program and sites, and how it can vary from site to site

This report was compiled by Jena Wallander, IHC Communications and Evaluation Coordinator, and all Hunger Hotline data was collected by IHC Hunger Hotline staff.




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Additional data provided by:

Child Nutrition Tables. (2018). United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/child-nutrition-tables>

Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation: Summer Food Status Report (Rep.). (2018). Food Research and Action Center. Retrieved from <http://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/2018-summer-nutrition-report.pdf>

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