

Food Service Experience: Planning, Organization and Logistics

Providing food to 20, 30, 50, 100 kids a day takes planning, organization, and logistics. A background in food service and an understanding of the ins and outs of a production kitchen can be very helpful. If you're planning on a smaller program, say 10-25 kids a day, then you'll be just fine without extensive experience.

Indeed finding a partnering sponsor for a smaller program might be difficult. However, if your program will be serving 25 plus kids a day, four days a week, you will be taking on a fairly big task.

Expectations

To run AMP effectively, you will need to:

- Comply with [United States Department of Agriculture \(USDA\)](#) regulations
- Purchase in bulk to keep your food costs down
- Serve at the correct time and temperature
- Dedicate staff and/or volunteers for recording meals and snacks
- Maintain records of how you spent your money both administratively and on food

Even if you have volunteers, ultimately you'll be responsible for meeting the USDA food, budget and sanitation regulations. You have to ask yourself, am I really in a position to be doing this alone? If the answer is yes, then wonderful.

There are several nonprofit and school district representatives throughout Florida who have shared their best practices with Florida Impact. If you're unsure or just don't see yourself doing this, we have some great suggestions and advice. [Contact us](#) for more information.

Get a sponsor

If you or others in your organization don't have much food service experience, and you're planning on serving over 25 kids per day, you might want to consider a few other options. One good option is a vended meal agreement and partnership with a nearby school district or other existing meal sponsor. In some cases a school district can choose to adopt your program. [Florida Impact](#) can help you learn more about this option.

What's important to understand is that these partnerships are common and often benefit both parties. For school districts, adding a site with 20-100 kids can help cover their bottom line for other federal nutrition programs they're running. Increasing the overall number of meals served can also benefit different organizations such as [Boys and Girls Clubs](#), [YMCA's](#) and churches already running AMP. In general, these alliances make your organization more attractive to potential funders because it shows a willingness to focus on your programming while building strong community partnerships in the process.