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Noah Praamsma, Program Director

BPRW Recreation and Nutrition Program Summary 2019

The Recreation & Nutrition Program is a collaborative effort between Burlington Parks, Recreation & Waterfront (BPRW), the Burlington Housing Authority (BHA), Burlington Supportive Housing Initiatives (BSHI), the Boys & Girls Club (B&GC), the Champlain Housing Trust (CHT), the Burlington School Food Project (BSFP), and the Community Sailing Center (CSS). BPRW provides staffing and logistical support to five of the city's summer meal sites: Franklin Square Housing Development (BHA), Riverside Apartments (BHA), South Meadow Apartments (CHT), Roosevelt Park (with support from the B&GC), and (most added this year) the Andy A_Dog Skate Park (with support from the CSS).

The Recreation & Nutrition Program offers enrichment opportunities in the form of recreational games, offsite field trips, gardening, and nutritional education, while offering free lunches, snack, and dinner from the Burlington School Food Project to any child ages 18 and under. BPRW staff provide mentorship and supervision for a total of 39 days, Monday through Friday, 11:00am 2:00pm during lunch (12:00pm-1:00pm at the Skate Park), 5:00pm - 7:00pm for a dinner snack at Franklin Square, and 3:30pm – 6:30pm dinner at Roosevelt Park, June 24th through August 16th of 2019, with no program on Wednesday, July 4th, 2018 (Independence Day).

Methods

Daily demographic data was collected at all four sites (Riverside Apartments, Franklin Square, South Meadows and Roosevelt Park). Site Directors and Counselors completed daily logs to track meal counts, gender, race and age. Data was recorded based on perceived gender, race and age, and children were not questioned about any of their demographic information. Demographic data was not collected at the Skate Park.

Results

6,895 total meals were served across four lunch sites, one snack site and one dinner site to attendees ages 18 and under.

- 567 total meals were served at Franklin Square for lunch (822 in 2018)
- 903 snack meals were served at Franklin Square for snack (1,055 in 2018)
- 797 total meals were served at Riverside (792 in 2018)
- 3,005 total meals were served at Roosevelt Park (2,840 in 2018)
- 1,015 total meals were served at South Meadows. (508 in 2018)
- 608 total meals were served at Andy A_Dog Skate Park

The following percentages are based on recorded meals served based on perceived gender (6,895) or perceived race (6,254) at Riverside, South Meadows, Roosevelt Park and Franklin Square (not Andy A_Dog Skate Park).

- 47% (2,943) of meals were served to perceived females and 53% (3,331) to perceived male.
- 75.0% (4,689) of meals were served to perceived Black/African American children, 11.6% (723) to perceived Asian children, 9.7% (604) to perceived non-Hispanic white children, 2.0% (127) to perceived Hispanic/Latino children and 1.6% (98) children perceived as “Other.”
- All children served and recorded were 18 year or younger.

Discussion

Total meals served over the summer of 2019 rose by 878 meals from the previous year; 608 of this can be accounted for by this year’s addition of the skate park lunch site, and the remainder primarily to an increase in attendance at the Roosevelt Park dinner site.

Total meals served at Riverside were remarkably static from 2018; future efforts could do well to focus on increasing attendance at that site and at Roosevelt Park, since these are also the most accessible to children residing on Riverside Ave west to Winooski.

A pattern clearly emerged of families that had moved from Franklin Square to South Meadow, a trend reflected in both site’s meal count numbers. While the quantity of meals delivered each day was adjusted, our staffing distribution lagged and the season ended with three staff and one intern staffing South Meadow and five staff (as well as a several-person DREAM team) at Franklin Square. Franklin Square also tended to have lower numbers during summer school. Next year may benefit from a 4-and-4 distribution of paid staff between these two sites, as well as consideration given to adding an evening shift at South Meadow. Logistics, such as refrigeration, would need to be addressed, but would pay off by virtue of distributing more meals as long as movement of children doesn’t course-correct in the interim.

Field trip attendance (though not recorded) is anecdotally anticipated to rise sharply at Riverside next year, as many children are anticipated to turn five.

Total Meals Served in 2019: 6,895

Total Meals Served in 2018: 6,017

Total Meals Served in 2017: 9,936

Total Meals Served in 2016: 2,644