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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **FOOD THAT'S IN WHEN SCHOOL IS OUT**

YMCA Collaboration to Offer Lunch Program for Youth

**Paso Robles** - The San Luis Obispo County YMCA is working to make sure that no children in Paso Robles, Cambria, and Shandon will go hungry when school is closed this summer. Over 7,450 children in San Luis Obispo receive free or reduced-price meals during the school year, but many of these children do not get enough to eat when school is not in session. The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) ensures that low-income children continue to grow and learn during the summer. This program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is the largest federal resource available for local programs that combine meal time with recreational and educational activities.

Jenifer Rhynes, CEO of San Luis Obispo County Y, recognizes the need for the program in the county. "Many of our children who rely on school breakfast and lunch during the school year, do not have the energy they need during the summer. That's where we come in, by providing nutritious meals and activities to keep kids nourished and engaged."

Statewide in 2010, out of approximately 3.7 million children who qualified for the program, only 18,000 participated, that is just over 3 percent. In 2001, 16 of 58 counties did not have a single summer food site. There are almost 13,000 children in these counties who rely on free or reduced-price meals during the school year, but are left to fend for themselves during the summer. In San Luis Obispo County alone, 87% of those who are eligible for the Summer Food Service Program are not served.

Partnering with the Food Bank Coalition of San Luis Obispo County, there will be four sponsor sites throughout the county hoping to feed 2,500 children. Sites include Centennial Park and Oak Park (closed site) in Paso Robles, Cambria Grammar School in Cambria, and Shandon. The Culinary Academy in Paso Robles will be preparing a lunch and snack (with exception to Cambria) for anyone 2-18 years of age to receive Monday through Friday during the summer months, starting the Monday after school is out.

For additional information about YMCA programs visit [www.sloymca.org](http://www.sloymca.org) or call the Y's administrative office at 543-8235.

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