



Nutrition News for Teachers

March 2011

A Healthy School Nutrition Environment Helps Achieve Academic Excellence

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The What, Why and How of a Healthy School Nutrition Environment

Evidence indicates that poor nutrition, physical inactivity and obesity are associated with lower achievement. Schools influence the lives of young children and they are continually encouraged to take a leadership role in helping students learn to make healthier eating and physical activity choices that last a lifetime. This newsletter will provide you with information, resources and strategies for creating a healthy school nutrition environment. **A healthy school nutrition environment is one where healthy eating and an active lifestyle are taught and supported in the classroom, the cafeteria and throughout the school.**

Let's Move! Campaign; Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act; and Team Nutrition Promote Healthy Eating and Focus on Reducing Childhood Obesity



The Let's Move! campaign has an ambitious national goal of solving the challenge of childhood obesity within a generation so that children born today will reach adulthood at a healthy weight. After a year of national conversation about the health of America's children, the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act passed and was signed in December 2010. This historic, bi-partisan law is described as a major step forward in the nation's effort to provide all children with healthy food in schools. This Act allows USDA the regulatory authority to improve the nutritional quality of school lunches, get unhealthy food out of the school and support strong nutrition and physical activity policies and practices in schools. Over time states and schools will implement the improvements.



As a teacher, you can help by initiating or getting involved with Team Nutrition (TN) initiatives promoted in North Dakota. Check out the information and resources on the TN websites that schools can implement to help students develop healthy, lifelong eating and physical activity habits.

- **Become a Team Nutrition School** – It is free and you automatically receive TN teaching materials. Access the TN school enrollment form and data base on-line at <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/team.html>.
- **Implement and Evaluate the Local Wellness Policy** – The TN website at <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/healthy/wellnesspolicy.html> is the national clearing-house for local school wellness policy information. North Dakota's evaluation guide, "A Simple Evaluation Guide: How Well Are We Doing with Wellness?" can be downloaded at <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/child/team/index.shtm>.
- **Go for a HealthierUS School Challenge (HUSSC) Certification Award** – The HUSSC criteria and application can be accessed at <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/healthierUS/index.html>.







For questions on Team Nutrition or creating a healthy school nutrition environment, contact Loris Freier, MS, RD, LRD, Child Nutrition Programs, toll-free at 1-888-338-3663.

Dietary Guidelines For Americans - The Cornerstone For Nutrition Policy, Child Nutrition Programs And Nutrition Education

What's New for School Aged Children in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines?

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGAs) provide science-based advice updated every five years for individuals over age two. These guidelines are the optimal authority on good dietary habits to promote health and reduce the risk of major chronic diseases through proper nutrition and physical activity. The 2010 DGAs again emphasize that Americans need to consume nutrient rich foods within their calorie allotment. The 2010 Dietary Guidelines report is available on-line at www.dietaryguidelines.gov. Four main eating and physical activity points in the 2010 DGAs that classroom teachers can begin role modeling and teaching students are:

-  Lower sodium/salt intake.
-  Consume more fiber with whole grains, legumes, fruits and vegetables.
-  Consume less foods with solid fats and added sugars.
-  Limit electronic screen sitting time to less than two hours per day and increase physical activity.

Diets of school-aged children fall short of the recommended DGAs. They have low intakes of vegetables and fruit, very low intakes of whole grains, and high intakes of sodium, saturated fat, and added sugars.

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program in Elementary Schools Increases Fruit and Vegetable Consumption of Children

The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) is the newest USDA Child Nutrition Program available to all states. The purpose of the program is to help children learn more healthful eating habits by increasing the consumption of a variety of fruits and vegetables. To participate in the FFVP, an elementary school must operate the National School Lunch Program with the priority to have fifty percent or more of its students eligible for free or reduced price meals.

Currently 111 elementary schools in North Dakota receive funds to provide every child a free fresh fruit and/or vegetable snack. It is an effective and creative way of introducing different fresh fruits and vegetables as healthy snack options. Examples of the variety of produce used by schools for children to sample include zucchini strips, yellow carrots, Asian or Bosc pears, purple cauliflower and star fruit.

The North Dakota School Nutrition Association, a collaborative partner for this newsletter, and the national School Nutrition Association (SNA) are recognized as the voice of school nutrition. The FFVP helps meet the SNA goal to promote and provide high quality, healthy food and meals to children every school day.

What Does the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 Do for School Nutrition Programs?

The Act will help assure healthy food is available for students throughout the school system. USDA will now update school meals based on recommendations from the Institute of Medicine; setting nutritional standards for all foods sold in schools during the school day, including vending machines, the 'ala carte' lunch lines and school stores. For the first time in over 30 years it provides additional funding to schools that meet updated nutrition standards in school lunch and breakfast. With water a major nutrient, it expands access to drinking water in schools, particularly during meal times. Basic standards will also be set for nutrition education and physical activity goals for the local school wellness policies.

National School Breakfast Week

National School Breakfast Week is March 7-12, 2011 with the theme, "School Breakfast Detectives." Use the week to raise student awareness of the importance of breakfast. Student detectives can get out the spy glass and "clue into" how eating breakfast sets them up for a busy day at school.



School Breakfast Program is Key to Academic Success

Teaching Nutrition

Team Nutrition Resources Help Incorporate Nutrition Education into the Curriculum

Both the Let's Move! campaign and USDA Team Nutrition encourage more nutrition education in schools to help change student eating behaviors. The Team Nutrition Resource Library on-line at <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/educators.html> currently has preschool and K-12 age-appropriate nutrition education materials. Within the next year, new and revised educational materials will update or replace the current MyPyramid for Kids classroom materials. Continue to check and use the TN website link for materials and educational activities designed for teaching nutrition to elementary school-aged children.

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Offers a Classroom Nutrition Education Opportunity

The FFVP brings a variety of fresh produce as nutritious snacks for children at school. It can be a child's first exposure to fresh fruits and vegetables, and the perfect time to do a nutrition education lesson or activity. Nutrition education is also critical to the FFVP success. Ask the school foodservice staff to partner with your classroom efforts to promote fruits and vegetables to your students.

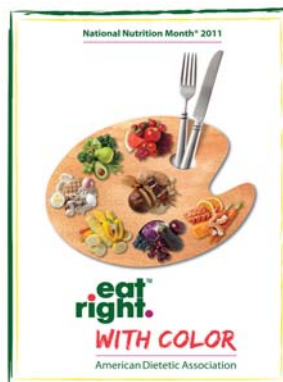
Here are some North Dakota teachers comments from a November 2010 FFVP survey:

- Teachers tried fruits and vegetables they had not tasted before.
- Teachers ate more fruit and vegetables at snack time and at home as a result of the FFVP.
- Students eat and learn about the fruit or vegetable served by saying the name, spelling it, and discussing the color, texture, taste, part of plant and where it is grown.
- Students are less hesitant to try new fruits and vegetables.
- Students are more enthusiastic about the food at lunch when tasted in the classroom.
- Students research at home if the class has questions about a fruit or vegetable.
- Student behavior and attentiveness has improved in the classroom.
- Parents have expressed excitement and appreciation for the FFVP.
- A parent buys the same fruit and vegetable so the entire family can experience them.



Teach Students to "Eat Right with Color" During National Nutrition Month

National Nutrition Month® (NNM®) offers educators a time to join in a national celebration to promote and teach about healthful eating with practical nutrition and physical activity tips. Over 300 North Dakota Licensed Registered Dietitians (LRDs) join the NNM® sponsor, the American Dietetic Association (ADA), for this annual March nutrition education and information campaign. The 2011 theme, "Eat Right with Color," focuses on adding a variety of colors to your plate to make an appealing meal. The rainbow of foods creates a palette of nutrients for a healthful diet.



NNM includes a Registered Dietitian Day to recognize nutrition professionals. North Dakota has over 300 Licensed Registered Dietitians (LRDs) available statewide to help translate the science of nutrition into practical solutions for healthy eating.

Check out the activities for schools to use on the ADA website at www.eatright.org. Contact a LRD in your area for information or ideas that will help you or your students in making healthy food choices.

Nutrition News for Teachers

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Check Out This Newsletter For Information, Ideas And Resources For Teaching Nutrition And Creating A Healthy School Nutrition Environment

Use the Links Below to Get Started

- ✓ Eat Smart. Play Hard.(TM) Materials-resources and tools that reinforce healthy eating and are fun for children
<http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/eatsmartadditionalresources.html>
 - ✓ Power Up with Breakfast Lesson - http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/EatSmart/power_up.pdf
 - ✓ Snack Smart Lesson - http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/EatSmart/snack_smart.pdf
 - ✓ Choose Drinks that Count Lesson - http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/EatSmart/choose_drinks.pdf
- ✓ Alternatives to Using Food as a Reward <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/child/reps/rewards.pdf>
- ✓ Healthy School Parties and Other Celebrations - <http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/child/reps/celebrations.pdf>
- ✓ Fuel Up to Play 60 – A nationwide movement focused on fighting childhood obesity by empowering kids to take care of their own health. <http://www.fueluptoplay60.com/>
- ✓ Successtalk – an e-mail discussion group to link school staff interested in creating a healthy school nutrition environment.
<http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/hsmrs/successtalk>



This newsletter can be accessed electronically at www.dpi.state.nd.us/child. Click on partners, then teachers.

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