



# TEAM NUTRITION Connections

## ARE YOUR CHILDREN WHERE YOU WANT THEM TO BE?

Are your children where you want them to be? Do they pay attention in class? Are you having discipline problems? Want to find a fun way to change things? Try Team Nutrition.



Team Nutrition is a nutrition education initiative for local schools and childcare centers that strives to improve children's lifelong eating and physical activity habits. For children to be their best they need to eat healthy and be physically active. Team Nutrition makes learning that lesson fun.

Team Nutrition offers nutrition education material based on the principles of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Food Guide Pyramid. Children are engaged in hands on learning, which is fun and challenges them to try new foods. Through these activities, they are encouraged to change their eating and activity behaviors. These behavior changes will result in other positive behavior changes, enhanced attention and reduced disruptive behavior. Well-nourished, active children are happier children.

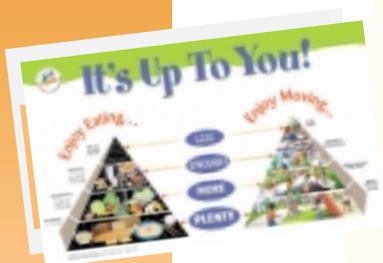
One of the best times to teach children about nutrition and physical activity is when they are young. Once they learn healthy behaviors, they can take these with them through adolescence into adulthood. Team Nutrition promotes nutrition and physical activity in fun ways using simple messages.

Team Nutrition can help you incorporate nutrition and physical activity information into many different learning opportunities in the classroom, in the school cafeteria, at home, at school events, through the community, and through the media. When children hear messages repeatedly through a variety of sources, they are more likely to "hear" them and act accordingly.

Partnerships with national organizations to develop and disseminate nutrition messages through varied sources help to further leverage resources, expand the reach of messages, and build a broad base of support for children. Working together, we can take steps to help children reach their full potential.

**Best of all, it's free. Read further to learn more about Team Nutrition and how you can be a part.**

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### Team Nutrition

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## HEALTHIERUS – PARTNERSHIP TO IMPROVE NUTRITION AND HEALTH OF THE NATION'S CHILDREN

The Secretaries of Agriculture, Education and Health and Human Services have signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** to strengthen and promote the education and health of the Nation's school-aged children and youth. The Departments will work together to encourage all youth to adopt healthy eating and physical activity behaviors in order to curb the increasing rate of obesity and overweight, as well as promote improved learning through better health. Supporting *Team Nutrition* is a key element of the MOU.

The **Department of Education** will provide guidance on incorporating nutrition, physical activity and health in all its programs, and encourage State Boards of Education to develop policies for a healthy school environment that promote positive dietary and physical activity behaviors to ensure children are healthy and ready to learn.

The **Department of Health and Human Services** will help state and local agencies to provide technical assistance and training activities related to promoting physical activity and healthy eating habits through school policies and programs.

The **Department of Agriculture (USDA)** will continue to promote healthy eating and related behaviors as an essential component of the nutrition assistance programs, which represents an important part of the Nation's investment in improving the nutrition and health status of children and youth.

Together, these Departments will work to strengthen and expand school-based efforts to help children and youth develop healthy eating and physical activity skills that will last a lifetime. The collaboration commenced upon signature in June 2002 and continues for five years.

## THE NUTRITION – LEARNING LINK

### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

As parents and educators, you are interested in the well being of children and in their successful education in particular. Common sense and experience have told educators for years that good nutrition, good health, and education go hand in hand. Some studies have linked eating breakfast to better academic performance, higher test scores, and fewer behavior problems. This is great news for students—and for their parents, teachers, and principals.

Of course, recognizing the critical link between nutrition and learning is one thing; doing something about it is another. Especially when you are faced each day with so many administrative challenges, community demands, and a wide variety of ideas and innovations that promise to enhance your student's education.

**So why does the nutrition/learning connection deserve a place high on your priority list?**

- Because children will benefit right away from learning to make healthy eating choices and include physical activity each day; they'll have more energy and concentrate better.

- Because children will benefit for the rest of their lives from learning now to make food and physical activity choices for a healthy lifestyle.

**Principals:** As a leader in your school and a role model in the community, people will listen when you say nutrition and physical activity are related to good health and learning. If you take the first steps in translating words into action, others will follow. And, USDA will be your partner in delivering the message.

For many years, USDA's school meal programs have offered students nutritious breakfasts and lunches. USDA created Team Nutrition to provide technical support to: foodservice professionals; nutrition education to children and families; and to promote a healthy school environment.

By becoming a Team Nutrition School, you are making a commitment to healthy school meals, nutrition education, and local partnerships to promote healthy eating and physical activity habits. If your school is not already a Team Nutrition School, we hope you will read the information on page 6, and then complete and submit the enrollment form on page 7.



## PARTNERS

USDA is partnering with several organizations to reinforce the healthy eating and physical activity messages. Our goal is to improve children's lifelong eating and physical activity habits. The organizations we are working with have similar goals and are working to deliver compatible messages to children. Specifically:

### DHHS's CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION



In 1992, CDC started a new initiative to support coordinated school health programs that can reduce chronic disease risk factors: poor eating habits, physical inactivity, and tobacco use. CDC currently supports 20 states for coordinated school health programs. In addition, CDC has collaborated with national health and education organizations to develop guidelines and materials to assist schools in promoting healthy eating and physical activity.

Team Nutrition works closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention regarding nutrition and physical activity for students and healthy school nutrition environment issues. CDC was one of the collaborating organizations that helped develop *Changing the Scene – Improving the School Nutrition Environment kit*. USDA will continue working with CDC, Division of Adolescent and School Health, to develop additional materials including a list of alternative options for competitive foods in schools.

### NATIONAL DAIRY COUNCIL



**NATIONAL DAIRY COUNCIL**

The National Dairy Council and Team Nutrition are working in coordination to build support for healthy school nutrition environments. State and Regional Dairy Council's from across the country are identifying select school district(s) in their territories and helping them use *Changing the Scene* to take action on one or more of the six components of a healthy school nutrition environment. They are helping schools build teams and use tools from the kit to improve opportunities for students to learn and practice optimum nutrition and physical activity habits. For more information on this project, call 1-800-426-8271 for the Dairy Council nearest you.

### 5 A DAY CAMPAIGN



The 5 A Day for Better Health Program is a nationwide nutrition campaign to encourage Americans to eat 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables every day for better health. The campaign is expanding to include more national partners, including the Department of Health and Human Services's CDC, National Institutes of Health and National Cancer Institute, The Produce for Better Health Foundation, and the American Cancer Society. USDA's Team Nutrition and other USDA nutrition assistance programs will be supporting the 5 A Day messages and including them in program materials.

### CHEFS



Have you ever had a chef come to your school to get children excited about trying new foods? If not, you should try it. Team Nutrition has worked with the American Culinary Federation (ACF) and the American Institute of Food and Wine (AIWF) to bring chefs into the schools to work with children and foodservice professionals. Children respond so well to these chefs that they will try foods they would never consider tasting in the cafeteria or even at home. Some chefs stimulate their enthusiasm with food carvings or spice samplings. There are a variety of possibilities. ACF's Chef and Child Foundation has been working with schools and children for several years. AIWF has an educational program titled Days of Taste that culminates with a visit to the chef's restaurant to prepare and serve a lunch. Visit their websites: [acfchefs.org](http://acfchefs.org) and [aiwf.org](http://aiwf.org).

The Healthy School Meals Resource Systems contains the Chefs Connection database. This is a listing of chefs across the country that are interested in working with schools to deliver food and nutrition messages. Go to [www.schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov](http://www.schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov) and click on the Chefs Connection button. If you don't find a chef listed for your area, start calling around to local restaurants or the hospital. Many chefs that are not on our list are happy to work with children. After all, these children will be their future customers. Also, there are a variety of Team Nutrition materials that can be used with their presentation. Get children excited about food and flavors, invite a chef to your school.

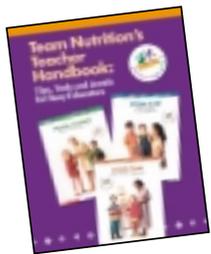
## IS YOUR SCHOOL A TEAM NUTRITION SCHOOL?



School principals and foodservice managers in more than 28,000 schools can say YES. Their schools have already made a commitment to a team effort to improve the health and education of their children by promoting healthy eating choices and creative nutrition education. School Team Leaders create school and community partnerships to help meet this commitment to students. USDA supports these schools with a kit of resource materials to help jump start their efforts. Currently, the kit includes these nutrition education materials:

- **Getting Started** - tips to get the effort going
- **Team Nutrition School banner** - to announce a commitment to the school and the community
- **Fun Tips: Using the Dietary Guidelines at Home** - take home piece for students
- **Great Nutrition Adventure Action Kit** - planning kit for a chef's visit to the school
- **Team Nutrition Connections** - newsletter for Team Nutrition Schools and supporters
- **Team Up at Home: Team Nutrition Activity Booklet** (Elementary) -activities for parents and children
- **Team Up at Home Reproducible** (Elementary) - duplication copy
- **Posters** - age appropriate posters to promote healthy eating
- **Go, Glow, Grow Foods for You\*** (Elementary) - nutrition education booklet for young children
- **Scholastic's In-School Curriculum\*** (Elementary receives one of three kits—preK-K, grades 1-2 or grades 3-5)
- **Teacher's Support Handbook: Tips, Tools & Jewels for Busy Educators** (Elementary)
- **Food, Family and Fun resource book\*** (Middle and High) - recipe and activity book
- **"Dear Student" Reproducible** (Middle and High) - take home nutrition education for student
- **Team Nutrition School Activity Planner** - "how-to" guide for planning and publicizing a nutrition fair
- **Healthy School Meals, Healthy Kids: A Leadership Guide for School Decision Makers** - an explanation of Team Nutrition and its benefits
- **Serving Up Success** - summary of successful school activities
- **yourSELF Nutrition Education Kit\*** - a classroom kit designed to teach personal responsibility for healthy eating choices—provided to food service managers at schools with 7th and 8th grade students
  - **Promotional Materials** - items for students such as bookmarks, stickers and bookcovers that promote healthy eating and physical activity.

\* These materials can also be purchased from the National Food Service Management Institute. Phone 1-800-321-3054.





## Training & Technical Assistance

In addition, USDA has developed materials and distributed them to school food authorities (SFAs) for use in working with all their schools to improve meal service. These technical assistance materials include:

- **Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals** - planning assistance for school lunch and school breakfast
- **Food Buying Guide** - a guide to help schools with the purchase of foods to meet the meal requirements
- **Serving it Safe: A Manager's Tool Kit\*** - a food safety and sanitation training package
- **Tool Kit for Healthy School Meals** - 53 standardized recipes, a promotion guide and a training manual for preparing, modifying and standardizing recipes
- **Cooking a World of New Tastes\*** - a video series of culinary techniques for foodservice staff
- **Assisted NuMenus Guidance\*** - cycle menus, standardized recipes, generic food product descriptions, food preparation methods, and nutrient analysis
- **Choice Plus: A Reference Guide for Foods and Ingredients\*** - a guide to help schools make informed decisions when purchasing food for school meals



## School & Community

USDA has also provided materials to encourage school and community support to provide comprehensive nutrition education for their students and help them continuously improve their food service program. These include:

- **Community Nutrition Action Kit** - a kit which contains youth activities, family/caregiver activities and community activities with guidelines for implementation, reproducible handouts, resource information and references
- **Changing the Scene** - a tool kit that addresses the entire school nutrition environment and includes a variety of tools for use at the local level to raise awareness and address school environment issues



\* These materials can be purchased from the National Food Service Management Institute. Phone 1-800-321-3054.

## JOIN THE TEAM!

Complete and return the enrollment form on page 7. Once enrolled, you receive a resource kit of materials (while supplies last) to jump start your effort. However, materials alone will not make you successful.

The most important benefit of becoming a Team Nutrition School is the focus it will bring to promoting healthy eating and physical activity for your students. Establishing partnerships with teachers, foodservice staff, school administrators, coaches, school nurses, parents, the media, community leaders and organizations serves children in several ways: healthier meal offerings; consistent, positive nutrition education messages from a variety of sources; and a school environment that supports healthy eating choices.

The Team Nutrition Home Page ([www.fns.usda.gov/tn](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn)) provides access to most of the materials listed above — you can download and print many of them. It also provides an online form for ordering additional copies of materials.

**Now is the time for Team Nutrition Schools to examine your success, reaffirm or identify new Team Leaders and community partnerships, and reenergize your initiative to keep the momentum going. If you are not a Team Nutrition School, join today!**

## JOIN THE TEAM... BECOME A TEAM NUTRITION SCHOOL

Becoming a Team Nutrition School will help you focus attention on the important role of nutritious school meals, nutrition education and a health-promoting school environment in helping students learn to enjoy healthy eating and physical activity. It will provide the framework for team efforts by school nutrition staff, teachers, parents, the media and other community members.

Team Nutrition's goal is to improve children's lifelong eating and physical activity habits by using the principles of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Food Guide Pyramid.

### Team Nutrition has three implementation strategies:

- Healthy School Meals that meet student expectations
- Nutrition Education that is fun and focused on behavior
- Support from school administrators, parents and other community leaders

### All program materials encourage students to make food and physical activity choices for a healthy lifestyle. They focus on four behavior outcomes:

- Eat a variety of foods
- Eat more fruits, vegetables, and grains
- Eat lower fat foods more often
- Be physically active

### Team Nutrition Schools have these common values:

1. We believe that children should be empowered to make food and physical activity choices that reflect the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
2. We believe that good nutrition and physical activity are essential to children's health and educational success.
3. We believe that school meals that meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans should taste good and appeal to children.
4. We believe our programs must build upon the best science, education, communication, and technical resources available.
5. We believe that school, parent and community teamwork is essential to encouraging children to make food

and physical activity choices for a healthy lifestyle.

6. We believe that messages to children should be age appropriate and delivered in language they speak, through media they use, in ways that are entertaining and actively involve them in learning.
7. We believe in focusing on positive messages regarding food and physical activity choices children can make.
8. We believe it is critical to stimulate and support education and action at the national, state and local levels to help children develop healthy eating and physical activity behaviors.

As a new Team Nutrition School, you will receive a resource kit (while supplies last) of materials to help you plan and carry out activities for your students and their families. Additional copies of some Team Nutrition materials can be purchased from the National Food Service Management Institute (1-800-321-3054). You also have the opportunity to use the Team Nutrition Web Page (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn>) to order additional support material, to share your success stories, and learn what other Team Nutrition Schools are doing.



COMPLETE THE SCHOOL ENROLLMENT FORM ON THE NEXT PAGE.

**FAX IT TO: 703-305-2549**

**OR MAIL IT TO: Team Nutrition  
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 632  
Alexandria, VA 22302**

At the same time, provide a copy of the enrollment form to your foodservice director and to the Team Nutrition Leader at your State Agency. If you do not have that address, contact your school foodservice director or check the Team Nutrition website. If you have questions, email, fax or mail them to Team Nutrition at the above address. Also, email can be directed to [teamnutrition@fns.usda.gov](mailto:teamnutrition@fns.usda.gov).

**We look forward to having you JOIN THE TEAM!**

# TEAM NUTRITION SCHOOL ENROLLMENT FORM

SUBMIT ONE FOR EACH SCHOOL

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT



## OUR TEAM NUTRITION SCHOOL LEADER IS:

MS.       MRS.       MR.       OTHER

FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_ LAST NAME \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENROLLMENT \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL GRADES (K-12) \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL DISTRICT \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE (      ) \_\_\_\_\_ FAX (      ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

## PLEASE CHECK ONE OR MORE OF THE APPROPRIATE GRADE RANGES:

P (PRESCHOOL: PREK)       E (ELEMENTARY: K-5/6)       M (MIDDLE: 6/7-8)       H (HIGH: 9-12)

## WE AGREE TO:

- Support USDA's Team Nutrition goal and values.
- Demonstrate a commitment to help students meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Designate a Team Nutrition School Leader who will establish a school team.
- Distribute Team Nutrition materials to teachers, students and parents.
- Involve teachers, students, parents, foodservice personnel, and the community in interactive and entertaining nutrition education activities.
- Participate in the National School Lunch Program.
- Demonstrate a well-run Child Nutrition Program.
- Share successful strategies and programs with other schools.

**WE CERTIFY OUR SCHOOL DOES NOT HAVE ANY OUTSTANDING OVERCLAIMS OR SIGNIFICANT PROGRAM VIOLATIONS IN OUR SCHOOL MEALS PROGRAMS.**

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL, PRINTED NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL FOODSERVICE MANAGER, PRINTED NAME \_\_\_\_\_

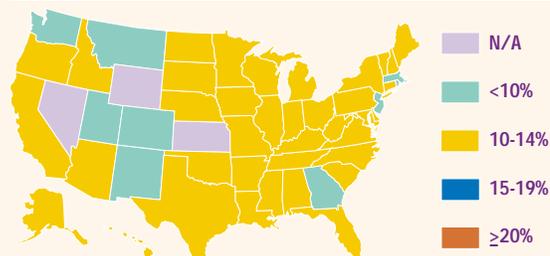
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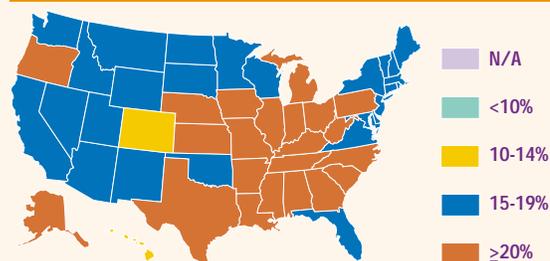
# ALARMING HEALTH TRENDS

## Obesity Among U.S. Adults: BRFSS, 1991



Source: Mokdad AH, et al. J Am Med Assoc 1999;282:16.

## Obesity Among U.S. Adults: BRFSS, 2000



Source: Mokdad AH, et al. J Am Med Assoc 2001;286:10.

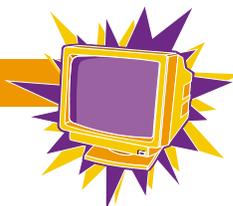
The declining status of children's health is making headlines. Obesity rates have sharply increased and Type II diabetes, usually an adult onset disease, is now showing up in children and teens. Less exercise and less milk consumption combined with an increase in soda consumption among children, increases their risk for bone fractures and susceptibility to osteoporosis as they get older. These are serious concerns that need to be addressed and trends reversed. Team Nutrition is working with a variety of partners to get important messages to the public.

## FOR MORE Information

### INTERNET

Contact us via the Internet/World Wide Web at the following URL (Uniform Resource Locator):

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn>



### E-MAIL

E-Mail us at Team Nutrition On-Line at our Internet mailbox, [teamnutrition@fns.usda.gov](mailto:teamnutrition@fns.usda.gov)



### WRITE

Write us at:

3101 Park Center Drive, Room 632  
Alexandria, VA 22302



### PHONE/FAX

Phone: (703) 305-1624

Fax: (703) 305-2549



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