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New School Nutrition Standards Encourage WIC Graduates to Continue Healthy Eating Habits

WASHINGTON, DC, October 4, 2012— The National WIC Association (NWA) supports the newly updated national school meal nutrition standards aimed at improving the health of school-aged children, including preventing and reducing childhood obesity. They are strong, science-based standards that incorporate recommendations made by Institute of Medicine scientists and national health experts.

The new standards require meals to fall within age-appropriate calorie ranges based on the U.S. Dietary Guidelines. However, they allow for unlimited consumption of fruits and vegetables to help students meet daily recommendations. Meals must also comply with lower sodium and trans fat limits.

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is a short-term intervention program that provides nutrition education, breastfeeding education and support, nutritious foods, and improved access to regular health care and social services for low-income moms and their young children up to age five. It is designed to influence lifetime nutrition and health behaviors in a population that has or is at risk of developing, nutrition related health problems.

When children graduate from the WIC Program, their diets will be influenced by what they eat at school and at home. Participation in the national school meals programs with the new nutrition standards allows graduates of WIC the opportunity to build upon the healthy nutrition foundation offered through WIC.

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