



Nutrition Education in Food Service Tool Kit

Introduction

For most children, school is the largest source of meals eaten outside of the home. School food service offers an ideal setting for experiential learning around food for children and for engaging parents in modeling healthy eating habits at home. The goal of this tool kit is to take advantage of the potential of school food service settings to positively influence children's eating – both at school and at home. The tool kit is designed for use in elementary schools, particularly those serving low-income populations. Activities are included for food service staff to use in school as well as for parents to use at home.

There are 6 nutrition topics covered in the tool kit:

1. **Fruits and Vegetables**
2. **Healthy Meals**
3. **Healthy Breakfast**
4. **Healthy Snacks**
5. **Healthy Drinks**
6. **Portion Size**

Each topic includes up to 6 components:

1. **Posters**
 - a. Eye-catching posters to complement the messages from other tool components.
 - b. To be posted in the school cafeteria¹ where children routinely see them during school meals.
 - c. Some free poster samples are provided; others can be purchased from distributors.

¹ Any school setting where foods are served to children.



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2. Food Service Activities

- a. Easy, yet engaging activities that food service staff can do with children.
- b. To be done during school meals.

3. Music

- a. Fun music to reinforce the messages from other tool components.
- b. To be played in the school cafeteria where children routinely hear it during school meals.
- c. Some free music is provided on CD; others can be purchased from distributors.

4. Parent Newsletter Articles

- a. Brief articles in English and in Spanish.
- b. To be included as part of food service menus or principal or teacher newsletters to parents.

5. Parent Handouts

- a. One-page fliers in English and Spanish.
- b. To be sent home with children, handed out to parents at school events, or posted on a parent bulletin board.
- c. Most topics include multiple handouts to give you flexibility. You can pick only one if you want or use them all - spread out over the school year.

6. Recipes

- a. A few recipes are included in the parent handouts.
- b. This section provides additional tips often requested by families.

This tool kit includes copies of components as well as a CD that can be used to download materials for copying. At the end of the tool kit is a list of additional on-line nutrition education resources that may be useful in school food service settings.
