



Nurses Make a Difference for Healthy School Food

1. Model positive eating / drinking behaviors. Keep fruit and water on your desk to show your healthy snacks.
2. Encourage your school to have a fruit and vegetable snacks only policy.
NYCHSF is conducting a pilot program in Ithaca. Children have access to fresh fruit and vegetables in the classroom when they are hungry. The produce is supplied by businesses, foundations, and private funders who adopt the classrooms. This program is based on the very successful, but limited, USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program. While the businesses can gain positive PR for doing this, it is not an opportunity for them to “advertise” to the children.
3. Use **Wellness Wakeup**, a program of **NY Coalition for Healthy School Food**.
Wellness Wakeup delivers empowering messages about nutrition over the loudspeaker in the morning, or in some other way for schools that do not have morning announcements. The messages are in the form of sound-bites, so children learn a little bit each day. If you can not get your school to use the messages for morning announcements, see if teachers will read them to your class in the morning. NYS schools can access the **Wellness Wakeup** program for free at www.healthyschoolfood.org.
4. Advocate to keep corporate influence out of the classroom.
Fast Food Nation, by Eric Schlosser outlines how businesses can “buy” their way into curricula. The Institute of Medicine recommends that schools “are as advertising-free as possible.”
5. Advocate to ban the use food as a reward.
This once-common practice undermines parents who are trying to feed their children healthfully, and dietitians and eating-disorder experts are urging teachers to discontinue this practice. You can find alternative ideas for rewards at: www.cspinet.org/nutritionpolicy/constructive_rewards.pdf and www.tn.fcs.msue.msu.edu/foodrewards.pdf
6. Advocate for no junk food in the classroom. Set standards for snacks.
The Institute of Medicine released guidelines for snacks in schools. You can find these guidelines at: www.iom.edu (look in the “Education” section for “Nutrition Standards in Schools,” dated April 25, 2007). Even so, the guidelines could be better. There needs to be a focus on fresh fruits and vegetables for snacking, as opposed to processed, packaged foods that are marketed as “healthy” choices. Children don’t get enough fruits and vegetables, so they are ideal. Baked potato chips are NOT a healthy snack, despite what marketers tell us.
7. Help your school rethink birthday parties and other celebrations.
One school found that every child in the entire school preferred extra recess over a party with food, and this would be the best option. Consider having birthday parties once per month for all children with birthdays that month. Offer one **treat** food and make sure the rest are healthy **snack** foods. If you can’t switch to the once per month model, consider celebrating with healthy smoothies, which children love to make, or non-food activities.
8. Advocate for healthful fundraising.
Find alternative fundraising ideas at: www.cspinet.org/new/pdf/schoolfundraising.pdf
9. Be a voice in your school for the Local Wellness Policy.
All schools that participate in the National School Meal Program are mandated to have a Local Wellness Policy. It is up to the schools to be sure they are implemented. You can ask your superintendent for a copy, or check the district website. Join the wellness committee if there is one, and offer to form one if there is not.
10. Educate and motivate your students with these resources.
For elementary: **Food is Elementary** curriculum available at www.foodstudies.org.
For ages 9-14: *Chew on This* by Eric Schlosser & Charles Wilson (kids’ version of *Fast Food Nation*).
For junior high and high school: www.meatrix.com; True Cost of Food & Mouth Revolution (watch at www.youtube.com and search on “True Cost of Food” and “Mouth Revolution”). See NYCHSF’s handout of educational resources. Contact us to email you one.
11. For more information, go to: www.healthyschoolfood.org/nutrition101.htm;
www.cancerproject.org; www.heartattackproof.com; http://www.nealbarnard.org/diabetes_book.htm

New York Coalition for Healthy School Food

Check out our all new website at: www.healthyschoolfood.org

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Great resources also available at: www.cspinet.org, go to “Nutrition Policy” then “School Foods”