

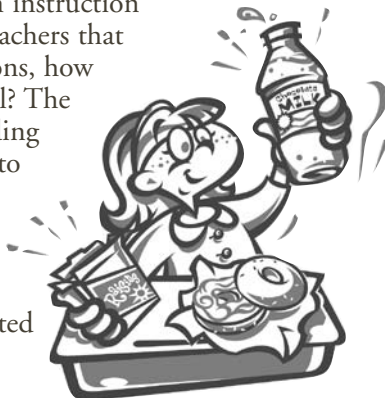
SPOTLIGHT ON SCHOOLS



Why are schools in the spotlight? With the *No Child Left Behind Act* and the current childhood obesity epidemic, schools are on stage to help improve academic performance and reduce the incidence of overweight, undernourished students. One strategy schools are using to help focus on a solution to national trends is school breakfast.

Building Breakfast Success

The documented nutritional, behavioral and academic benefits of serving school breakfast are well-known by school foodservice professionals. Recognizing the importance of feeding students, last summer, Carolyn Scott, child nutrition services supervisor at Lake Forest School District, Felton, Del., decided to pilot a breakfast program. With just a half-day of classroom instruction time and a group of teachers that didn't want interruptions, how could this be successful? The known benefits of feeding students were enough to overcome these obstacles. Scott served a 10:00 a.m. brunch in the classroom. As a result, "Teachers reported less disruption during class and found that children were more focused for the second half of the morning," said Scott. Superintendent Dr. Daniel Curry, liked what he saw. "Feeding kids in the classroom provided students with an environment where they could eat in a family-style setting and teachers could continue to do their own work during this break." Revealing the success of this summer pilot has fueled Scott's efforts. "Our goal is to expand and do another pilot during the 2004 school year; eventually, we want to implement a district-wide nutritious breakfast program."



Focus on Health

Lynn Stinziano, assistant director of Chartwells School Dining Services, Atlantic City, N.J., feels it's her responsibility to provide children with quality meals in school. Breakfast in the Classroom has become part of first period for 6,000 elementary students in the Atlantic City school district. "We cannot control what students eat before school or after school, but we can do our part in reducing the childhood obesity epidemic and breakfast is a part of that." In addition to serving breakfast to help nourish her students, Stinziano has made changes to the menu and now serves 1% milk instead of whole milk and lower sugar items like cereal, yogurt and fortified muffins. With reports from teachers that test scores increased, Stinziano remains committed to student nutrition as she hopes to expand breakfast into the high schools in her district.

Taking Action

Action For Healthy Kids, a national coalition with 51 state teams, concentrates on improving children's health and academic performance through sound nutrition and physical activity. Recognizing the positive impact of breakfast, over one-third of the state teams have identified implementing school breakfast as one of their main objectives. Each team has an objective to make schools a healthier place for children to achieve academic success. As a school foodservice professional, you are the link between students and food served in schools. Your help is needed to make a difference in the school nutrition environment.



Visit www.ActionForHealthyKids.org to get actively involved with your state team. If you'd like more information about Expanding Breakfast, visit www.nutritionexplorations.org.

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