

Simple Steps to a Healthier School

“You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose. You’re on your own. And you know what you know. And YOU are the one who’ll decide where to go...” -Dr. Seuss



School Food

KITCHEN & CAFETERIA

- Remove flavored milk or limit the number of days it is offered
- Place healthy food at the beginning of the lunch line
- Offer a choice “do you want carrots or broccoli?” rather than simply “do you want carrots?”
- Rename food with appealing & descriptive names
- Place fruits in bowls instead of metal pans
- Institute a ‘cash for cookies’ policy
- Think about lunch line flow – are the healthy choices convenient? Place the salad bar away from the wall
- Make baked goods with more than 50% whole grains
- Install a salad bar
- Form a partnership w/ a local chef – what insight can they provide? (Resource: Moving Chefs to Schools)

School Wellness

THE FOOD ENVIRONMENT

- Replace high sugar/fat/sodium vending machine offerings with healthier options
- Hang student-created posters encouraging healthy eating in the cafeteria
- Start a monthly lunch time ‘Tasting Table’ that features local & seasonal produce. Utilize parent volunteers
- Provide a fruit bowl instead of a candy dish in the office
- Start an after school cooking club
- Create a wellness policy that encourages healthy snacks for classroom celebrations
- Offer healthier competitive foods
- Start a composting program
- Assess interest in a school garden
- Add a culinary class to your course offerings

Nothing compares to the simple pleasure of a bike ride.
-John F. Kennedy



A CULTURE OF WELLNESS

- Include simple health tips in your daily school announcements
- Organize a staff fitness or healthy eating group
- Encourage, reward and support staff wellness
- Establish a youth advisory board for your wellness policy council
- Include parents on your wellness committee
- Invite local sports celebrities to talk to your students about healthy living

HEALTHY FUNDRAISERS

- Host a young chefs competition with local celebrity chefs
- Walk-a-thon or bike-a-thon
- Sports tournaments: golf, basketball, bowling
- Create a cookbook from healthy student recipes
- Sell non-food items such as notebooks, stationary or greeting cards that feature students' art & inspirational messages

ACTIVE STUDENTS & STAFF

- Ensure that there is adequate bicycle parking at your school
- Encourage parents to organize a bike or walk train
- Include alternative PE classes such as yoga, dance or cycling
- Start an after school bicycle repair class
- Organize a bike fair with fun obstacle courses, helmet fitting and safety seminars
- Consider recess before lunch
- Implement 'Fitness Fridays' in your school with activity breaks throughout the day
- Create a 'Bike Week' with activities each day of the school week



Success Stories

MOUNT AIRY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: GOOD FOOD FOR FAMILIES

- Encouragement of healthy eating at home leads to significant results

<http://www.jamieoliver.com/us/foundation/jamies-food-revolution/news-content/healthy-eating-program-gets-kids-familie>

MANTECA UNIFIED: THE CAFETERIA AS A “PARTNER IN EDUCATION”

- Healthy, appealing and cost-effective meals are the norm in this cafeteria

<http://www.mantecabulletin.com/archives/20975/>

CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS: “MIRACLE WORKER IN THE SCHOOL KITCHEN”

- Tasty, from-scratch meals for under \$3

http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2011-03-17/news/ct-met-healthy-school-lunch-man-20110317_1_school-kitchen-school-students-national-school-lunch-program

MECKLENBURG COUNTY, NC: TEENS AS PEER HEALTH ADVOCATES

- Youth empowerment program focused on combating childhood obesity

<http://www.charlotteobserver.com/2011/04/03/2186991/teens-join-fight-against-obesity.html>

SANTA CRUZ, CA: GREEN WAYS TO SCHOOL

- Working to build a “culture of human powered transportation”

<http://www.greenways2school.org/>

For additional resources, please visit the **School Food Tour website at:**

<http://schoolfoodtour.org>

