

CONSISTENT NUTRITION MESSAGES

Goal: Consistent nutrition messages shall be disseminated throughout the district, schools, classrooms, cafeterias, homes, community and media.

USDA's Team Nutrition program is based on the premise that it takes a team approach to create a healthy nutrition environment for children. Children's behaviors are influenced by messages they receive within their environment including the school cafeteria, the classrooms, the school campus, at home, throughout the community, and through the media. Team Nutrition uses three behavior-oriented strategies to promote children's health, one of which is to provide multi-faceted, integrated nutrition education for children, their parents/guardians, and other adults who influence children's behavior. A key concept within this strategy is the delivery of consistent nutrition messages based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

The district recognizes that students receive nutrition messages through both overt forms of communication, such as through classroom lessons and on posters that are displayed throughout the school campuses and through more subtle forms of communication. Students receive messages about the values the district places on nutrition and health through less explicit forms of communication, such as the types of foods that are offered throughout the schools, the types of foods that are included at faculty and other school-related events, advertising that may be present on book covers and school grounds, and acceptance of donations by fast food outlets. The district will disseminate consistent nutrition messages throughout the district, schools, classrooms, cafeterias, homes, community and media.

Plan Of Action: District

1. The district will support the inclusion of consistent, positive nutrition messages in the daily events of the school day.
2. Nutrition messages will be developed as part of the curriculum and be appropriate to the age and/or grade level of the students.
3. The district Wellness Committee will work in conjunction with principals, teachers, and food service personnel to disseminate consistent nutrition messages through various channels, such as food service initiatives, classroom activities, school-wide events, home activities, media events, and advertising in the school buildings and throughout the school campuses. The Wellness Committee will also ensure that faculty, staff, and administration are aware of the importance of providing positive consistent nutrition messages through both explicit and more subtle means.

Role Of The Principals

1. The principal will oversee and ensure implementation of consistent nutrition messages throughout the school year in his/her building.
2. The principal will convene meetings of grade level teachers with the health teachers and food service staff on a quarterly basis to review and establish age appropriate consistent nutrition messages.
3. Principals will ensure delivery of positive and consistent nutrition messages during student events and assemblies. Informative announcements to faculty, staff and students will support building and/or classroom nutrition education.
4. Principals will ensure that consistent nutrition messages are disseminated to all students through a variety of sources, such as daily announcements, posters, newsletters to parents/guardians, nutrition/health fairs, building television station, etc.
5. Principals will ensure that faculty and staff members are aware of the policy goal to provide consistent nutrition messages.
6. Principals will ensure that adequate resources and materials are provided to teachers and support staff to generate and deliver positive nutrition messages.
7. Principals will ensure that all advertising in the school building and on school grounds promotes positive nutrition messages.

Role Of The Librarians

1. School Librarians will review books, magazines, and other reference materials supporting positive nutrition stories and messages to students of all ages, providing a list for teachers to use to support curriculum.
2. Librarians will provide a list of books with positive consistent nutrition messages to parents/guardians as part of suggested reading lists.
3. The Library will feature the subject of nutrition during October, National School Lunch Week; January, National School Breakfast Week; and March, National Nutrition Month.
4. Librarians will provide pre-school and Head Start students/parents/guardians participating in community elementary library programs with resources and materials supporting positive nutrition messages for young children.

Role Of The Food Service Department

1. The Food Service Department will model positive, consistent nutrition messages through quality meal service and menu offerings.

2. Food service staff will encourage students with positive nutrition comments and messages as they proceed through the serving line.
3. Posters (student generated and/or professional) providing consistent positive nutrition messages will be used to decorate the serving and dining areas.
4. School Food Service will provide resource information to principals and teachers supporting consistent nutrition messages.
5. School Food Service will support the concept that the food service program is a hands-on learning laboratory for practicing healthy nutrition habits.
6. School Food Service will work with classroom teachers to present nutrition-related topics in the classroom.

Role Of The Teachers

1. Teachers will cooperate with the principals to develop appropriate nutrition messages for all students.
2. Health and Physical Education teachers will incorporate positive nutrition messages into curriculum.
3. Faculty will involve students in research and creation of positive, consistent nutrition messages to be used in the classroom and shared throughout the school and community.
4. Music educators will feature songs which provide positive nutrition messages to students in classroom education, parent presentations, etc.
5. Teachers will actively support school food service as a learning laboratory by relaying positive messages regarding school dining, including encouraging students to participate in breakfast and lunch programs, and working with the food service department to coordinate delivery of positive nutrition messages.
6. Teachers will provide the Food Service Department the opportunity to present nutrition-related topics in the classrooms.

Role Of Students

1. Students will actively participate in suggesting and developing positive nutrition messages with guidance by teachers.
2. Students in upper grades will assist in developing and disseminating nutrition messages to younger students. (For example, high school and middle school students can generate

multi-media announcements, television programming, and graphic art nutrition messages for all age levels. Older students can lead nutrition lessons/activities for younger students.)

3. Students will interact with teachers, peers and food service staff to disseminate nutrition education messages to the community.

Role Of The Community

1. Adult volunteers, homeroom mothers, and parent/teacher organizations will support classroom activities by assisting with the creation and dissemination of nutrition messages in the community and supporting positive nutrition in parties and school events.
2. Business owners will be invited to partner with the school community to reinforce positive nutrition messages.
3. Businesses and schools will work to develop positive, consistent nutrition messages in key areas of the community such as the following:
 - a. Billboards
 - b. Restaurants providing more fresh fruit and vegetable choices for children and adults
 - c. Newspapers supporting school nutrition messages and activities
 - d. Radio and television stations providing consistent, positive nutrition messages, including public service announcements developed by students.

Resources

Action for Healthy Kids - www.actionforhealthykids.org

This website provides resources and information about nutrition and health-related activities in Pennsylvania and other states across the U.S.

American Dietetic Association - www.eatright.org

The ADA website provides accurate food and nutrition information on a variety of subjects, as well as information about professional development opportunities.

Eat Smart, Play Hard - <http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/Original/default.htm>

The Eat Smart, Play Hard website contains background information and promotion materials for this national campaign to promote nutritious eating and encourage physical activity in children and their families.

Healthy Reading Lessons -

<http://www.tn.fcs.msue.msu.edu/Healthy%20Reading%20Lessons.pdf>

Ten one-hour lessons that use popular children's books, taste-testing activities, and literacy skill-building strategies to link nutrition education and physical activity promotion with development of beginning reading skills. Developed by Michigan Team Nutrition.

Milk Messages - <http://www.milkdelivers.org/schools/promotional.cfm> and <http://www.milkdelivers.org/gotmilk/index.cfm>

These websites provide information about promoting the benefits of milk.

MyPyramid.com - www.mypyramid.com

The MyPyramid website includes healthy guidelines, messages and support materials to meet the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Pennsylvania Advocates for Nutrition and Activity (PANA)- www.panaonline.org

PANA's website includes information about a variety of programs and special events that promote nutrition and physical activity.

Project PA - <http://nutrition.psu.edu/projectpa/>

Project PA's website includes resource materials, information about wellness policies, best practices, and links and individuals to assist with school breakfast expansion.

School Nutrition Association - www.schoolnutrition.org

The website of this national School Food Service organization includes resources and ideas to disseminate and communicate positive messages to students, community and others.

USDA Team Nutrition - <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/team.html>

USDA Team Nutrition website promotes positive, consistent nutrition messages in schools through multiple communication channels and provides links to a variety of resources.

U. S. Department of Health and Human Services and USDA, Dietary Guidelines for Americans - <http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/>

The Guidelines provide authoritative advice for people two years and older about how good dietary habits can promote health and reduce risk for major chronic diseases. They serve as the basis for Federal food and nutrition education programs.