


Food for Thought: Minding the Lunch Money



Mary McKenna, UNB, Fredericton, NB Oct 2008
Championing Public Health Nutrition - CSPI

What do these have in common?



They educate by the choices they present

Overview

- What are school nutrition policies?
- What's happening?
- What does leadership look like?

School Nutrition Policy

- **Framework to guide school planning, implementation, and evaluation pertaining to student nutrition and health**
 - Promote norms
 - Reflect national dietary guidance
 - Consider cultural and dietary practices


WHO Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health

- *School policies and programmes should support the adoption of healthy diets and physical activity.*
 - *Adopt policies that support healthy diets at school and limit the availability of products high in salt, sugar and fat*

WHO Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, 2004
http://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/strategy/eb11344/strategy_english_web.pdf

Impact of School Nutrition Standards/Policies

- Increase availability of more nutritious foods
- Decrease availability of less healthful foods
- Increase/decrease meal program participation
- Decrease purchases of competitive foods
- Increase purchases of vegetables and fruit
- Decrease rates of increase in overweight



National Level Activity – Japan

- Only food available is school meals (no canteens, vending machines, etc).
- Registered dietitians trained to teach nutrition in classrooms (also in South Korea)



Enjoying Apples, or meals provided by the school lunch program

National Level Activity – Scotland

- Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007
 - Act of Parliament set national nutrition standards for school meals and foods outside of school meals



National Level Activity – England

- National standards for school meals
 - Maximum levels for fat, saturated fat, sugar, salt
 - Minimum levels for carbohydrate, protein, fibre, vitamin A, vitamin C, folate, calcium, iron, zinc
- Less healthy food banned from school canteens and vending machines



National Level Activity – United States

- National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs
- Local Wellness Policy
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program
- The Alliance for a Healthier Generation
- Action for Healthy Kids
- Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools (Institute of Medicine)



Canada – Provincial/Territorial Policies

- Nutrition policies are widespread
- Policies vary widely but all address
 - Nutritional quality of food
 - Elementary schools

Food and Nutrition Policy for Nova Scotia Schools

- Food and beverages
- Portion sizes
- Drinking water
- Fundraising
- Special functions
- Promotion & advertising
- Food as a reinforcer
- Vulnerable students
- Food safety
- Nutrition education
- Time to eat
- Local produce and products
- Environmental considerations
- Role models
- School partnerships and commitment



National Level Activity – Canada

- Breakfast for Learning
 - Support for meal and snack programs
- Centre for Science in the Public Interest
 - Advocacy and information
- Dietitians of Canada
 - Education and expertise
- Dairy Farmers of Canada
 - Nutrition education and milk programs
- Refreshments Canada
 - Withdrawal of soft drinks from elementary and middle schools



Government Roles

- Leadership
- Provision of resources
- Funding
- Evaluation
- Capacity development
- Monitoring and surveillance
- Research



• Institute of Medicine 2007

Support Comprehensive Nutrition Policy

- Food available
- Healthy school environment
- Health education
- Health services, counselling, social support
- Community and family involvement and outreach

Support and Involve Stakeholder Groups

- Government
- School personnel
- Students
- Parents
- Health professionals
- Non-governmental organizations
- Agricultural sector
- Industry and media
- Academic community

Assist with Challenges

- Champions
- Support to increase and maintain priority
- Resources and training
- Revenue solutions
- Engagement strategies
- Identification of desired foods
- Food procurement/preparation
- Communication
- Accountability strategies
- Evaluation and research

Assist with Evaluation

- Develop and disseminate process and outcome indicators
- Support evaluation
- Disseminate and utilize evaluation results

Work Together to Achieve Synergy

- Home
- School
- Workplace
- Community
- Media

Summary

- Action is occurring
- All levels of government have a role to play
 - Political will
- Leadership is needed
 - Comprehensive policy
 - Stakeholders
 - Challenges
 - Evaluation
 - Synergy
 - Public health advocacy



Thank You

- Contact information:
 - Mary McKenna, PhD, RD
 - Professor, University of New Brunswick,
Faculty of Kinesiology, Fredericton, NB, Canada E3A 2P5
 - mmckenna@unb.ca
 - Tel: 506-451-6872