



Tips for Parent Involvement

Here are some ideas to get parents actively involved in encouraging and promoting physical activity and healthy eating.

Encourage students to teach parents and family members activity songs and exercises—this will not only reinforce what they have been learning, but will get parents involved in being physically active with their children.



During **Parent/Teacher Conferences**, inform parents of the *Food-N-Moves 4 U* Program and the reasons why your school is participating.

Demonstrate class physical activities during **Open Houses** that parents and children will be attending.



Invite parents to send **healthy foods** to school with their children for snack time once a week or every day.

Send home **physical activity “homework”** as part of regular lesson plans for parents to do with children.



Include information about the program in **newsletters** sent home with children and on your school’s **website**.





Sample Snack Policies

Background: Snacks play a major and growing role in children's diets. Between 1977 and 1996, the number of calories that children consumed from snacks increased by 120 calories per day. (That is equal to 12.5 pounds per year!) *CSPI Healthy School Snacks, 2006*. Serving healthy snacks to children is important to providing good nutrition, supporting lifelong healthy eating habits, and helping to prevent costly and potentially disabling diseases, such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, and obesity.

Currently, Maine has no rules regulating snack offerings in school. However, as of the Fall 2006 school year, all schools must have Wellness Policies in place that may or may not address this healthy snack issue. Be sure to check with your local school wellness policy regarding any nutrition or snack policy.

Please refer to the following examples when developing your snack policy. You can use any of the policies listed below or a combination of more than one. General rules to keep in mind are:

- Never use food as a form of punishment or reward.
- Teachers and school staff should be positive role models for healthy eating.
- Staff or students with food intolerances or food allergies should be considered when offering snacks.
- Whenever possible, locally grown foods will be offered and encouraged. (examples include: apples, blueberries, broccoli, locally made breads, etc.)
- All students deserve to have healthy snacks as a choice while in school.

Sample Healthy Snack Policy #1: All foods offered by the teacher or any school staff person as a snack item in the classroom or on school property will be from at least one of the following categories:

- Fruits and vegetables (not fried)
- Low-fat/fat-free dairy products
- Whole grains, nuts, seeds

Furthermore, no soda, fruit drinks, or candy will be offered for snack items.

Sample Healthy Snack Policy #2: Before any class party or celebration, parents will be notified and asked to provide items from the Healthy Snack List* and will be asked to avoid providing soda, fruit drinks or candy.

Sample Healthy Snack Policy #3: At the start of the school year, parents and students will be encouraged (both verbally and in writing) to bring snacks listed on the Healthy Snack List. * Reminders will be provided periodically throughout the school year.

