

New Hampshire Team Nutrition Mini Grants Best Practices for Healthy School Nutrition Environments



INTRODUCTION

This “Best Practices for Healthy School Nutrition Environments” booklet contains experiential information about competitive mini grants that were offered to New Hampshire Schools. The mini grants were funded through a USDA Team Nutrition Training Grant awarded to the New Hampshire Department of Education, Division of Program Support, Bureau of Nutrition Programs and Services. The funds were distributed by the Bureau to the schools during the 2004/2005 New Hampshire school year. Each mini grant focused primarily on nutrition education activities and programs in the schools, however some physical activity programs and projects were included.

Schools reported projects to the Bureau that were successful, but also identified activities and projects that were difficult to accomplish. We believe the type of information found in this booklet makes it a useful tool for other schools who are thinking about creating their own healthy school nutrition environments.

This booklet contains mini grant information written and submitted by the grant recipients, themselves. The photos were taken during their own mini grant experiences. It is our hope that the information contained in this booklet will help you identify ways to explore the creation of your school’s healthy school nutrition environment.

We would like to thank all of the mini grant recipients for their hard work on behalf of the health of the children in our state. It is their efforts, and yours, that directly affect our school children, their families and the school community at large.



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NASHUA SCHOOLS

SAU #42

Dr. Crisp Elementary School in Nashua, New Hampshire is an inner city school that houses over 425 students, grades preschool through five. Prior to the 2004-2005 school year, a typical week at Dr. Crisp would feature classroom celebrations that included cupcakes, brownies, candy and other such “junk food”. The principal’s office was decorated in an M&M candy theme. Food was used as a reward and as an incentive.

In November of 2003, the eyes of Dr. Crisp’s staff were opened by a presentation of the “Changing the Scene” Program. All agreed it was hard to ignore the ever-increasing media coverage of childhood obesity. By March of 2004, they began forming a wellness team and identified ways to improve the school’s nutrition environment.

The team included teachers, parents, administration, a nutrition educator from the University of NH Cooperative Extension, the guidance counselor, food service workers, a pediatrician consultant and the school nurse. Not only were they concerned about the foods that were part of celebrations, but many of the students were bringing in daily snacks that were high in sugar, high in fat and/or excessive portion sizes.

The committee felt that how the message was presented was as important as the message itself. Rather than banning foods, they encouraged the school community to join in making healthy nutrition and fitness choices on a day-to-day basis. They strongly believed that providing the school’s families with the information and tools needed to make healthy choices would be key to success.

Dr. Crisp Elementary kicked off the 2004-2005 school year with a nutrition and fitness theme at their open house. The open house featured free samples of fruit and yogurt parfaits, healthy snack lists, recipes and a Farmer’s Market! Every classroom had a display of student work with a healthy nutrition theme. The M&M decorations in the principal’s office were replaced with student artwork. The healthy message continued via monthly nutrition news in the school newsletter. Colorful posters with fruits and vegetables were displayed throughout the school. The school cafeteria worked diligently to provide a variety of fresh fruit and vegetable choices on the salad bar each day.

The school was proud of its great start, but knew that with some financial backing even more could be accomplished. Their wishes were answered when the school was selected as a recipient of a 2004-2005 NH USDA Team Nutrition grant of \$5,000 through the New Hampshire Department of Education.

The grant money was utilized to fund several key projects. The school purchased materials for a nutrition lending library including age appropriate teaching tools for all grade levels. Some examples of library items include: children’s storybooks such as “Oh the Things you can do that are Good for you!”, puzzles, board games, cookbooks, and reference books.

A great deal of community teamwork went into writing the cookbook “Cooking the Crisp Way”. The 75-page book is full of healthy recipes including nutrition analysis. It also features healthy snacks, cooking charts and student artwork. Every family in the school was given a free copy of the cookbook.

Another major project funded with grant money was a pedometer based walking program called “KidPower”. Every student was given a pedometer, a logbook or activity chart and weekly information sheets geared towards increasing physical activity. The four-week program was very successful in encouraging students and their parents to get out and move.

The remaining grant money was utilized to provide taste testing of healthy snack choices for the school’s fourth grade students. The taste testing was done in conjunction with a thirty-minute nutrition education program that was presented by a volunteer local nutritionist.



The school nurse conducted regular “snack patrols” over the school year. She would stop by classrooms during snack time to try to “catch” students eating healthy. As the school year went by there were more and more students who were proud to show their healthy snacks and fewer students bringing “junk”. Classroom celebrations have also changed and now feature vegetables and dip, fruit kabobs and cheese and crackers. The changes can even be seen in the cafeteria where they have increased the amount of produce ordered by thirty percent.

Pre and post surveys of the project were conducted in May of 2004 and May of 2005. An overall snapshot of the data shows that students are eating more fruit, playing outside more often and drinking less soda! The data also shows that there is still plenty of room for improvement, so the mission will continue.

The staff at Dr. Crisp Elementary Schools feel time is right; people are ready and willing to make positive lifestyle changes. They encourage all schools to join them in making healthy nutrition and fitness a part of the school environment.



MILTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

SAU #64

The “Fit for Life” task force was created at Milton Elementary School to guide the projects and activities of the Team Nutrition grant. Meetings of the “Fit for Life” team were held monthly. During those meetings a mission statement with goals was created. The goals of the group were either reached or exceeded and many of the projects started through this grant will continue next school year. Some of the activities funded by the grant include: nutrition education lessons in the classroom, newsletters to the parents and the use of pedometers.

A parent newsletter was developed that included nutrition information on various topics. It also included some information about physical activity and the important role both play in wellness. Information in the newsletters reminded families to make small changes because over time small changes tend to lead to better health habits. The information also reminded parents about their opportunity to be good role models for their children and that good nutritional choices and regular activity gives their family the gift of health.

The school created an evening presentation for families on nutrition and physical activity. The presentation was called Family Nutrition Healthy Lifestyles. The second grade classroom performed a play about good food choices for this presentation and families learned about the importance of calcium, fruits and vegetables and whole grains.



Nutrition education in the classroom was another focus of the grant. Lesson plans were developed by a Milton school teacher that included: 1) “100 Fruits on Top” board. This activity was developed for the 100th day of school and allowed students to learn about math and nutrition. 2) A pyramid board where each food group section was separated. Students were asked to place pictures of foods eaten into the correct food group section. These lessons will continue to be a part of nutrition education instruction at Milton Elementary School.



The fifth graders embarked on a gardening project. Students learned about food origins and were able to taste the fruits of their labor. Large murals depicting students eating and other scenes were painted in the cafeteria.



The “Fit for Life” Task Force will continue to meet on a monthly basis and will create new goals and activities to improve health and nutrition for years to come!

NOTTINGHAM AND NORTHWOOD

SAU #44

SAU #44 is composed of Strafford, Nottingham and Northwood Schools. After receiving the mini grant, all schools in the SAU became “Team Nutrition Schools.” Each school formed staff committees to obtain input from food service personnel, teachers, parents, and students regarding interest in nutrition and exercise. Below is a summary of the information gathered in the committees and the actions taken to improve wellness within the district.

Nutrition

Parents wanted their children to have nutritious lunches and snacks, but did not always know how to best accomplish this. There was a great deal of misunderstanding concerning the nutritional value of foods. Parents did not always understand the information provided on packaged foods. Students often made food choices based on what they were familiar with, rather than trying new foods, textures and flavors. Teachers did not have an integrated curriculum that included nutrition.

Staff researched and obtained print information from Team Nutrition, US Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Education, and various other agencies. An extensive book of recipes was provided to the Food Service Managers at each school. Strafford School purchased software to produce recipes, fact sheets and other informational briefs for parents and school staff. Informational materials on nutrition, making healthy food choices, dietary needs of students, preparing healthy snacks and meals, and other relevant topics for parents, and age-appropriate materials for students, were ordered. Student Nutrition Kits for use with each school’s nutrition unit were purchased.

All schools conducted taste testing events to introduce students to new and unusual fruits and vegetables. Many students reported that it was the first time they had tried certain foods – and they liked them! Several students reported that they had asked their parents to purchase some of these foods following the taste testing. Along with this event, students engaged in a “Fruit and Vegetable Challenge”. Activities of the “Fruit and Vegetable Challenge” included; charting healthy snacks brought from home, and a “Vegetables Are Your Friend Day.”

School staff became involved in the activities, too. Colorful posters on exercise and nutrition were distributed to classrooms and hung in the cafeteria. Activity books and materials on nutrition were provided to 1-2 grade teachers for use with their students. The Food Service Managers in each school investigated ways to make healthy snacks available for purchase at a low price, to replace the “junk food” of choice for many youngsters. At Strafford School, café monitors watched for lunchtime behaviors to change in students in grades 1-3. Students who tried fruits and vegetables, instead of their usual pizza, were recognized at a school event. Prizes were awarded to the students who had shown the most improvement in their nutritional choices.

Exercise

Physical education staff at each of the schools looked at new ways to get students involved in exercise. Videotapes on nutrition, exercise and health were purchased for grades 1-4 and 5-8. Two of the schools, Nottingham and Strafford, purchased pedometers for the students in conjunction with the “Kid Power” Program. Students kept journals of their walking activities and discussed this in class. Students who recorded the most miles walked were recognized. Students received the KidPower Newsletter. Northwood School conducted a schoolwide event, “Jump Rope for Heart Week”, to emphasize easy, fun and low cost options for exercise.

CONWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT

SAU #9

Before attaining the USDA Team Nutrition grant, Conway School District's John Fuller School did not have many opportunities for creativity when it came to food. Students hadn't been involved in the choosing of local, cultural or ethnic favorites. John Fuller School did however have an after school program; "Project SUCCEED" (Schools Under Contract Creating Enriching Extended Days). SUCCEED is funded through a 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant and includes a homework club, computer lab and enrichment activities. One enrichment offered through the SUCCEED project was the Cooking Club. Food for the Cooking Club was used for nutrition education and taste testing purposes. A cook at the John Fuller School suggested that we apply for a USDA Team Nutrition grant to help enhance the Cooking Club.

The John Fuller School, in collaboration with the after school program, used USDA mini grant funds to expand the Cooking Club after school program. The Cooking Club was expanded to expose and educate students to a wide variety of healthy choices as well as local, cultural and ethnic favorites. After school students were surveyed as to what they thought a healthy food choice was. After school staff then used the survey results as an educational tool in teaching students about healthy choices. This afforded an excellent opportunity to explore just what a "healthy option" consists of and allowed for other academic enrichment to occur as well: math skills honed in a shopping list, food science and literacy skills honed in menu planning.



The Cooking Club hosted some wonderful school community events like the Project SUCCEED Family Night on April 13th. The After School Cooking Club did all of the cooking for the event so that families, administrators and community members could see what they were up to in the after school program. The menu was: spaghetti, meatballs, locally made sausage, salad, bread and a variety of desserts; all prepared and served by the After School Cooking Club. This took weeks of prepa-

ration and instruction since the meatballs and desserts had to be made and frozen in advance. The event was a huge success with well over 120 people in attendance. Attendees were mostly kids and families, but the superintendent of SAU #9, the principal of John Fuller School and some local business people were also in attendance.

The Cooking Club had a “Cooking Around the World” unit in which students cooked the foods of various regions of the world (Mexico, Italy, Germany) while studying other parts of the culture. The students then prepared and offered menu samples at the school’s annual Falcon Fire event. Falcon Fire is an annual school celebration that is attended by all staff, students, parents and administrators. The club hosted other events such as Open House, Lights On! After school and Staff Appreciation Day. The club has also given tasty, partially prepared menu items with cooking instructions to be completed at home for a parent/child activity.

John Fuller School is one of four Conway School District Schools within SAU #9. SAU #9 encompasses the Conway, Bartlett and Jackson school districts for a total of five schools. Currently the after school program, Project SUCCEED, is offered at all four Conway School District schools which makes transferability of this project fairly seamless. The Jackson Grammar School is a very small rural school with no after school program and no real need for one. The Bartlett Elementary school has an after school recreation program into which this program could possibly fit with some collaboration. The students in the Cooking Club, with the help of their advisor, Pam Dethlefs, created a “Cooking Around the World” cookbook that is in the publishing phase and will be distributed to John Fuller families this winter.

Overall, the Cooking Club which is held on Friday afternoons, is a Project SUCCEED favorite. It is the carrot for many of the students to have a productive week in the after school program. They appreciate the USDA Team Nutrition grant for this wonderful and delicious opportunity.



PLAINFIELD SCHOOL

SAU #32

There has been growing recognition of the role that nutrition plays in the health of the population. From a school-age perspective we know that a child who is well-nourished performs better in both academics and athletics and has better attendance. In addition, the growing concern of obesity in school-aged children has made it clear that this is an area that can not be addressed solely in the home environment. In recognizing the impact that school can have on the food and activity choices of the children at Plainfield School, the Nutrition Committee was formed in 2004. The purpose of the committee is to oversee and recommend positive changes to the nutrition practices of the students of Plainfield School.

Teaching healthy behaviors at a young age is important since change becomes more difficult with age. Behaviors involving nutrition and exercise are the cornerstones of preventing obesity in children and adolescents. Families and school are the two most critical links in providing the foundation for those behaviors. The goal at Plainfield School is for students to have the opportunity to be exposed to healthy foods and learn how to incorporate them into their daily food choice through a school-wide healthy food sampling program and through a gardening program in addition to nutrition education. The hope is that these activities would help students reach their optimal level of health and prevent many lifestyle diseases. By increasing their awareness and providing an opportunity to appreciate good nutrition at school, students will be better able to learn the life skill of healthy eating.

A school assessment “Keys to Promoting Healthy Eating in Schools” was completed by staff members and a parent and then shared with a larger Nutrition Committee consisting of several parents (including an RN and RD), staff members (including the school nurse, lunch program coordinator and PE teacher), students and a school board representative. The committee meets monthly to discuss and plan activities and other ways to improve the nutritional environment of the school. The committee agreed to pursue the grant opportunity, after reviewing the completed assessment, making it possible to establish a school garden, offer healthy food tasting opportunities and offer a school-wide nutrition presentation entitled “FOODPLAY” and “THIS IS YOUR LIFE.”.

School Garden

Students in grades 2 and 7 started seedlings and planted the garden in the spring. Families signed up to tend the garden throughout the summer. When students returned in September the garden was in its full glory. During the first weeks of school, teachers utilized the garden as “nature’s classroom.”

The lessons related to science, creative writing and art in addition to nutrition. The same students, now in grades 3 and 8, harvested the garden in the fall. The produce was displayed in the foyer for all to see during “Harvest Days.” Parent volunteers and staff members prepared healthy recipes for “Feast Day.” Students



throughout the school were able to sample a taste of recipes prepared with the garden's bounty. Recipes such as corn chowder, zucchini pizza, pesto pasta, etc. were served to students in the school by the 8th grade students. Students were able to try something new and expand their palettes. They also learned how food starts from seeds and ends up on the table. The whole project was a wonderful school community-building event. The grant allowed the school to purchase seeds, tools, a composting bin, etc.

Healthy Food Tasting

Each month a different recipe was prepared and served with the help of students, parents and staff. The recipes were served to the entire school community. Teachers collected feedback utilizing the assessment tool in the 5 A Day cookbook. Students often commented on how much they liked the recipes. Dishes such as strawberry yogurt parfaits prepared and served by 4th graders, oatmeal with applesauce and cinnamon prepared and served by student council members and pesto minestrone, using whole wheat pasta, on a cold winter day were all big hits. Many students commented on how they would like the minestrone served on the lunch menu because it was so good. Students also reported that they had tried something new when surveyed and many stated they loved it! Once again students were exposed to new healthy food, and experienced trying something they may not have tasted before. The grant allowed us to purchase necessary foods to make this possible.



“Foodplay” and “This Is Your Life”

Students were also exposed to healthy eating habits through the theater arts by offering two school-wide presentations entitled “FOODPLAY” and “THIS IS YOUR LIFE.” The neighboring school, Cornish Elementary, was invited to attend the presentations. An assessment tool was used providing feedback about the performance. The majority of feedback was very positive and indicated the students had learned from this opportunity. “FOODPLAY” provided education materials utilized by classroom teachers.

Information about the activities was always shared in weekly school newsletters. The newsletter reaches families of the 302 students in grades K-8. Students often shared with their parents if they liked recipes served and some recipes were included in the newsletter. In addition to the newsletter, educational materials were also shared.

Because of the grant, the nutrition committee was able to pursue some of the ideas they had to improve nutrition awareness within their school community. They plan to continue planting the garden and to continue moving forward with strategies to work with students and families toward making healthy lifestyle choices for overall wellness.

WINCHESTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

SAU #38

Winchester Elementary School had an exciting Healthy Youth project last year, with the help of a mini-grant from the NH Department of Education and their partnership with Cheshire Medical Center's *Advocates for Healthy Youth*. As a result of this project, Winchester initiated many practices (described below) that they hope to continue!

Taste-testing:

Dietetic interns from Keene State College visited classrooms to introduce children to healthy foods. The students loved exploring new foods, new tastes and many discovered that they enjoyed some foods they had never tried before.



Cafeteria collaboration:

The school lunch director worked with the Healthy Youth team and the KSC dietetic interns, offering the cafeteria as a time and space for some of the food experiments. The kitchen staff also followed up by placing some of the newly introduced foods as choices on the daily menu. Nutrition information and other parent education tips were sent home as part of the monthly menus. This collaboration helped the students to see that everyone at Winchester takes their health seriously!

Pedometers for all:

Students earned personal pedometers and other prizes by filling out a nutrition survey with their families. In addition, classroom pedometers were issued to grades 3-5 for students to use during active times such as recess and gym class.

Walking Track:

What better use of recess time and those pedometers than to have students walk and keep track of their steps? Supervision was provided for this healthy choice during the school day.

Snack Pantries:

By establishing classroom snack pantries, teachers were able to ensure that all students had a healthy snack for those mid-morning doldrums. Healthy snacks were donated by families and local grocery stores. The grant helped to start up the pantries with a stock of healthy choices.

5 A Day:

At least twice during the year, students recorded how many fruits and vegetables they ate each day, both at school and at home. Students were provided with fun worksheets to help them keep track. This was an educational experience for many families as well!

Granite State FitKids:

Cheshire Medical Center helped to bring this health education and wellness program to our 4th grade students. It supported and enriched the health classes already being taught by the P.E. teacher. The students loved it!

Partnership with local grocery store:

A field trip was organized to Winchester's *Kulick's Market* for our 5th graders to learn more about reading food labels. Student groups were assigned nutrients to evaluate and created displays to show which foods were good snack choices.

Library Resources:

Materials were purchased for our school library that supported our efforts to educate children and their families in proper nutrition and healthy choices.

Project Manager:

The Healthy Youth project really took off once Cindy Knipe was hired as a part-time Nutrition Coordinator. It provided the teaching staff with someone who had the time to research, find materials, organize field trips, and plan events. She listened to concerns, problem-solved and helped immensely, especially with planning the culminating event – the spring Health Fair!

Winchester Elementary Health Fair:

Celebrating the end of the school year is always fun, but this year there was even more to celebrate! The Health Fair was held in June, and student exhibits included everything from skits and puppet shows to songs, plays, and displays. Many community businesses and organizations joined in the fun and set up booths. With support from the PTA, they had family dancing on the blacktop, additional taste testing with the KSC interns, bicycle safety, and more! What a great way to end such a successful project!



Winchester Elementary School would like to thank the NH Department of Education, the Cheshire Medical Center, The United Way, Advocates for Healthy Youth (AFHY) the Keene State College Dietetic Internship Program, and the staff, students, and families of Winchester! Such collaboration is a perfect example of the school's motto, "**TEAM** means **T**ogether **E**veryone **A**chieves **M**ore!"

WAKEFIELD

SAU #64

The Paul School in Wakefield, NH, was privileged to participate in an interactive student-oriented nutrition education program. The program was funded through a Team Nutrition Grant written by school nurse, Janice Stanley. The success of the program was a cooperative effort between Val Long from UNH Cooperative Extension, Martha Judson, representative for “Changing the Scene”, and our school Food Service Director, Janet Glidden. The Carroll County Cooperative Extension health educator, Joanne Knowlton, implemented lessons in the fourth and sixth grades. These grade levels were chosen because of their enthusiasm and their relative level of responsibility.



For each lesson the students learned the customs, geography, and foods specific to that country. We focused on China, Italy and North Africa. During the informal presentation, a Cooperative Extension educator directed the students through the preparation of the food to be cooked. The students peeled, chopped and stirred the ingredients.



Objectives of the program were as follows: 1) to inform students of the nutritional value of a variety of foods; 2) to introduce students to new foods with different flavors and textures; 3) to stress the importance of cleanliness and safety when preparing food; 4) to encourage students to journal their thoughts and reactions to the lesson; 5) to introduce students to the geography and customs of different countries.

Each student received a colorful journal and a newsletter specific to each country. Cooperative Extension did the research and published these newsletters.



Student and staff reaction to the program was very positive. The whole school experienced the wonderful cooking smells coming from the classrooms. Teachers were cooperative in scheduling time from their academic day to include Cultural Cuisine. The program was adapted from the curriculum, “Food is Elementary”, by Antonia Demas, Ph.D.

CON VAL SCHOOLS

SAU#1

The Con Val district used grant funds to teach students the importance of a healthy lifestyle through proper nutrition and physical activity. The Food Service director, Tony Geraci developed two programs aimed at promoting exercise and nutrition within the district; a Hot Potato Hop and a “Healthy Challenge” program to promote exercise and healthy foods.



The first objective of the Healthy Challenge program was to get students up and moving. To get students excited about physical activity an obstacle course was set up between the South Meadow middle school and the Con Val High School over a distance of $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile. The obstacle course was meant to serve two purposes. The first as a metaphor to help the students understand that as they make their way through life, they will, and should be challenged by different and sometimes difficult choices. How they negotiate their way through those challenges will have real consequence. The second purpose was that it was a real obstacle course, one that you really had to work up a sweat to get through! It had fun and different challenges along the way. Students really had to think about how you were going to get through each phase. There were coaches stationed at each obstacle, to give the kids guidance on how they might get through. It was however, up to each student to make their way through the obstacle.



The second objective of the project was to provide some great ideas for snacks that students could make at home. The Food Service director enlisted the help of the local “rock star chefs” and had a blast creating fresh healthy snack options for the kids. Some of the fare concocted by the chefs included: fresh fruit smoothies, quesadillas, peanut butter banana waffles, fruit pizza made with fresh pineapple and yogurt, and fresh veggies with hummus dip. The kids received hands on experience in preparing these snacks. There

was a great turn out of parents and community members in addition to the students. They had write ups put into the local papers which helped to underscore the importance of community involvement in the health of youth and the “HEALTHY CHALLENGE” message of the days activities. The USDA also came and supported the project not only through their participation in the event, but by writing a nice article that was in national distribution.

Grant funds were used for a marathon dance party at the Great Brook School (another middle school in the SAU). The theme of the dance was The Hot Potato Hop. The goal of the dance party was to teach the kids that one: potatoes are not bad for you; it’s the goop that people put on the top! To demonstrate this message a healthy topping bar was created. Roasted Wild Mushroom Confetti was the favorite! They also made purple Peruvian potatoes with mango salsa, roasted red bliss with fresh herb compounds, black bean Chile, yams with spicy Cajun sprinkles and russets with roasted red peppers. At Con Val they believe that if schools make it fun and encourage adventure to look, taste, and play “out side the box” the kids will respond. At the Hot Potato Hop students ate spuds and danced the night away! The students also learned that potatoes are a great source of energy and fun. Mr. Potatohead will never look the same.



MASCOMA

SAU #62

The faculty of the Mascoma School District had become increasingly aware of the number of obese students in our schools. They had read research studies tying obesity to an increase in the number of children suffering from obesity-related diseases and a drop in academic achievement. Faculty members were already working on ways to add physical activity and better nutrition on a daily basis. A parent notified the district concerning the Team Nutrition grant and found that a teacher and administrator were already pursuing a Healthy NH Kids Grant to enable the district to work on the obesity issue. So a partnership was born! Work on both grants continued and Mascoma became the lucky recipient of both the Team Nutrition and Healthy New Hampshire Kids funds. Team Nutrition was developed and immediately set to work to maximize the benefits of both grants.

Team Nutrition consisted of parents, community members, teachers, district administrators, food service personnel and school board members. The main goal of the nutrition team was to improve nutrition and reduce obesity in elementary students.

Some of their accomplishments include:

- Collaboration with Cafe Services to stop offering children chocolate milk and pop tarts for breakfast.
- Provision of 1% and 2% milk options for children.
- Working with a group from the Indian River School Student Council to research low or no sugar drinks for the school vending machines. Upon completion of this work all high sugar drinks in the machines were replaced with no sugar or low sugar items.
- Developing student awareness and appreciation of semi-exotic fruits and vegetables through playing “Nutrition Trivia” during each physical education class.
- Improving the decor in the cafeterias. Team Nutrition funds were used to purchase colorful, informational posters on nutrition. These were prominently displayed along with posters of Power Panther exhibiting good manners.
- The use of newsletters for staff and family to raise awareness about using food as a reward. We also managed to limit the number of food-centered fund raisers. We also worked at improving the menus for in-class celebrations. (Fewer cupcakes and more veggie platters!)



The Team also had some big accomplishments! Parent groups in all three elementary schools worked with Cafe Services to complete a monthly taste test during lunch time. Each month parents or food service personnel prepared an item from the “Five a Day” cookbook. Students were given samples of the food, the food was tasted, and students completed a survey on the look, smell and taste of the food sample. Fruit and dip, strawberry smoothies, and rainbow salad were big hits. Broccoli in orange sauce disappeared off the bottom of the survey chart! Overall, the program was very successful, and students are already asking what they will be tasting next year!

The parent/teacher components of the program were very successful. The physical education teacher planned a Fit and Fun Family Night that educated parents and community members about the new USDA food pyramid, healthy snacks and exercise. The gymnasium was packed and smiles were everywhere.

Our team also sponsored “Food Play” for students. A parent night with NH Public Television staff provided information on how to feed your child for optimal health.

Team Nutrition provided teachers with materials to use in conducting nutrition lessons. In addition to classroom materials, each school library received several hundred dollars worth of nutrition-books, themed videos and CDs concerned with nutrition. These materials are available for students, teachers and families to borrow.

The culminating event was a Nutrition Adventure Day that rewarded students for their participation in nutrition education. Everyone enjoyed activities like “Melon Weight Lifting”, “Cantaloupe Shot Put” and “Coconut Bowling”.

Team Nutrition also provided a wonderful boost to our physical fitness programs. The athletic director was so impressed with the work at the elementary schools that he started a “Fit and Fun” program for high school students! Team Nutrition has decided that the accomplishments of the last year should be built upon and the district is moving ahead. We completed the Team Nutrition survey, identified key areas that need improvement, and have begun planning work for another successful year!



HAMPTON

SAU#21

C.H.O.I.C.E Tidbits

The Coalition For Healthy Options Influencing Children's Education (CHOICE) of the Hampton School District is a school-community partnership formed in the spring of 2003 to increase wellness and minimize the risk of future health problems for children of Hampton by developing programs and policies that work to reduce obesity and improve fitness through better nutrition and increased physical activity. Our first few meetings were spent assessing where we were as a community, how we thought about health and wellness in every day activities and where we wanted to go. Membership of the group was open to any interested individuals and included school administration, food service professionals, teachers, coaches, nurses, counselors, parents, a dentist, an endocrinologist, representation from the local hospital, community parks and recreation dept., before and after school program supervisors, dietitians and students on occasion.

The **Goal** of CHOICE is to prevent obesity and promote wellness in the Hampton student population through increased physical activity as well as better food and lifestyle choices.

The Mission Statement reads: "We are committed to developing habits that promote optimal health. Working with children, families and community members to prevent obesity through increased physical activity as well as better food and lifestyle choices, so everyone will achieve their optimum level of wellness."

Our first year was spent asking each area of expertise to assess their programming and determine positive changes that would be sustainable. That resulted in the following actions:

- Establishing Walk to School Days – the 2nd Wed. of every month Sept. through Nov. and April – June. Parents + Police Dept. has helped with this and the Hampton Walkers join on the first walk in the fall and spring.
- Vending only water in grades 1-5 and vending healthy items in grades 6-8.
- Increasing the choices of fruits and vegetables daily in the school meals program.
- Increasing physical activity opportunities in after school and recreation programming.
- Improving the snack offerings at recreational after school programs.
- Recommending that students in grades one and two select at least two colors (other than brown or white) for lunch – those are found in the fruits and vegetables and the hope is to get students eating more of a variety.
- Mapping out a foot path (using math skills) for classroom walks to increase physical activity opportunities.
- Having students log their daily physical activity times and when they reach goals posting paper sneakers (with photos if they choose) on the hall walls.
- Giving toe tokens for 5 mile physical activity at home – signed by parents.

- Increasing life-long wellness skills in physical education classes.
- Asking parents to send in fruit or cheese and cracker platters for classroom parties instead of cupcakes and candy.
- Having students use nutrition/wellness as the subject for writing projects.
- Conducting a voluntary family survey as to physical activity and nutrition practices.
- Parent newsletters. (assembled by parents)

October, January and March issues included articles on:

- Benefits of a Healthy Lifestyle
- Benefits of a colorful plate
- Benefits of family-style meals
- The T's of healthy snacking
- Explanation of BMI
- Get moving on your way to wellness
- Issues included Q & A
 - Recipes
 - Food trivia
 - Tips to reduce screen time
 - Recreation opportunities
 - Word find
 - Calorie charts for activities



*Students and staff join the Hampton Walkers on a **Walk To School Day** to emphasize walking for a lifetime.*

The results of the family survey 1441 sent home/ 158 (11%) returned indicated:

- 73% average 2-3 days a week exercising as a family
- 87% consume breakfast before school 5 days a week
- Grains (90%) topped the breakfast selections followed by dairy (88%), fruit (58%) and protein (56%)
- 90% of the families sit down to eat a meal together at least 4 times a week while only 31% eat together at least 8 times a week.
- Beverage choices with a 90% response were 100% juice, followed at 86% by water. Only 60% of those responding consume at least 2-3 servings of milk per day.

This year has been spent sharing area expertise in the development of Hampton's School Wellness Policy. It has been readied for a first read at the November school board meeting.

ANTRIM GIRLS' SHELTER

RA #700

Antrim Girls Shelter is a residential child care facility located in Antrim, NH. After receiving the Team Nutrition mini grant a health council was formed. The health council then met on a consistent basis throughout the grant period to discuss grant activities.

A cookbook was created and included recipes that were nutritious and that the girls liked. Taste testing was done on each recipe and the girls completed the questionnaires on each taste test. Feedback was compiled and discussed on each taste test and recommendations were made. Taste testings consisted of: vegetarian lunch items, beverage choices such as, shakes, fruit smoothies frappes and other foods.

While the taste testing occurred, the girls learned about the USDA Food Guide Pyramid and participated in making a large poster of the Pyramid for the program. This poster hangs in the dining area. The girls also kept a daily eating log and discussed how they did in meeting their pyramid requirements. Each girl coming to the shelter can take home a copy of this cookbook.

The Shelter was also able to purchase a nutrient analysis software package with funds from the grant. Meals are being nutrient analyzed utilizing this tool.

This was a very popular and exciting project to complete with our girls. They were very enthusiastic, and interested in learning about food, nutrition, and the importance of eating healthy foods. The Antrim Girls Shelter cookbook that the residents take home with them will reinforce their nutrition education and skills learned while at the shelter. This program was very effective in raising the girls' awareness of diet and the importance of making healthy food choices.



