A message from NUTRITIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

September 13, 2023: Wellness Wednesday

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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Try these interactive activities that will engage your students—they'll use their creativity and design skills | | |
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A message from NUTRITIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

September 20, 2023: Wellness Wednesday

National School Lunch Week is Coming!

Greetings from NDS!

 The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) serves nearly 30 million children every school day. President John F. Kennedy created **National School Lunch Week** (NSLW) in 1962 to promote the importance of a healthy school lunch in a child’s life and the impact it has inside and outside of the classroom.

**NDS thanks the hundreds of dedicated staff and administrators at our partner schools who work hard every day. Their dedication ensures children can rely on them to have tasty meals ready for them at lunchtime.**

**#NSLW23 will be celebrated October 9-13, 2023.**



**The National School Lunch Program:**

**Supporting Healthy, Well-Nourished Students**

Balanced nutrition throughout the day contributes to student success in and out of the classroom. The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) offers students fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein and fat free or low fat milk with every school lunch. Updated federal nutrition standards also ensure these meals are within age-appropriate calorie levels and limit both unhealthy fats and sodium.

Multiple studies show that NSLP plays an important role in supporting obesity prevention and overall student health by improving children’s diets and combatting food insecurity:

**Children receiving school lunches consume fewer empty calories and more milk, fruit, vegetables and fiber than their peers** - they are also more likely to have appropriate intakes of calcium, vitamin A and zinc.

**School lunches are healthier than typical packed lunches** - school lunches contained fewer calories, fat, saturated fat and sugar than lunches brought from home.

**School lunch participation is associated with a lower body mass index (BMI)** - school and child care meals help children maintain a healthy weight.

**NSLP reduces food insecurity**, which is linked to negative health, development and educational outcomes such as slower progress in math and reading and a higher likelihood of repeating a grade.

NSLP serves nearly 30 million students each school day in approximately 95,000 public and private schools nationwide.



**Key Sources:**

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A message from NUTRITIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

September 27, 2023: Wellness Wednesday

Improving Sleep Health



Adjusting back to the school year after summer break requires focus on good quality sleep. Quality sleep includes sleep duration, timing, and restfulness. Sleep is essential for good performance at school, as well as physical and mental health more generally. Read on to find out more about why good sleep is so important, and how to ensure children have good sleep.

What is good sleep?

* **Duration:**
  + Children 3-5 should get 10-13 hours of sleep
  + Children 6-12 should get 9-12 hours
  + Children 13-18 should get 8-10 hours of sleep a night
* **Timing:** Getting children to bed early allows them to enter deeper stages of sleep, which are more restful, earlier in the night.
* **Quality:** Good sleep involves sleeping through the night without waking up.

Importance of Good Sleep

* **Growth:** Children primarily grow at night when the body release growth hormones during sleep.
* **Mental Health:** Adequate sleep reduces the incidence of mental health disorders.
* **Cognitive development:** Sleep is important for memory consolidation, learning, and problem solving, and kids who sleep more tend to do better in school.
* **Physical health:** Sleep allows the body to recover from physical activity and supports the immune system.

Tips for Better Sleep

* Develop a bedtime routine to do every night
* Make sure the bedroom is cool and dark
* Stop using electronic devices an hour before bed
* Read a book or story before bed

Additional Resources

Why is Sleep So Important (Texas Children’s Hospital): <https://www.texaschildrens.org/blog/why-sleep-so-important#:~:text=Sleep%20is%20especially%20important%20for,have%20learned%20throughout%20the%20day>.

The Importance of Sleep for Kids (Johns Hopkins): <https://www.hopkinsallchildrens.org/ACH-News/General-News/The-importance-of-sleep-for-kids>