



MICHIGAN TEAM NUTRITION

RESULTS FROM 2003-2004 HEALTHY SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT MINI-GRANTS

Successfully Transforming School Environments to Support Healthy Eating and Physical Activity



WHY BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT?

- The number of overweight children is increasing at an alarming rate.
- Unhealthy eating habits and lack of physical activity play an important role in childhood overweight.
- Schools play a key role in creating an environment where students can improve their food choices and be active. Ninety-nine percent of children ages 7-13 are enrolled in school.

THE SOLUTION CAN LEAD TO POSITIVE CHANGES!

Selected results follow from 12 Michigan schools that completed a Team Nutrition Changing the Scene Improving “Other Food Options” Mini-grant in 2003-2004. These schools focused on improving “other food options,” which include foods outside the school meal program, for example vending machines, a la carte lines, school parties and rewarding with food.

- A healthy food mural was painted on the cafeteria wall and nutrition lessons were taught by a registered nurse.
- A school’s parent newsletter now includes a Team Nutrition insert with healthy recipes for families.
- Non-food rewards have replaced teachers’ use of treats for good behavior.
- Classroom celebrations are healthier. Students opting to bring lunch from home are packing more fruits and vegetables.
- A salad bar was added to the cafeteria and both staff and students have indicated they enjoy the healthier choices.
- A Food Guide Pyramid was constructed on the wall in the cafeteria from tiles students created; each grade worked on a different food group. Healthy snacks are being sold during lunch time from a cart.
- A high school purchased a smoothie machine for the a la carte line to offer a healthy beverage choice.
- Healthy mid-morning snacks were provided to 190 students (all first and second graders) and fewer stomachaches and headaches were reported by the office staff and school nurse. The school will continue this effort at their own cost.
- A fundraiser was changed from selling cookies to fruit. They also added low-fat wraps and salads to the a la carte line.
- A high school offered staff a wellness program, purchased a milk vending machine and added a salad bar for students
- Changes were made to the a la carte line, “bundling” fruit and vegetables with other choices to make a more balanced meal.
- A milk vending machine was purchased that includes low-fat products, and food is being grilled instead of fried in the cafeteria.

A SOLUTION:

Michigan Team Nutrition is taking steps to improve students’ food and physical activity choices.

Michigan Team Nutrition is successfully working with schools to make, sustain and expand on positive changes in the school nutrition and physical activity environment in order to offer and promote healthy choices for students. One approach to decreasing the number of Michigan students with unhealthy weights is through changing the school environment and implementing policies so there are opportunities for students to select healthy food and beverages and participate in physical activity.

HOW DID THESE CHANGES OCCUR?

In 2003-2004, Michigan Team Nutrition provided mini-grants of up to \$1,000 to 12 schools located throughout Michigan. These 12 schools...

- Consisted of five elementary schools, two middle schools, three high schools, one middle/high school and one K-12 school. The total enrollment for participating schools was 7,504 students.
- Formed a coordinated school health team consisting of school administrators, teachers, food service director, parents, students and community members.
- Were led by trained facilitators, many of whom were county Michigan State University Extension staff members.
- Assessed current school practices related to nutrition and physical activity using the *Changing the Scene* kit from USDA.
- Developed and implemented a plan to make at least one positive sustainable change in their school environment related to improving "other food options" at their school.
- Evaluated changes made towards a healthy school environment.



THE FUTURE

Michigan Team Nutrition is committed to supporting and promoting healthy school nutrition and physical activity environments. Mini-grants were provided to 15 additional schools in 2004-2005. In 2005-2006, mini-grants again will be awarded to 15 Michigan schools to assess their school environment. (Check the

Michigan Team Nutrition Web site for more

information on these and other grants.) These schools will use a new assessment tool, the Healthy School Action Tool (HSAT), which was developed through the collaborative efforts of the Michigan Department of Community Health, the Michigan Department of Education, Michigan State University Extension, Michigan Team Nutrition and United Dairy Industry of Michigan. For more information on HSAT go to www.mihealthtools.org/schools.



Working Together in Michigan

Organizations in Michigan are partnering to help schools improve their nutrition and physical activity environments. Mini-grants to improve school environments were and will be awarded to Michigan schools by the Michigan Department of Community Health, the Michigan Department of Education, Michigan State University Extension, Team Nutrition and United Dairy Industry of Michigan. There is also a statewide coalition, Michigan Action for Healthy Kids (MAFHK), that brings together nearly 600 people representing nearly 250 Michigan public and private organizations. MAFHK is working to help Michigan schools find and implement solutions to improve students' nutrition and physical activity. For more info on MAFHK go to www.actionforhealthykids.org and click on "Michigan" under "Select Your State."

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ABOUT TEAM NUTRITION

Team Nutrition is a national USDA initiative designed to motivate, encourage and empower schools, families and the community to work together to continually improve school meals and help students and families make food and physical activity choices for a healthy lifestyle. Team Nutrition schools make a commitment to help children eat healthy and be physically active; they receive free resources and are eligible to apply for grants to support changes in their school environment. More than 900 Michigan schools are enrolled in Team Nutrition.

Michigan State University Extension and the Michigan Department of Education in Partnership

Project funding was provided by a Team Nutrition Training grant from the USDA Food and Nutrition Service, the USDA Food Stamp Program, and United Dairy Industry of Michigan. Michigan State University and the Michigan Department of Education are affirmative-action, equal-opportunity institutions. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status or family status.