RESEARCH BRIEF: BREAKFAST FOR LEARNING

Food Research & Action Center

Skipping Breakfast and Experiencing Hunger Impair Children's Ability to Learn

- Behavioral, emotional, mental health, and academic problems are more prevalent among children and adolescents struggling with hunger.[1,2,3,4]
- Children and adolescents experiencing hunger have lower math scores and poorer grades.[5,6]
- Children experiencing hunger are more likely to be hyperactive, absent, and tardy, in addition to having behavioral and attention problems more often than other children.[7]
- Teens experiencing hunger are more likely to have been suspended from school and have difficulty getting along with other children.[8]
- Children with hunger are more likely to have repeated a grade, received special education services, or received mental health counseling, than low-income children who do not experience hunger.[9]
- Students who are undernourished have poorer cognitive functioning when they miss breakfast.[10]
- Students who skip breakfast are less able to differentiate among visual images, show increased errors, and have slower memory recall.[11]

Eating Breakfast, Including at School, Helps Improve Student Academic Performance and Behavior

- Children who eat breakfast at school — closer to class and test-taking time — perform better on standardized tests than those who skip breakfast or eat breakfast at home.[12]
- Students who eat breakfast the morning of a standardized test have significantly higher scores in spelling, reading, and math, compared to those who do not eat breakfast.[13]
- Student academic achievement increases, especially for math, when schools offer the School Breakfast Program.[14]
- Students who participate in school breakfast show improved attendance, behavior, and academic performance as well as decreased tardiness.[15,16,17,18]
- Providing breakfast to students at school improves their concentration, alertness, comprehension, memory, and learning.[19,20,21]
- Children who eat breakfast show improved cognitive function, attention, and memory.[22]
- Consuming breakfast improves children's performance on mathematical tasks, vocabulary tests, demanding mental tasks, and reaction to frustration.[23,24,25]

Breakfast in the Classroom Programs* and Programs Offering Breakfast at no Cost to all Children† in the Cafeteria Yield Other Positive Results

- Children who increase their school breakfast participation as a result of a school breakfast program offered at no cost to all students show greater improvements in math scores, attendance, punctuality, depression, anxiety, and hyperactivity than children whose participation remains unchanged or decreases.[26]

*Breakfast in the classroom programs are an increasingly popular alternative to traditional, before-the-bell, cafeteria-based breakfast programs. Breakfast is brought in from the kitchen in containers that keep dishes at the right temperature, or is picked up from carts in the hallways as students enter class. Typically this breakfast is offered at no cost to all students. Such programs boost school breakfast participation and remove the stigma associated with participation.

†Offering breakfast at no cost to all students is sometimes referred to as "universal breakfast" or "universal-free breakfast." The program helps remove the stigma for low-income children of participation in school breakfast and thereby increases participation among students generally, but particularly low-income students.

- Providing students with breakfast in the classroom setting is associated with lower tardy rates, fewer disciplinary office referrals, and improved attendance rates.[27,28]
- Student math and reading achievement test scores improve when breakfast is moved out of the cafeteria and into the classroom.[29]
- Schools that offer breakfast at no cost to all students have higher breakfast participation, especially when breakfast is served in the classroom.[30,31,32,33,34,35]
- Breakfast in the classroom is associated with more students eating breakfast as well as better overall dietary quality.[36]
- Students attending schools that offer breakfast at no cost to all students are more likely to consume a nutritionally substantive breakfast and to consume significantly more calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, fruit, and dairy products at breakfast, when compared to students from schools with a traditional means-tested school breakfast program.[37]
- Schools that offer breakfast in the classroom programs at no cost to all students experience an increased sense of community and reduced stigma associated with eating breakfast at school.[38,39,40]

Beliefs About Breakfast Can Influence Participation in School Breakfast

- Adolescent girls often skip breakfast because they believe it might contribute to weight gain.[41,42]
- Adolescents who skip breakfast are significantly more likely to have fasted to lose weight.[43]
- Children report that they believe eating breakfast increases their energy and ability to pay attention in school.[44]

School Breakfast Decreases the Risk of Food Insecurity

- School breakfast offered at no cost to all students may eliminate disparities between food-secure and food-insecure children in terms of eating breakfast at all.[45]
- Students with improved nutrient intake as a result of a program that offers school breakfast at no cost to all students report decreases in symptoms of hunger.[46]
- Access to school breakfast decreases the risk of marginal food insecurity and breakfast skipping, especially for low-income children.[47,48,49]
- Rates of food insecurity among children are higher in the summer — a time when many do not have access to the good nutrition provided by the school meal programs available during the academic year.[50,51]

School Breakfast Can Improve Children's Dietary Intake and Protect Against Obesity and Other Negative Health Outcomes‡

- School breakfast participants are more likely to consume diets that are adequate or exceed standards for important vitamins and minerals (e.g., vitamin C, vitamin A, calcium, phosphorous).[52,53,54]
- Children and adolescents who skip breakfast tend to have poorer nutrient intakes than those who eat breakfast. Eating breakfast regularly has been linked with greater intake of fiber, calcium, iron, vitamin C, and other vitamins and minerals, and lower intake of fat, cholesterol, and sodium.[55,56,57]
- School breakfast participation is associated with a lower body mass index (BMI, an indicator of excess body fat), lower probability of being overweight, and lower probability of obesity.[58,59,60,61]
- Children and adolescents who eat breakfast have more favorable weight-related outcomes (e.g., lower BMI, lower waist circumference, lesser likelihood of being chronically obese, decreased risk of obesity) in the short term and long term than those who skip breakfast.[62,63,64,65,66,67,68,69,70,71]
- School breakfast, including breakfast offered at no cost to all students, has been linked with fewer visits to the school nurse, particularly in the morning.[72]

‡For more information, read FRAC's *Breakfast for Health* brief available at www.frac.org.

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Endnotes

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RESEARCH BRIEF

The Connections Between Food Insecurity, the Federal Nutrition Programs, and Student Behavior

FRAC
Food Research & Action Center

Students who live in food-insecure* households can have multiple disadvantages in school when compared to peers from food-secure households. Food insecurity negatively impacts the social, emotional, and behavioral development of school-age children and adolescents, and exacerbates their risk for behavioral issues that interfere with learning and achieving academic success.[1] Access to good nutrition, including access to the Federal Nutrition Programs,† such as the School Breakfast Program and the Afterschool Nutrition Programs, is a key strategy to support positive development and behavior among students facing food insecurity.

This brief highlights research on the connections between food insecurity and behavior, and the critical role that the Federal Nutrition Programs play when addressing these issues among school-age children and adolescents.

Food insecurity inhibits students' social skills.

- Food insecurity impairs a child's ability to develop interpersonal relationships (e.g., form and maintain friendships, get along with people who are different from them, comfort or help other children); maintain self-control (e.g., respect others and their belongings, control one's temper, respond appropriately to peer pressure); and welcome learning opportunities (e.g., attentiveness, task persistence, eagerness to learn, flexibility).[2]
- Children who experience hunger are seven times more likely to engage in physical altercations.[3]
- Children from food-insecure households have lower levels of self-control in early childhood and higher levels of delinquency during late childhood, compared to their peers from food-secure households.[4]
- Teachers are more likely to report poor interpersonal skills, internalizing behaviors, and a decrease in self-control among students who have become food-insecure.[5] (Examples of internalizing behaviors include fearfulness, anxiety, and withdrawal.)
- Female students that live in households that become food insecure have impaired social skills development, such as experiencing loneliness and a diminished ability to get along with other children.[6]

* Food insecurity is a term defined by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) that indicates that the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food, or the ability to acquire such food, is limited or uncertain for a household.

†The federal nutrition programs include the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); National School Lunch Program (NSLP); School Breakfast Program (SBP); Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP); Summer Food Service Program (SFSP); and Afterschool Nutrition Programs.

Toxic Stress and Adverse Childhood Experiences

Growing up in poverty is associated with toxic stress, which is chronic stress that can have enormous impacts on child development and health.[39,40,41] Under prolonged stress, stress hormone levels become excessively high for long periods of time. This leads to a "wear and tear" on the brain and body, referred to as allostatic load. Toxic stress can inhibit normal brain and physical development and metabolic processes among children, making them more susceptible to behavior and learning impairments and physical and mental illness later in life.[42] Toxic stress in children often results from strong, repeated, or prolonged exposure to adversity, such as adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).[43] ACEs are potentially traumatic experiences, such as economic hardship, loss of a parent due to divorce, witnessing domestic violence, or the incarceration of a parent. ACEs are more common among children living in poverty.[44] Exposure to more ACEs puts children at greater risk for health and economic problems later in life.[45,46] For instance, one study found that female caregivers' ACEs were associated with current household and child food-insecurity status.[47]

Food insecurity increases students' risk for additional mental health issues and challenges.

- Food insecurity is strongly correlated to higher levels of anxiety and irritability among children.[7]
- As the severity of household food insecurity increases, so does the likelihood that children and adolescents will develop a mental disorder.[8]
- Teens experiencing hunger are more likely to have difficulty getting along with peers, get suspended from school, see a psychologist, have suicidal tendencies, and struggle with depression, as compared to their food-secure peers.[9,10]
- When food insecurity worsens for a teenager, the risk of developing a mood disorder, such as depression or bipolar disorder, increases.[11]
- Chronic stress (commonly referred to as toxic stress) among children experiencing chronic poverty and food insecurity can lead to delays in brain development and produce anxiety, impaired mood control, and emotional behavioral disorders.[12,13,14]

Students struggling with food insecurity may have difficulty being engaged in the classroom.

- Food-insecure students are more likely to be apathetic, withdrawn, non-responsive, and have decreased motivation in the classroom.[15]
- Children experiencing hunger are more likely to be tardy or absent from school.[16]
- Students who experience income shocks (i.e., severe fluctuations of income) at home are more likely to become disengaged in the school environment.[17]

The federal nutrition programs reduce food insecurity among school-age children and adolescents.

- Access to school breakfast decreases the risk of marginal food security and breakfast skipping, especially for low-income children.[18,19,20] School breakfast availability also reduces low food security and very low food security (the most severe level of food insecurity) among elementary school children.[21]

- According to national data, free or reduced-price school lunches reduce food insecurity prevalence by at least 3.8 percent.[22]
- School lunch participation is associated with a 14 percent reduction in the risk of food insufficiency[‡] among households with at least one child receiving a free or reduced-price school lunch.[23]
- Rates of food insecurity and food insufficiency among children are higher in the summer — a time when students do not have access to the school meals that are available during the academic year.[24,25,26] Several studies demonstrate that greater summer meal availability or accessibility has beneficial effects on food insecurity, especially on very low food security.[27,28]
- Children in households that have participated in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) for six months are approximately one-third less likely to be food insecure than children in households recently approved for SNAP, but not yet receiving it.[29]
- Among low-income families with children, SNAP receipt reduces the probability of very low food security for households and for children.[30]

Participation in the federal nutrition programs, especially school breakfast,[✣] can improve behavior in school.

- Students who participate in school breakfast show improved behavior, attendance, and academic performance as well as decreased tardiness.[31,32]
- School breakfast participation, especially breakfast offered at no cost to all students, positively impacts children's mental health, including reductions in hyperactivity, anxiety, and depression.[33,34]
- Providing students with breakfast in the classroom is associated with fewer disciplinary office referrals, lower tardy rates, and improved attendance rates.[35,36]
- Schools that do not operate an afterschool snack program report a slightly larger increase in disciplinary events in the last week of the month, as compared to schools that provide an afterschool snack.[37] The last week of the month is when SNAP benefits often are running low or depleted for low-income households.
- Similarly, disciplinary infractions increase at the end of the SNAP benefit cycle for students in SNAP and non-SNAP households. However, the increase is larger for students from SNAP households. This means that students in SNAP households have lower rates of disciplinary issues earlier in the month, in contrast to later in the month when SNAP benefits are most likely exhausted.[38]

This brief was prepared by FRAC's Qwamel Hanks, NDTR, School Breakfast Project Associate; Heather Hartline-Grafton, DrPH, RD, Senior Nutrition Policy and Research Analyst; and former intern, Emily Johnson.

[‡] Food insufficiency refers to an inadequate amount of food intake due to lack of money or resources.

[✣] For more information on the benefits of school breakfast, see FRAC's research briefs, Breakfast for Learning and Breakfast for Health, at www.frac.org.

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The Truth About Flavored Milk in Schools

School meals contribute significantly to the health and well-being of our nation's youth and in the lives of families and communities. Dairy foods, including unflavored and flavored milk, make important nutrient and health contributions to school meals.

Low-fat (1%) chocolate and other flavored dairy milks (fat-free or low-fat) can be offered in school meal programs, with a requirement that unflavored milk be available at each school meal service. Schools may choose to provide lactose-free and reduced-lactose dairy milk to students without needing a written request from a parent or guardian.[1]

Flavored dairy milk can help schools address the nutrition, taste and health needs of the students they serve. **Learn more about the myths and realities of flavored milk in the school cafeteria.**

Myth	Reality
Flavored milk is not as nutritious as white milk	Dairy milk, whether flavored or unflavored, is a good or excellent source of 13 essential nutrients, including calcium, vitamin D and potassium – nutrients of public health concern that many students don't get enough of in their diets. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the American Academy of Pediatrics recognize that a small amount of added sugars, which fall within the daily calorie limit, can be used to increase the palatability and appeal of nutrient-rich foods, such as low-fat flavored milk.[2-3]
Flavored milk contributes too much sugar to children's diets	Since 2007, the U.S. dairy community has reduced added sugars in school milk by 54%. Currently, the average added sugar content in 8 ounces of flavored school milk is 7.6 grams. The average flavored milk served in schools has 126 calories – just 29 more calories than unflavored milk.[4] Flavored milk contributes only 4% of added sugars in the diets of children 2-18 years[5] and is not associated with an increased body mass index (BMI).[6] In fact, the consumption of flavored milk is associated with higher total milk consumption and better overall diet quality without any adverse -impact on weight.[7-11]
Students will still choose milk regardless if there is a flavored option	Chocolate milk is the most popular milk choice in schools[4] and children drink more and waste less when flavored milk is available.[12] Removal of flavored milk from schools can lead to a decrease in total milk consumption, which could negatively impact children's nutrient consumption.[13-14]

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Myth	Reality
Students with lactose intolerance can't drink dairy milk (flavored or unflavored)	Lactose intolerance is a real condition that affects many Americans, particularly people of color and Native Americans. Lactose-free dairy milk has the same nutritional profile as regular milk, just without the lactose. Lactose-free dairy milk meets the school meal pattern requirements for fluid milk. Schools may choose to provide lactose-free and reduced-lactose dairy milk to participants without needing to obtain a written request from a parent or guardian.[1]

School Milk Nutritional Benefits

- **13 essential nutrients,** including high-quality protein, calcium, potassium, phosphorus, zinc, selenium, iodine, niacin, riboflavin, pantothenic acid and vitamins A, D and B12[15]
- **3 of the 4 nutrients of concern for under-consumption,** as identified by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans – vitamin D, calcium and potassium[2]
- **Number one source of protein, vitamin D, calcium, and potassium** in the diets of children ages 2-18[5]
- **Better bone health** and lower risk for type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease[16-17]
- **Immune-supporting** protein, zinc, selenium and vitamins A, D and B12[16-17]
- Flavored milk contributes **just 4% of added sugars** in the diets of children 2-18 years, while unflavored milk contains no added sugars[5]
- Children who drink flavored milk consume more milk and have significantly **higher intakes of vitamin D, calcium, potassium and other nutrients**[7-11]
- Flavored milk **helps increase milk consumption** and decrease waste[11-14]

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Nourishing Bodies & Minds:
How School Nutrition Programs Foster Student Success

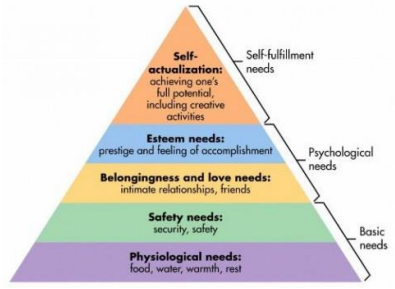
Sheri Shipp, RDN
Youth Wellness Manager
American Dairy Association Indiana

"American Dairy Association Indiana, Inc. (ADAI) is a not-for-profit promotion, communication, and nutrition education organization funded by and serving Indiana dairy farm families. We champion a thriving Indiana dairy community by promoting dairy foods and farming."

About ADAI

- USDA Check Off program
  - Created by farmers, for farmers
  - Not responsible for milk prices
  - Cannot lobby
- What we do
  - Nutrition Communications
  - Youth Wellness
    - Education
    - Fuel Up
    - Grant Opportunities
  - Dairy Farmer Activation, Engagement, Promotion

Nutrition Education + Trust in Dairy = ⬆ Dairy Consumption



hangry

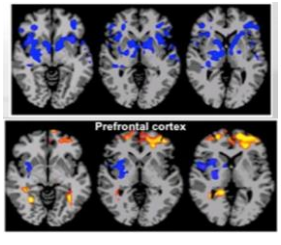
adjective

han·gry ˈhaŋ-grē

hangrier; hangriest

informal : irritable or angry because of hunger

Your Brain on Breakfast

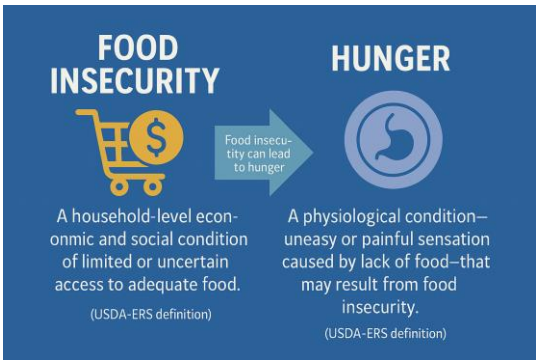


Hungry Child
The Mid-Brain
Is focused on food

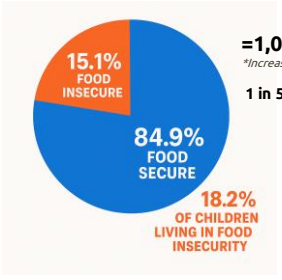
Grouchy
Restless
Anxious

After Eating
The Front Brain
Is in working mode

Calm
Organized
Thoughtful
Alert



Food Insecurity in Indiana 2023



=1,033,890 Hoosiers

**Increase from 950,220 in 2022*

1 in 5 children

Consequences of Food Insecurity, Hunger & Malnutrition in School-Aged Youth

Academic & Cognitive Impacts
- Lower test scores and grade retention
- Delayed cognitive development
- Reduced concentration and attendance

Physical Health & Growth
- Stunted growth and low body weight
- Weakened immunity and increased illness
- Higher risk of chronic diseases later in life

Mental & Emotional Well-being
- Higher levels of anxiety and depression
- Increased behavioral issues

Social & Developmental Effects
- Impaired peer interaction and classroom participation
- Greater reliance on emergency care

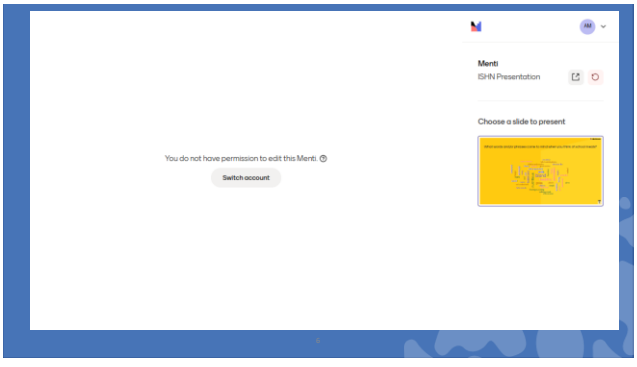
School Nutrition Programs Fill Gaps

Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, signed into law in 1946.

> "It is hereby declared to be the policy of Congress, as a measure of national security to safeguard the health and wellbeing of the Nation's children and to encourage the domestic consumption of nutritious agricultural commodities and other food, by assisting the States, through grants-in-aid and other means, in providing for the establishment, maintenance, operation, and expansion of non-profit school lunch programs."

USDA Child Nutrition Programs

- **National School Lunch Program** (NSLP) – lunch to children during school day
- **School Breakast Program** (SBP) – required in Indiana for public schools with 15% or greater F/R rate
- **After School Snack Program** – optional program for snack after school is out or during the day if qualify for extended hours
  - **50% or more F/R eligible can claim all snacks at free rate*
- **Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program** – competitive grant opportunity to provide a fresh fruit or veggie snack, outside of mealtimes
- **Special Milk Option** – milk during the school day, camps, childcare institutions
  - *only available to students w/o access to NSLP or SBP meals
- **Seamless Summer Option**
- **Summer Food Service Program**
- **Child and Adult Care Food Program** – daycare centers for children or adults or after school hours programs (i.e. Supper meals)



Dietary Guidelines for Americans

- Science based advice on what to eat and drink to meet nutrient needs, promote health, and help prevent chronic disease.
- Used to develop, implement, and evaluate Federal food, nutrition, and health policies and programs
- Basis for Federal nutrition education materials designed for the public and for the nutrition education components of USDA and HHS nutrition programs – My Plate
- Nutrients of public concern for general population
  - Calcium
  - Potassium
  - Dietary fiber
  - Vitamin D

School Meal Requirements

Lunch

Meal Components	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
	Amount of Food[1] per Week (minimum per day)		
Fruits (cups)[2]	2 ½ (½)	2 ½ (½)	5 (1)
Vegetables (cups)[2]	3 ¾ (¾)	3 ¾ (¾)	5 (1)
Dark Green Subgroup[3]	½	½	½
Red/Orange Subgroup[3]	¾	¾	1 ¼
Beans, Peas, and Lentils Subgroup[3]	½	½	½
Starchy Subgroup[3]	½	½	½
Other Vegetables Subgroup[3,4]	½	½	⅔
Additional Vegetables from Any Subgroup to Reach Total	1	1	1 ½
Grains (oz. eq.)[5]	8-9 (1)	8-10 (1)	10-12 (2)
Meats/Meat Alternates (oz. eq.)[6]	8-10 (1)	9-10 (1)	10-12 (2)
Fluid Milk (cups)[7]	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)
Dietary Specifications: Daily Amount Based on the Average for a 5-Day Week[8]			
Minimum-Maximum Calories (kcal)	550-650	600-700	750-850
Saturated Fat (% of total calories)	<10	<10	<10
Added Sugars (% of total calories)	<10	<10	<10
Sodium Limit: In place through June 30, 2027	≤1,110 mg	≤1,225 mg	≤1,280 mg
Sodium Limit: Must be implemented by July 1, 2027	≤935 mg	≤1,035 mg	≤1,080 mg

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WhyNotDrinkMilk.com

Breakfast

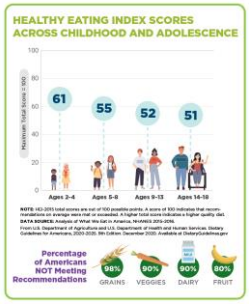
Meal Components	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
	Amount of Food[1] per Week (minimum per day)		
Fruits (cups)[2]	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)
Vegetables (cups)[2]	0	0	0
Dark Green Subgroup	0	0	0
Red/Orange Subgroup	0	0	0
Beans, Peas, and Lentils Subgroup	0	0	0
Starchy Subgroup	0	0	0
Other Vegetables Subgroup	0	0	0
Grains or Meats/Meat Alternates (oz. eq)[5]	7-10 (1)	8-10 (1)	9-10 (1)
Fluid Milk (cups)[7]	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)
Dietary Specifications: Daily Amount Based on the Average for a 5-Day Week[8]			
Minimum-Maximum Calories (kcal)	350-500	400-550	450-600
Saturated Fat (% of total calories)	<10	<10	<10
Added Sugars (% of total calories)	<10	<10	<10
Sodium Limit: In place through June 30, 2027	≤540 mg	≤600 mg	≤640 mg
Sodium Limit: Must be implemented by July 1, 2027	≤485 mg	≤535 mg	≤570 mg

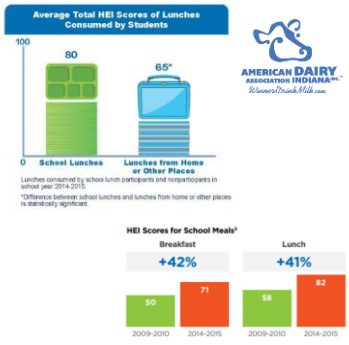
Source: https://www.cfpublic.org/education/2024-04-25/central-florida-school-food-programs-new-federal-rules

Offer vs Serve (OVS) Program

- **Food is only nutritious when eaten**
- Students must be offered all required meal pattern components and in full portions
- Why?
  - Minimize plate waste
  - Encourage schools to offer choices
  - Improve customer satisfaction

Nutritional Quality





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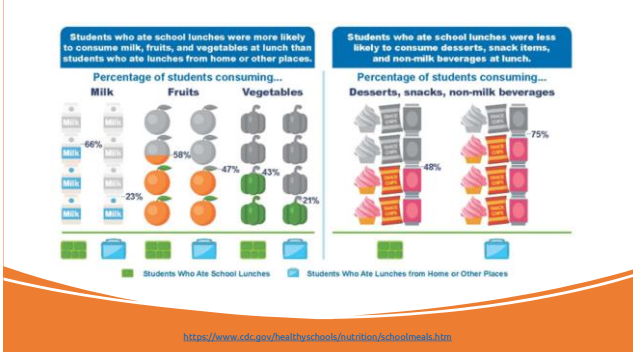
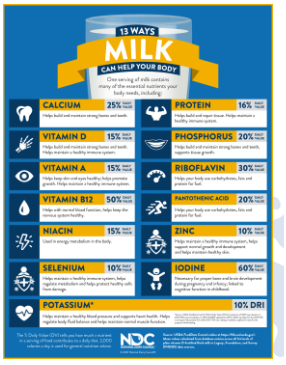
WhyWeDrinkMilk.com



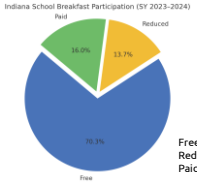
Just the milk alone!



Indiana School Meal Participation Jeopardy!

Number of School Breakfasts served in Indiana SY 2023-24?

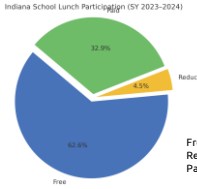
52,110,057



Free: 40,869,519
Reduced: 1,957,985
Paid: 9,282,553

Number of School Lunches served in Indiana SY 2023-24?

118,403,726



Free: 74,093,389
Reduced: 5,302,490
Paid: 39,007,847

Breakfast Opportunity

Lunch
Approximately 32.4% of students eligible are not regularly participating

Breakfast
Approximately 62.7% of students eligible are not participating

Benefits of School Breakfast Participation

Benefit Category	Outcomes
Academic	+17.5% test scores, better grades, fewer retained grades
Behavioral	↓ tardiness, absenteeism, disciplinary actions, nurse visits
Cognitive	↑ concentration, memory, focus
Nutrition	↑ fruit/veg/dairy intake, ↓ dietary insecurity
Mental/Emotional	↓ anxiety/depression; ↑ classroom engagement
Equity & Access	↓ stigma; ↑ equity for low-income students

Common Barriers to Breakfast Participation

- Students don't arrive with enough time to eat before class starts
- Meal accessibility
- Stigma that school breakfast is for students from families with low-incomes
- Middle and high school students may not be hungry first thing in the morning
- Students would rather socialize with their friends

Breakfast as Part of the School Day

- Addresses the common barriers of traditional cafeteria breakfast.
- Ensures more students are able to start the day with a healthy meal.

Breakfast After the Bell: alternative service models that shift the time breakfast is served so that it's part of the school day and moves breakfast from the cafeteria to where students are, like classrooms and common areas:

- Breakfast in the Classroom
- Grab and Go
- Second Chance Breakfast

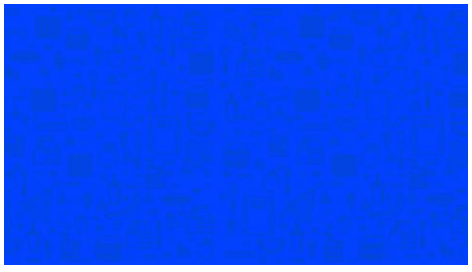
School Nutrition & Healthy/Supportive School Environments

- Provide adequate seat time for meals
  - Time to socialize and connect with peers
  - Research suggests that when lunch periods are at least 25 minutes long there is significantly less food waste
    - Less than 20 mins also:
      - Consumed 13% less of their entrée
      - Consumed 10% less of their milk
      - Consumed 12% less of their vegetable
- Encourage teachers to eat meals with students.
  - Help reinforce healthy eating behaviors and strengthen relationships
- Promote use of share tables
  - encourage responsible decision making
  - help reduce food waste
  - make food items available to other children

- Communicate to parents, teachers, and staff about how to access school meal programs to promote equity.
- Keep free and reduced meal benefits and/or student meal debt private to help eliminate stigma.

Call to Action!

- Help create awareness of the nutritional quality of school meals
  - Parents
  - Teachers
  - Administrators
- Get to know your school nutrition professionals, including the director, and ask how you can help
- Eat lunch or breakfast at school
- Encourage students to participate in school meal programs – they are for EVERYONE!
- Be a Lunch Lady for a day!
- Learn more about your school wellness policy and its goals
- Recess before lunch
  - May potentially improve school meal consumption
  - 5.1% more fruit consumed with "reverse recess"
- Create awareness of the role that school meals play in improving health, learning and behavior
- Join or start your district wellness team
- Encourage alternative breakfast service models



Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

FREE meals to all children 18 years old & under
*Most sites require eating on site, however some offer meals-to-go

Access Meal Program Sites using this website or scan the QR code below
https://idoenutrition.com/

"We can't make kids smarter, but with improved nutrition and physical activity we can put a better student in the chair."

Robert Murray, MD, Professor of Nutrition, Department of Human Sciences, College of Education & Human Ecology, Ohio State University

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Scan for slides and resources!

THANK YOU!