



## COMMUNITY OUTREACH TIPS

### Ways to get the facts out about healthy school meals

Consider all the ways you can get the facts out to your community about healthy school meals. Your time is a precious resource, but a little effort can go a long way. Here are some suggested events or projects, based on how much time and energy you can contribute. Supporting materials can be found at [www.schoolnutrition.org/TrayTalk](http://www.schoolnutrition.org/TrayTalk). We hope you aim for the full cup!

#### The Teaspoon Approach:

- When posting menus, provide more details than usual to give students and parents a more complete picture of the nutritional quality and variety of school meals. (eg if you don't already, specify when whole grains, low-fat or locally grown items are offered.)
- If you are planning a student taste test or focus group, consider inviting parents so they can learn how you are consistently working to improve meals and expand choice for students.
- Send home a recipe card to parents featuring students' favorite nutritious meal. Include nutritional stats if available.
- Display a healthy school meal at a school board, PTA/PTO, city council, neighborhood or parents meeting or any other local gatherings, so community members can see the nutritious foods children are eating at school. Include a sign providing the nutritional stats if available.

#### The Tablespoon Approach:

- Schedule a short presentation before one of these community groups. Ask for 15 minutes to speak about the school nutrition program. Visit [www.schoolnutrition.org/TrayTalk](http://www.schoolnutrition.org/TrayTalk) for links to a PowerPoint presentation that can be customized to reflect your local school nutrition program, fact sheet style handouts, and talking points to help you respond to questions on specific topics. Consider bringing sample trays of lunches, nutrition education posters, or the nutritional analysis of your menus, and be sure you leave time for questions.
- Consider posting or updating a school or school district webpage devoted to recent lunch room or meal improvements, healthy recipes, etc.
- Urge the high school newspaper to write a special school nutrition article. You could suggest they post a healthy school menu item recipe, an interview with the cafeteria manager, or a feature on recent improvements in the program.

#### The Full Cup Approach:

- Do several of the suggested projects above.
- Set up a school nutrition booth at a local festival, farmers market, health fair or community event. Display sample school meals or have a tasting, provide sample menus and recipes with nutritional information, bring a suggestions box and don't forget free and reduced price application forms, as well as fact sheets.
- Host a parents or community meeting or a health fair in the school cafeteria. Give a presentation on your local school nutrition program and discuss child nutrition issues. Consider working with the school physical education department, health staff or nurse to broaden the theme to child wellness.

*Learn about school meals. Share your ideas. [www.traytalk.org](http://www.traytalk.org)*