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**Section
5**

**Resources for
School Food Programs**

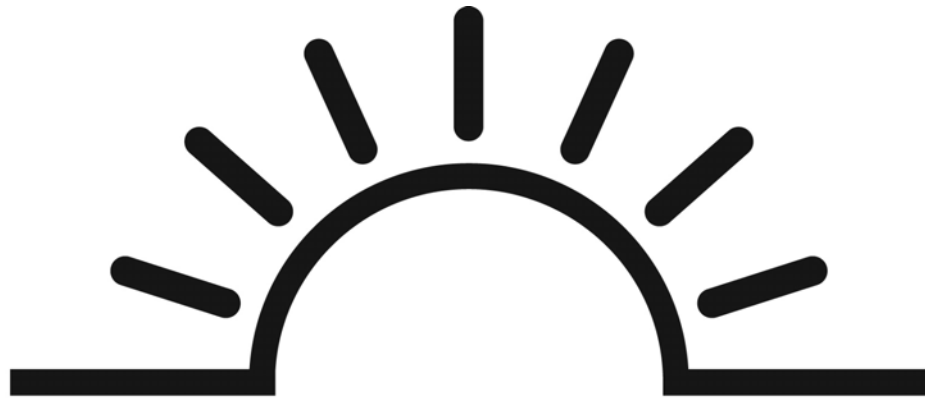


Section 5
Resources for School Food Programs

Table of Contents

School Food Program Ideas	5-1
Useful Websites for Healthy Meal and Snack Ideas	5-7
Funding for School Food Programs	5-9
Survey on School Food Programs	5-12

March 2005



School Food Program Ideas



Key Points

School Food Program Ideas

- To successfully introduce new foods at school this requires planning and marketing.
- Strategies to introduce new foods include:
 - Taste testing
 - Involving students in food preparation and/or distribution
 - Surveying students to determine what food to serve
 - Presenting healthy food in an attractive manner
- Provides various suggestions for foods to serve as part of a snack/canteen program, breakfast program, or lunch program.

School Food Program Ideas For Schools With No Cafeteria

All schools serve food at some time during the school year - whether in a canteen, breakfast program, weekly lunch choices or a snack program. In the past less healthy food choices have been popular, but healthier options can be just as popular.

There are plenty of healthy food choices available for school food programs. Introducing new food choices in the school environment requires some planning and management for gaining students' acceptance. Here are some ideas to make healthy choices the popular choice.

Introducing new foods in your school

Taste testing

- ▶ Before adding a new food selection to your menu, offer students the opportunity to sample the food first. Young people often think they do not like a food because they have never tried it before. By giving them the opportunity to try a food without pressure to buy it can help students realize that they actually like the food. It's also important to remember that students often need to be exposed repeatedly to a food before they will accept it - sometimes between 8 to 15 times.

Students involved in preparing or distributing food

- ▶ Students are more likely to accept food choices when they are involved in preparing the food or even in helping to distribute the food. The food service arrangements in each school will determine how involved students can be.

Surveying students to help decide what food to serve

- ▶ It is important for students to be involved in selecting food choices, and it is key to successfully adding healthy food options to your menu. Asking students what healthy foods they would like served at school keeps them involved and more likely to select the new food choices. However, it is a good idea to provide guidance for students. Instead of asking students what foods they want sold at school, provide a list of possible healthy options and have students rank their favourites.

Presenting healthy foods in an attractive manner

- ▶ Use baskets, interesting arrangements, colourful food choices, garnishes and place healthy options in a prominent area. If food looks attractive and appetizing people are more likely to choose it.

It is important to remember that making major changes all at once can backfire, and kids may be resistant to try new things. Changing traditional school food options should be done gradually.

Other ways to create interest in healthier options

- ▶ Have promotional healthy eating messages during morning announcements (like “kids healthy tip of the day”). Invite students to create these messages and deliver them: e.g. “I like to drink milk”
- ▶ “Frequent purchase cards” for healthy foods (e.g. buy 5 fruit cups and get the 6th for free)
- ▶ Hold a random draw for those purchasing healthy foods

Operating your school food program

- ▶ Make a list of items that are needed on a regular basis to operate your school food program. Make it available to members of your school community (e.g. parents, grandparents, community groups, local businesses, etc). These individuals/organizations may be able to make a donation (e.g. napkins or juice) if they are not able to donate their time.
- ▶ Create a School Food Committee to help decide on the menu and prepare food if you don’t have paid staff for this responsibility. There are plenty of people within your school community that may not be able to volunteer their time daily or weekly, but would be willing to help out once a month with a specific task. For example, a grandmother may feel comfortable knowing she is needed to come in for an hour on the first Monday of the month to prepare fruit smoothies, but she may not be comfortable with participating in fundraising events. Volunteer burnout is always a concern. By having a separate “Food Committee” with volunteers who may or may not have other volunteer obligations can help reduce the risk of volunteer burnout.

School Canteen or Snack Program Suggestions

The following suggestions are from the “Guide to Food Choices” - the appendix of the School Healthy Eating Regulations. **Note:** Some of the following suggestions may not be appropriate if your school is voluntary peanut aware.

<u>Ideas from the Foods to Serve Most Often list:</u>	<u>Ideas from the Foods to Serve Sometimes list:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Fresh whole fruit or canned fruit▶ Fruit salad cup▶ Fruit, yogurt, granola parfait▶ Veggie sticks and dip▶ Muffins (whole grain, lower fat)▶ Yogurt▶ Whole grain bagel & cream cheese▶ Applesauce or applesauce blend cups▶ Smoothies▶ Low Fat Loaves (e.g. zucchini, banana)▶ Rice cakes▶ Milk or Chocolate Milk▶ Hummus & Pita Wedges▶ Whole grain bread sticks▶ Crackers and cheese▶ 100% Fruit Juice▶ Plain air-popped popcorn▶ Cheese Strings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Cereal & Pretzel Snack Mix▶ Cookies (Oatmeal, Gingersnaps, Digestives, Arrowroot, Fig Newtons)▶ Frozen Yogurt▶ Puddings▶ Salsa and Baked Tortilla chips▶ Rice Krispie™ Squares

School Breakfast Program Suggestions

<u>Ideas from the Foods to Serve Most Often list:</u>	<u>Ideas from the Foods to Serve Sometimes list:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Whole Wheat or Multi-grain Toast, Bagels, English Muffins▶ Unsweetened or Low Sugar Cereals - Corn Flakes®, Shreddies®, Rice Krispies®▶ Low Fat, High Fibre Muffins with vegetables or fruit - blueberry, carrot, apple, etc▶ Fresh Fruit - apples, oranges, bananas, melons, etc▶ Yogurt - 2% milk fat or less▶ Smoothies▶ Milk or Chocolate Milk▶ 100% Fruit Juice - apple juice, orange juice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ White Toast, Bagels, English Muffins▶ Sweetened Cereal made with oats or whole grains - Instant Oatmeal, Honey Nut Cheerios®, etc▶ Low Fat Loaves - zucchini, banana, etc▶ Cereal and Granola bars

Condiments - soft margarine, jam, cheese spread, cream cheese, peanut butter

School Lunch Suggestions

Sandwiches, Wraps, Subs, Pita Pockets

- ▶ Made with whole grain breads; lean meats (e.g. turkey, chicken, roast beef, ham); other fillings (e.g. tuna, salmon, egg); cheese (lower fat cheese available); veggies (e.g. lettuce, tomato, cucumber, pepper rings or strips, onion); condiments (e.g. mustard, barbeque sauce, salsa, reduced fat mayo). If time allows, try a sandwich bar where sandwiches are custom made to order.

Pasta Dinners

- ▶ Spaghetti with tomato sauce; lasagna; macaroni and cheese. Experiment with different shapes of pastas, protein (it doesn't have to be just ground beef - try ground poultry or pork, chicken cubes, shrimp, ham, or low fat sausage), veggies, and sauces (avoid the cream based ones).

Baked Potato with topping

- ▶ Some toppings to consider include grated cheese, cole slaw, chili, egg salad, salsa, sour cream and chives, broccoli and cheese, tuna salad, margarine, etc.

Chili

- ▶ With whole wheat garlic bread or chili on rice.

Soups or Chowders

- ▶ With whole grain roll, biscuit, or bread sticks- homemade is best as it can be prepared with lots of veggies and beans and can be low in salt. Canned tomato or broth-based soups can be served sometimes. Canned broths can also be used as a soup base - add cooked chicken, turkey, ham, or beef and some vegetables. Try to avoid cream-based soups, such as cream of mushroom or chicken.

Casseroles

- ▶ Shepards Pie, chicken & rice.

Salad Bar

- ▶ Allow students to prepare their own salad from a variety of pre-cut vegetables, fruit, cheese, chicken, turkey, ham, hard boiled egg, nuts, seeds, etc. This option is more work than other options and requires adequate space, but it is very popular with students.

Burritos, Quesadillas, Tacos

- ▶ Fill with lots of veggies (onions, green or red peppers, tomatoes, etc.); lean beef, chicken, or turkey; beans; reduced fat cheese; salsa.

Veggie Burger or Veggie Dog

- ▶ Most taste very similar to real meat, but with far less fat. A large variety of brands are available at most major grocery stores

Brown Bag Lunch

- ▶ Fruit (e.g. banana), crackers, cheese string, yogurt, and arrowroot cookies. This type of lunch is proving to be very popular with students in elementary schools, but would require more food if it was for older students as they have higher calorie needs.

Pizza

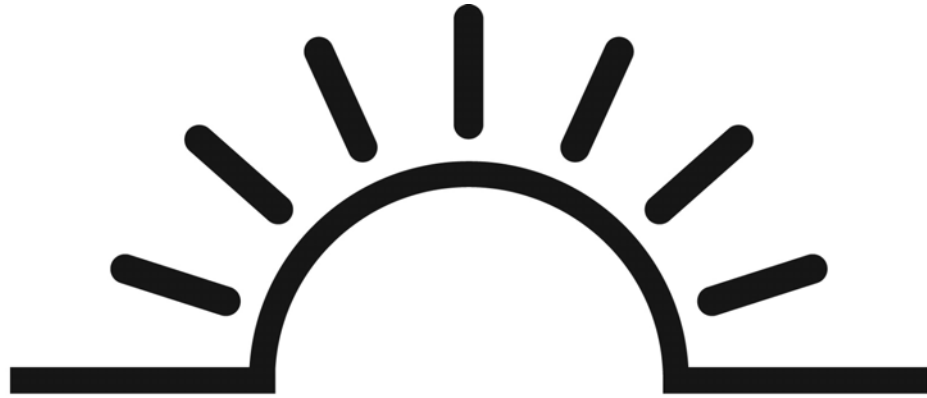
- ▶ With veggies, reduced fat cheese, lean meats, or veggie pepperoni. Limit processed meats such as pepperoni & salami. *

Lean Hamburger * or Grilled Chicken Burger

- ▶ Serve with a side salad

* Serve these choices less often

There are plenty of possibilities not listed here. Consider foods that are healthy, as well as popular with students and go from there. Also, for voluntary peanut aware schools, make sure that the ingredients are peanut safe.



Useful Websites for
Healthy Meal and
Snack Ideas



Useful Websites for Healthy Meal and Snack Ideas

Dietitians of Canada:

www.dietitians.ca

The Eat Well, Live Well section of this website has lots of practical and fun features. Some of the features include EatTracker, Nutrition Challenge, FAQs, Fact Sheets, Virtual Kitchen, Virtual Grocery Store Tour, and many more.

Canadian Living:

<http://www.canadianliving.com>

Based on the popular Canadian magazine, this website contains an extensive section of health and well being articles for the entire family. Busy families will be particularly interested in the *Make it Tonight* selection of recipes that can be prepared in 30 minutes or less and the *Step by Step* cooking lessons - not sure how to cook a turkey? This section assists even the most timid cook!

Kraft Canada:

<http://www.kraftcanada.ca>

This site contains a large library of articles on a variety of nutrition topics including: antioxidants, calcium, fiber, fat, iron, sodium and much more. *Kid Friendly Side Dishes*, *Top 10 Fruit and Veggie Packed Recipes* and a comprehensive 'encyclopedia' of vegetables - *Vegetables 101* will help your family learn more about new vegetables and fruits while introducing new recipes.

Home Made Simple:

http://www.homemadesimple.com/kitchen/nourishing_nibbles.shtml

If you have run out of ideas for school lunches check this site for articles on *Looking Forward to Lunch*, *Packable Lunch* and *Easy Living Tips for Back to School*. Children will be interested in the kid friendly recipes on this website such as the *Banana Dog* and the *Pear Pal* while parents will find a well organized index of recipe ideas for entrees, soups, salads, side dishes, and dessert items.

Just Add Milk:

<http://www.justaddmilk.ca/recipes/index.php>

What is 'ice cream in a bag'? That's just one of many recipes on this website. Visitors can also try the 'milk recipe of the week' or download the yearly milk calendar. You can 'ask a dietitian' your nutrition questions, learn more about *what's in milk* or view a set of articles on women's health issues on this site.

American Dietetic Association:

www.eatright.org

If you have ever wanted more information on the latest books on nutrition this site's *Good Nutrition Reading List* provides a guide to help you decide which books to invest in. Frequent visitors to this site can also access the healthy eating *Tip of the Day* and a variety of booklets and nutrition fact sheets designed to help parents teach children healthy food habits including: *Kid's Nutrition Needs*, *Start Healthy: The Guide to Teaching Your Little One Good Eating Habits*, *Making the Most Out*

of *Family Mealtimes* and many more.

The Food Network:

<http://www.foodnetwork.ca>

The Food Network offers a series of *handy printable* guides and reference charts for your kitchen such as: measurement conversion charts, temperature conversions, steak doneness charts while the *food glossary* will help you sort out your bananas from your plantains. Curious about your daily calorie and nutritional intake? Try the *nutrition calculator* tool to discover more about your food intake.

The Childcare Nutrition Resource System:

<http://www.nal.usda.gov/childcare/recipes>

This website contains a variety of links to recipes sites while offering monthly *Food, Family and Fun: A new recipe to cook with kids each month*. Want to involve your child in meal preparation? Check the *Kids Can Cook* newsletter.

National Network for Child Care:

<http://www.nncc.org/nutrition/recipe.kid.html>

The archives of the National Network for Child Care includes articles on a variety of nutrition topics including: childhood obesity, meals and snacks, mealtime behaviour, food safety and other topics. Parents will be particularly interested in titles such as *There's a Picky Eater at Home; Winning Ways to Grocery Shop with Young Children; Making the Most of Family Mealtimes* and the *ABCs of Feeding Preschoolers*.

Kids Health:

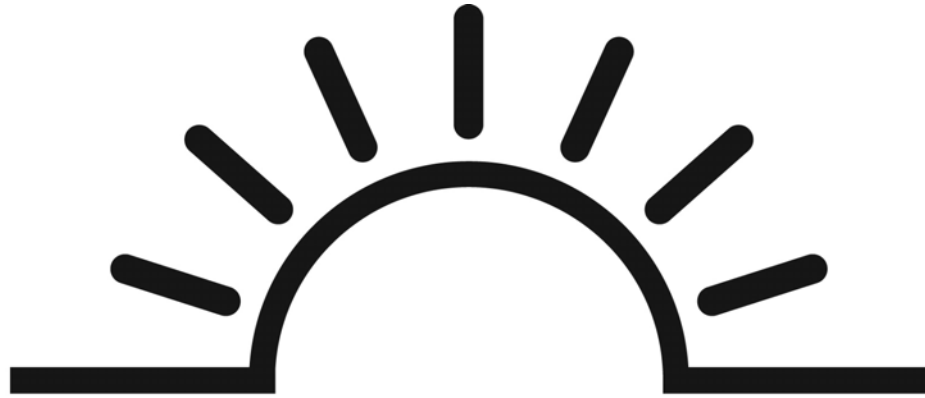
<http://www.kidshealth.org>

This site is sub-divided into sections especially for children, parents and a site for teens. Parents and children of all ages will enjoy pages specially designed to meet their areas of interest. One highlight of this site is a series of short movies designed to teach children about the human body.

Kidnetic:

<http://www.kidnetic.com>

The brightly colored entrance to this site is designed to catch the interest and attention of children but parents will also be interested in the 'recipe round up' that includes *brown bag specials, smart snacks, gross out delights* and *super sides*. Concerned about your child's health? This site also contains an *Ask an expert* on-line forum where you can pose questions to a pediatric nutritionist, an exercise physiologist, a child psychologist and a public health professor.



Funding for Food Programs



Key Points

Summary of Funding For School Food Programs

- School food programs include breakfast and snack programs that are offered to all students free of charge
- There are 2 main sources of funding:
 - Breakfast For Learning
 - Children's Emergency Foundation
- Building community partnerships with local businesses and community groups can also assist in the operation of your program

Summary of Funding For School Food Programs

BREAKFAST FOR LEARNING (BFL)

Located in Toronto, Canada

BREAKFAST FOR LEARNING is the only national non-profit organization solely dedicated to supporting child nutrition programs in Canada. Their mission is to ensure that every child in Canada attends school well nourished and ready to learn. In 1992, BFL helped to start 20 nutrition programs; now they support programs in over 6,900 communities, in every province and territory in Canada.

BFL has provided a grant to hire a Provincial Coordinator for School Healthy Eating Programs on Prince Edward Island. Part of this role includes assisting school food programs with grant applications and the adjudication of these grants from BFL for the province. The provincial coordinator for the PEI Healthy Eating Alliance works out of the Eastern School District (space donated by the Eastern School District).

Criteria: Breakfast For Learning supports breakfast and snack programs which are offered a minimum of 2 days/week, feature nutritious foods, demonstrate an ability to deliver services and to secure financial, in-kind, and volunteer support from their local community, and are available for ALL children to attend free of charge. Programs are encouraged to follow “*best practices*” (program standards) from Breakfast For Learning. These standards ensure that programs are consistent and they ensure quality in program delivery.

For more information about BREAKFAST FOR LEARNING, please visit their website at: www.breakfastforlearning.ca.

Children’s Emergency Foundation (CEF)

Located in Toronto, Ontario

The Children’s Emergency Foundation is a federally incorporated non-profit organization and a registered charity which raises and distributes funds to assist programs which help children in need across Canada and across the world. They support more than 360 child nutrition programs across Canada.

Criteria: Programs must already be in operation, feature nutritious foods, demonstrate an ability to

March 2005

deliver services and to secure financial, in-kind, and volunteer support from their local community, and programs must be available for ALL children to attend free of charge.

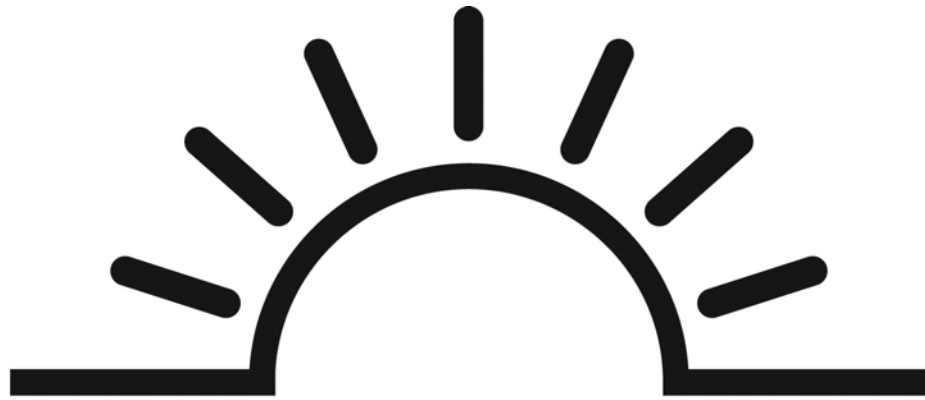
For more information about the Children's Emergency Foundation, please visit their website at: www.childremergency.org.

Community Partnerships

Many programs have established partnerships with local businesses and community groups to assist in the daily operation of breakfast and/or snack programs. Some businesses have contributed financially, while others have provided their support by donating a food product or supplies (i.e. napkins, cups, plates, utensils, etc), or by volunteering their time at a program.

Visit local businesses for donations, both financial and food product or supplies. Try grocery stores, restaurants, bulk food stores, restaurant supply stores, food suppliers, etc. Other donations may be found by approaching local service groups, churches, professional associations and unrelated businesses which may have a charitable donation fund. If you are unable to visit local businesses, try sending a letter or telephoning the manager/supervisor.

Volunteers are key to your program. It is important to try to get parents involved in your program. Other sources of volunteers include: local volunteer centres, seniors clubs, and churches. You can often advertise for free in newspapers and on local television.



Survey on School Food Programs



Survey on School Food Programs

When considering changing a service or starting a new service it is important to get input from those who will use the service. Surveying parents and/or students is one way to get input on school food programs.

The following survey has been adapted from a survey developed by West Kent Elementary School. There are four sections to the survey: 1) Lunch Program, 2) Snack Program, 3) Breakfast Program, and 4) Other Questions about Food Programs. Not all sections will apply to your school, so you should modify the survey to meet your needs. The parts of the survey in *italics* should be modified by you. And the **highlighted** parts should be used when the food program already exists in your school.

You will be able to download the survey from the PEI Healthy Eating Alliance website at www.healthyeatingpei.ca or contact Sherry O'Keefe (Assistant Co-ordinator, School Healthy Eating Policy Project) at 902-620-3672 or sherry@healthyeatingpei.ca.

Not Satisfied At All **Very Satisfied**
 1 2 3 4 5

Comments: _____

➤ **If the school could offer lunch alternatives, what would you like to see offered?**

____ *Homemade Soup* ____ *Pita sandwich (vegetable, tuna, etc.)*
____ *Healthy tortilla wraps* ____ *Homemade Pasta*
____ *Vegetarian Pizza* ____ *Sub*

Additional Suggestions _____

➤ **How much would you be willing to pay for each additional lunch alternative?**

____ Under \$3.00 ____ \$3.00 ____ \$4.00 ____ \$5.00 ____ More

➤ **What did your child/you like most about our Lunch Program?** _____

➤ **What did your child/you like least about our Lunch Program?** _____

➤ What did your child/you like most about our Breakfast Program? _____

➤ What did your child/you like least about our Breakfast Program? _____

Part 4 - Other Questions about Food Programs

➤ **What would your family find most useful? Please check all you are interested in.**

	Not Useful At All				Very Useful
Breakfast Program	1	2	3	4	5
Lunch Program	1	2	3	4	5
Snack Program	1	2	3	4	5

➤ **Would you be able/willing to volunteer for these programs if required?**

Yes No

If Yes, how often and which one? _____

➤ **Would you support/participate in fund-raising efforts to subsidize an expanded food program?**

Yes No

Your comments and suggestions are important. Please feel free to make any additional comments that may be useful to the school regarding food choices at our school.

Name (optional) _____

Contact Information:

Adapted from: the West Kent Elementary School Survey

March 2005

