



# MICHIGAN TEAM NUTRITION

RESULTS FROM 2004-2005 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.

### 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.

### THE SOLUTION CAN LEAD TO POSITIVE CHANGES!

*Selected results follow from 13 Michigan schools that completed a Team Nutrition Healthy School Environment mini-grant in 2004-05.*

- Healthier options were added to vending machines in many schools, with students helping to select new foods by holding taste tests.
- One school added an extra section of physical education class for eighth-graders so more students could participate.
- School meals were improved in several schools e.g., less frying, new healthier foods on the menu, menu reviewed by a dietitian, yogurt and string cheese added to breakfast options, salads added as a daily menu option and low-fat dressing offered.
- New healthier a la carte choices were added at one school. Students helped taste test new items to get their input and "buy-in."
- Physical activity opportunities increased in several schools e.g., walking/mileage clubs, teachers walking with their classes, opportunities for physical activity in the classroom.
- One school eliminated pop from a vending machine and replaced it with 100% juice and water and added timers on other machines still containing pop to regulate access to students.
- The student senate at one middle school now provides leadership for the snack store which sells healthy after-school snacks.
- Health education was taught in the classrooms at one school through a partnership between Michigan State University Extension and a local hospital.
- New policies were written at several schools to include: no opting out of physical education, not using physical activity as punishment, not withholding food as punishment, food not being used as a reward. One school board is adopting the Michigan Action for Healthy Kids Healthy Food and Beverages Policy.
- Healthier foods are now being offered at staff meetings and school luncheons at several schools.
- The foodservice staff noticed students starting to make healthier meal choices and reading the nutritional information that was provided.
- A Foodservice Director reported teachers and staff now view the food-service staff as a valuable resource.
- One school's garden project donated food to the local food bank.
- After-school activities were started in one school featuring a Double Dutch Team, Taebo classes and a girls conditioning program especially for those students not participating on a school sports team.

# HOW DID THESE CHANGES OCCUR?

In 2004-2005, Michigan Team Nutrition provided mini-grants of up to \$1,000 to 13 schools located throughout Michigan. These 13 schools...

- Consisted of eight elementary schools, one middle school, two high schools, one K-8 school and one K-12 school. The total enrollment for participating schools was 6,514 students.
- Formed coordinated school health teams consisting of school administrators, teachers, foodservice directors, parents, students and community members.
- Were lead 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 Healthy School Action Tool (HSAT). HSAT 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](http://www.mihealthtools.org/schools).
- Developed and implemented an action plan to make at least one positive sustainable change in their school environment related to improving nutrition and physical activity at their school.
- Evaluated changes made towards a healthy school environment.



## Working Together in Michigan

Organizations in Michigan are partnering to help schools improve their nutrition and physical activity environments. There is 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](http://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 600 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 and United Dairy Industry of Michigan. Michigan State University and the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) are affirmative-action, equal-opportunity institutions. Michigan State University Extension and MDE 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. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the view or policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

References for statistics cited are available upon request from Pat Hammerschmidt.