



Key Messages about Breakfast

- **Breakfast fuels the body and brain.**
Breakfast provides energy for children’s growing minds and bodies. Research shows that students who eat breakfast have increased physical endurance to help them make it through the school day.
- **Studies show that children who eat breakfast perform better in school.**
Breakfast eaters have increased alertness, improved attendance and less tardiness, better behavior, decreased reports of illness (stomachaches, headaches, etc.), and better performance on tests.
- **Children who skip breakfast are less likely to get the 40+ nutrients needed for growth and development.**
Meals served as part of the School Breakfast Program provide one-fourth or more of the daily recommended levels for key nutrients that children need for growth and development. School breakfasts are an excellent source of protein, vitamins A and C, calcium, and iron.
- **School breakfast helps students maintain a healthy weight.**
Studies have shown that children who eat breakfast on a regular basis have a better overall diet and are less likely to be overweight. Items offered served as part of the School Breakfast Program are low in fat, sugar and sodium (salt) and are served in portion sizes that are appropriate for children.
- **School breakfast is a healthy choice for families.**
School breakfast includes a choice of entrée, fruit or 100% juice, and low fat or fat free milk. School meals must, by federal law, meet nutrition regulations based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- **Not all students eat a healthy breakfast every day.**
Despite considerable evidence that eating breakfast has beneficial impacts, few children consume a regular morning meal. These students are missing out on key nutrients needed for health and academic success. One of the most frequently reported barriers to breakfast is time. School breakfast offers students a quick and easy opportunity for a morning meal.
- **School breakfast is available to all students.**
The national School Breakfast Program is a federally funded program available to all schools. All children can participate. Some students do qualify for free or reduced price meals, and others may pay a small fee.
- **School breakfast can make a difference.**
Families depend on school meals to provide nourishing meals each day for their children. Students depend on school meals to provide the nutrition they need to succeed.
- **Schools and communities are recognizing the benefits of school breakfast.**
According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the number of schools participating in the national School Breakfast Program has nearly doubled since 1989. North Carolina is one of the top ten states for the percent of schools offering breakfast every day. Many schools are utilizing innovative strategies to promote and serve breakfast.
- **Support from schools, families and communities are necessary to ensure that students eat a healthy breakfast every day.**

