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September 1, 2004

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome to the September 2004 issue of **Eat Right Montana's Simple Steps for a Healthy Weight**. As kids go back to classrooms, it's the obvious time to focus on taking time for nutrition and physical activity on school days. This month we feature thoughts on **school lunches** (in the cafeteria and carried from home), super-sweet **fruit treats**, and fun ways to turn **school days into active days**.

There's no doubt that American kids are overfed, undernourished, and increasingly at risk for serious "adult" diseases. The daily news is full of studies about the prevalence of overweight, Type 2 diabetes, hypertension, and elevated cholesterol levels in young children. Fortunately, there's also good news in the midst of negative stories. First, there are more resources for both professionals and families to help kids of all ages get on a healthy track. Secondly, more and more school districts are working hard to create healthier nutrition environments in their cafeterias, classrooms, and hallways.

If you are looking for some new ideas for your community, check out these three resources or the five extra pages after the handouts.

- **The Children's Health Fund: Healthy K.I.D.S. Newsletters**  
[www.childrenshealthfund.org/](http://www.childrenshealthfund.org/)  
Check out **K.I.D.S.** (*Knowledge Improving Diet and Strength*) **Newsletters** for middle schoolers, along with other nutrition programs.
- **California Project LEAN: Bright Ideas**  
[www.californiaprojectlean.org/brightideas/](http://www.californiaprojectlean.org/brightideas/)  
A new feature on this site, **Bright Ideas** showcases successful and promising examples of healthy eating and physical activity in schools.
- **HealthierUS School Challenge: Recognizing Team Nutrition Schools**  
[www.fns.usda.gov/tn](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn)  
Visit Team Nutrition's (TN) site for a new program recognizing schools that meet Gold or Silver standards, as well as tons of other information.

Thanks for your past and future support of **Eat Right Montana**. Your feedback is always important to us; please let us know what you think.

Debi Miller, Chair: 406-994-5641    Katie Bark: 406-994-5641  
Crystelle Fogle: 406-947-2344    Dayle Hayes: 406-655-9082



**Simple Steps for a Healthy Weight: #9. Making school lunch healthy.  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE      CONTACT: Crystelle Fogle, MBA, RD  
MT Department of Public Health and Human Services – 406/947-2344**

**Healthy Families 2004: Taking time for health at school (9<sup>th</sup> in a series of 12)**

September is back-to-school time – and the perfect time to think about school lunches. Whether kids eat in the school cafeteria or carry a Spiderman lunchbox, there's good news on the menu.

“Lunch at school is important for two main reasons,” says Katie Bark, RD, co-chair of Montana Action for Healthy Kids and coordinator of Montana’s Team Nutrition programs. “A mid-day meal provides brain food that kids need for afternoon classes and homework. A healthy lunch also helps maintain a strong body for after-school athletics and activities like dance and music lessons.”

Meals funded by USDA’s Child Nutrition Programs, including breakfast and lunch, must meet specific guidelines for menu balance and fat content. School lunches served in kid-sized portions are nutritious and appealing. A May 2004 study showed that kids who eat school lunch consume 29 percent fewer calories from fat and twice as many fruits and vegetables than kids who eat a typical bag lunch.

According to Bark, parents can play an important role in creating healthy nutrition environments at local schools. “Read the menus carefully, visit the cafeteria, buy a meal to eat with your child, and talk to foodservice staff about the healthy changes they are making. If you see room for improvement, look for constructive ways to support positive changes – like through PTA/PTO or other parent groups.”

Families can also create lunchbox makeovers at home – packing fun, nutritious meals for optimal performance. All it takes is five items: a fruit, a veggie, a whole grain, a protein, and a dairy food. It’s as easy as a lean roast beef sandwich on whole wheat with lettuce and tomato, a single-serve cup of canned fruit, and a carton of low-fat milk purchased at school. You can also cover the nutrition bases with peanut butter on crackers or rice cakes, string cheese, baby carrots, and a box of 100% juice.

Eat Right Montana, a statewide coalition promoting healthful eating and active lifestyles, urges Montanans to take a fresh look at school lunch. Support healthy changes in school cafeterias and look for new lunch treats at the supermarket – like drinkable yogurts and individual packs of fresh fruit slices.

“Small changes make nutrition fun,” says Bark. “Give your peanut butter sandwich a new shape with a cookie cutter or try ‘zebra bread’ – white bread on one side and whole wheat on the other!”

**ATTACHED: *12 Ways to Enjoy Fruit and Make School Days Active Days***

## 12 Delicious, Easy Ways to Enjoy Fruit

Fruit is a double-sweet treat. It's a delicious treat for your taste buds – and a nutrition treat for your whole body. Fruits are naturally nutrient-rich. That means they are packed with vitamins, minerals, and disease-fighting phytonutrients – and are still low in calories. To maximize the health benefits from fruit, nutrition experts suggest 2 to 3 servings per day – in a rainbow of colors. All types of fruit are nutritious – fresh, frozen, canned, and dried – so here are a dozen easy ways to treat yourself to good health!

- 1. Berries, berries, berries:**  
Canned blueberries in muffins, dried cranberries (craisins) in a salad, or fresh, juicy strawberries for dessert.
- 2. Citrus fruit:**  
Oranges, pink and white grapefruit, tangerines, tangelos, Clementines, lemons, and limes.
- 3. Melons and more melons:**  
Slices of watermelon, cantaloupe, honeydew, or Crenshaw – in a fruit cup or for a sweet snack.
- 4. Bananas:**  
Bananas, nature's fast food, come in their own wrapper – convenient to take in the car or eat at your desk.
- 5. Kiwi fruit:**  
Slice kiwi fruit into a mixed fruit or fresh spinach salad – or just scoop them out of their thin, brown peel.
- 6. Pineapple:**  
One of the most versatile fruits, pineapple is perfect fresh, canned, dried, as juice, or on a pizza!
- 7. Tropical fruit:**  
Fresh produce departments and canned food aisles now serve up mangoes, papaya, and star fruit.
- 8. Apples and pears:**  
A fresh, crisp snack, a juicy addition to green salad, and a tasty pie, tart, or cobbler for dessert.
- 9. Summer tree fruit:**  
Nectarines, peaches and apricots are fabulous when fresh – and still quite tasty when canned in their own juice.
- 10. Plums and prunes:**  
Fresh plums are another juicy taste of summer; dried or made into juice, prunes are very nice for regularity!
- 11. Cherries and grapes:**  
Fresh or dried, cherries and grapes make a great snack or addition to salads (mixed fruit or tossed green).
- 12. Trendy tomatoes:**  
Tomatoes are a fruit – and now they come in sweet, fruit-shaped cherry, grape, and strawberry varieties.



[www.montanadieticassociation.org/promo.html](http://www.montanadieticassociation.org/promo.html)

**Celebrating  
Healthy Families  
2004**

## 12 Fun Ways to Make Schools Days Active Days

Very few kids today get the activity they need for a healthy weight and overall fitness. Helping kids get fit can help them do better in school, have a better attitude all day long, and sleep better at night. When you help your child, grandchild, niece, nephew, or next-door neighbor get active, you can improve your own health and weight at the same time. Walking to school is a wonderful first step – but look at all the other enjoyable ways to add physical activity into the school day!

- 1. Walk to school:**  
For new ideas on the tried-and-true path to fitness for generations, visit [www.walktoschool-usa.org/](http://www.walktoschool-usa.org/)
- 2. Put on a pedometer:**  
Pedometers come in kid-friendly colors, sizes, and shapes. Ask if your school has a pedometer program.
- 3. Create a “walking” school bus:**  
Designated adults pick up kids for a group walk to school. Learn more at [www.walkingschoolbus.org/](http://www.walkingschoolbus.org/)
- 4. Use pedal or push power:**  
Bikes, trikes, and scooters are all fun ways to get to school. Remember to wear a helmet and bring a lock.
- 5. Take 10 in the classroom:**  
Simple idea to get kids moving during regular class time; see one program at [www.take10.net/](http://www.take10.net/)
- 6. Start a walking club:**  
Students, staff, teachers, and parents all need easy ways to get fit; work with the PE teacher to start a club.
- 7. Volunteer for active recess:**  
Most schools welcome volunteers. See what you can do to make recess more active, fun, and inclusive.
- 8. Take on a challenge:**  
At [www.presidentschallenge.org/](http://www.presidentschallenge.org/), you (and the whole school) can register for recognition and awards.
- 9. Walk home from school:**  
Meet the kids – and have some fun on the way home. Play ball at school or have a walking scavenger hunt.
- 10. Pick a verb, any VERB™:**  
Sports tips, places to play, games you can only imagine, it’s all at this very cool site: [www.verbnow.com/](http://www.verbnow.com/)
- 11. Switch to active videos:**  
Exercise videos now come in every flavor – from *Elmocize* to *Yoga Fitness for Kids* (ages 7 to 12).
- 12. Play, play, play:**  
Anywhere, anytime, at the park, or in the yard – it’s simple with a ball, Frisbee, jump rope, or hula hoop.



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**Celebrating  
Healthy Families  
2004**

# HEALTHY FAMILIES 2004

## Simple Steps for a Healthy Weight

JANUARY 2004

1. Keep a record.

FEBRUARY 2004

2. Develop a routine.

MARCH 2004

3. Balance food and activity.

APRIL 2004

4. Take a daily dose of moderation.

MAY 2004

5. Enjoy variety every day.

JUNE 2004

6. Take time for health every day – at home.

JULY 2004

7. Take time for health every day – at work.

AUGUST 2004

8. Take time for health every day – on vacation.

SEPTEMBER 2004

9. Take time for health every day – at school.

OCTOBER 2004

10. Take time for health every day – around town.

NOVEMBER 2004

11. Take time for health every day – at organizations.

DECEMBER 2004

12. Celebrate the joy of health every day.



[www.montanadieteticassociation.org/promo.html](http://www.montanadieteticassociation.org/promo.html)



**Montana Action for Healthy Kids** is a committee of **Eat Right Montana**, a non-profit coalition with a long-standing commitment to helping Montanans improve their health through nutrition and fitness. Team members include parents, chefs, and state, local, and tribal health and education professionals.

### **Mission Statement**

*Montana Action for Healthy Kids is dedicated to improving the health and wellness of our children in schools and communities through nutrition and physical activity where children learn, participate in, and enjoy healthy lifestyle behaviors.*

### **Current Projects:**

#### **School Parent Organization Mini Grant Program:**

With help from a national Action for Healthy Kids grant, the team is encouraging parents to take action to create healthier schools and increase opportunities for kids to practice healthy eating and physical activity habits through a competitive grant program. Fifteen school parent groups representing public and private schools are receiving funds to take action to improve food and beverage choices and/or to enhance the physical activity opportunities in their schools.

**Congratulations** to the school parent organizations receiving mini-grants for the 2004-05 school-year: Ridge View Elementary (Belgrade); Emerson Elementary (Butte); Montana City School; Evergreen School (Kalispell); Havre Elementary; Malta Elementary; Monforton School (Bozeman); Somers School; Frenchtown School; Liberty Christian Academy (Lame Deer); Bozeman Schools; Ronan/Pablo Schools; Fortine Elementary; De La Salle Blackfeet School (Browning); Hamilton Schools: and Garfield School (Lewistown).

#### **FIT KIDS = HAPPY KIDS Posters:**

With help from partner agencies such as the Montana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, a colorful and informative poster outlining simple steps to keeping kids fit is available free of charge to Montana schools, child care centers, physician offices, health clinics, child-centered agencies and businesses. Accompanying the poster is a camera-ready parent handout that can be reproduced and distributed to parents and families. The handout and poster provides six easy ways to help kids stay fit through healthful eating and physical activity.

**For more information on current projects or to receive a free poster:** Katie Bark, Montana Action for Healthy Kids, PO Box 5155, Bozeman, MT 59717, 406-994-5641 [kbark@state.mt.us](mailto:kbark@state.mt.us)

Visit the Action for Healthy Kids website at [www.ActionforHealthyKids.org](http://www.ActionforHealthyKids.org)

## Promoting Nutrition and Physical Activity: Online Resources for Healthy Kids and Healthy Schools

### Action for Healthy Kids (AFHK)

[www.actionforhealthykids.org/](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/)

In early October 2002, health professionals and educators from across the US gathered to “take action” for children’s nutrition and fitness. This site provides extensive tools, resources, and contacts from the meeting in Washington, DC.

### American Psychological Assoc: Task Force on Advertising and Children

[www.apa.org/releases/childrenads.pdf](http://www.apa.org/releases/childrenads.pdf)

Released in February 2004, this report outlines the effect of food and beverage advertising on children’s eating habits and their contribution to youth obesity. It also offers extensive recommendations for healthful changes.

### American School Food Service Association (ASFSA)

[www.asfsa.org/](http://www.asfsa.org/)

The 55,000+ members of ASFSA work in school nutrition all across the USA, and many are active in creating school-based nutrition programs for healthy kids. The site features news, research, and free promotional kits for school meals.

### BeefNutrition.org (National Cattlemen’s Beef Association)

[www.beefnutrition.org/hsn](http://www.beefnutrition.org/hsn)

Parent education handouts, presentation graphics (highlighting protein, iron, and zinc), and body image resources for adolescents (*Mirror, Mirror*) are just a few of the excellent materials available for downloading at this site.

### The Body Positive

[www.thebodypositive.org/](http://www.thebodypositive.org/)

Through videos, workshops and consulting, the creators of Body Positive teach young people how to have a positive body image and a healthy relationship with food. Their most recent video *BodyTalk 3* (2004) is targeted at ages 6 to 8.

### California Dept. of Education: Academic Achievement and Physical Fitness

[www.cde.ca.gov/news/releases2002/rel37.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/news/releases2002/rel37.asp)

This study, released in December 2002, supports the connection between physical fitness levels of students in grades 5, 7, and 9 – and student performance on CA Department of Education Achievement Tests.

### California School Board Association (CSBA)

[www.csba.org/PS/hf.htm](http://www.csba.org/PS/hf.htm)

The CSBA has long been active in encouraging schools to establish nutrition policies. Its 2003 guide *Successful Students Through Healthy Food Policies: Act Now for Academic Excellence* can be ordered for \$20.00.

### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

[www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/) and [www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/index.htm)

The CDC site is an essential resource for nutrition and activity issues. Search for: surveillance data (including maps of obesity prevalence); pediatric growth charts; and several national campaigns, like *Kids Walk-to-School* and *Turn Off Your TV*.

### **Center for Weight and Health (University of California, Berkeley)**

[www.cnr.berkeley.edu/cwh/](http://www.cnr.berkeley.edu/cwh/)

The center sponsors conferences and coalitions in California. The site features links to literature, research, surveys, funding, and information on *Reversing Childhood Obesity Trends: Helping Children Achieve Healthy Weights*.

### **Dole 5 A Day**

[www.dole5aday.com/](http://www.dole5aday.com/)

Dole was one of the first companies to create a nutrition education website – and this one keeps getting better. Log on for fruit and veggies facts, recipes, and fun. There are special sections for kids, parents, teachers, and school foodservice.

### **Eat Smart, Move More ... NC**

[www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/index2.php](http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/index2.php)

This initiative promotes physical activity and healthy eating through policy and environmental change, like the newly released *Eat Smart: North Carolina's Recommended Standards for All Foods Available in School*.

### **Healthy School Food Coalition**

[http://departments.oxy.edu/uepi/cfj/cfj\\_LA\\_sodaban.htm](http://departments.oxy.edu/uepi/cfj/cfj_LA_sodaban.htm)

Los Angeles Unified School District, second largest US district, unanimously passed a motion banning soda sales in all district schools. This site offers a guide to the strategies used in LA and other school nutrition information.

### **Healthy Weight Network**

[www.healthyweight.net/](http://www.healthyweight.net/)

Francie Berg, MS, publishes *Underage and Overweight* and offers handouts, resources, and links, like *SNE Guidelines for Childhood Obesity Prevention Programs: Promoting Healthy Weight in Children* (2002).

### **Kaiser Family Foundation Report: Role of the Media in Childhood Obesity**

[www.kff.org/entmedia/entmedia022404pkg.cfm](http://www.kff.org/entmedia/entmedia022404pkg.cfm)

This 2004 report reviews over 40 studies to explore what researchers do and do not know about the role media play in childhood obesity – and identifies ways media could help to address this important public health problem.

### **Lexington-Fayette Health Department (Kentucky)**

[www.lexingtonhealthdepartment.org/docs/Food for Thought printer.pdf](http://www.lexingtonhealthdepartment.org/docs/Food%20for%20Thought%20printer.pdf)

The health promotion folks in Lexington, Kentucky, have developed an excellent full-color publication: *Food for Thought: Healthy Food Guidelines for Schools* (available for a free download as a PDF file).

### **Michigan Department of Education**

[www.michigan.gov/documents/healthyweight\\_13649\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/healthyweight_13649_7.pdf)

*The Role of Michigan Schools in Promoting Healthy Weight: A Consensus Paper* (2001) features guidance on excessive weight and weight gain; social pressure for excessive slenderness; and unsafe weight loss practices.

### **Michigan Team Nutrition**

[www.msue.msu.edu/fnh/tn/](http://www.msue.msu.edu/fnh/tn/)

The partnership between MSU Extension and the MI Department of Education has dozens of resources for schools, including exciting ways to link nutrition and physical activity education with literacy – promoting reading and health together.

### **Minnesota Team Nutrition ToolKit**

<https://fns.state.mn.us/FNSProg/NSLP/NSLPResource.htm#toolkit>

This site provides dozens of tools for enhancing school nutrition environments including: handouts for parents and students; strategies for improving vending machine options; and resources for adult role models.

### **National Dairy Council Health Education Kits**

[www.nationaldairyCouncil.org/lvl03/kits/5000\\_kits\\_03.htm](http://www.nationaldairyCouncil.org/lvl03/kits/5000_kits_03.htm)

Three new education kits are available for free download from the National Dairy Council®: *3-A-Day of Dairy Health Education Kit*, *Healthy Weight Health Education Kit* and *African-American Health Education Kit*.

### **National School Foodservice Management Institute**

[www.nfsmi.org/index.html](http://www.nfsmi.org/index.html)

NSFMI offers training in Child Nutrition Management; a comprehensive catalog of materials for child nutrition professionals; and extensive research studies on foodservice and healthy school nutrition environments.

### **Nutrition Explorations**

[www.nutritionexplorations.org/](http://www.nutritionexplorations.org/)

This site, also sponsored by the National Dairy Council, provides dozens of fun and easy ways to teach and learn nutrition. There are in-depth sections for parents, teachers, and school foodservice professionals.

### **PASA (Parent's Advocating School Accountability)**

<http://pasaorg.tripod.com/nutrition/nutrition.html>

This parent group in San Francisco (CA) has supported extensive changes in the nutrition environment of SF schools. Site includes detailed info about those changes, links to other sites, and an excellent archive of school nutrition news.

### **President's Challenge ~ You're It. Get Fit!**

[www.presidentschallenge.org/](http://www.presidentschallenge.org/)

Physical activity and awards program for Americans of ALL ages. Site offers activity logs for kids, teens, and adults (you can register your whole school), as well as cool online tools and ways to win awards for activity.

### **Project LEAN (Leaders Encouraging Activity and Nutrition)**

[www.californiaprojectlean.org/](http://www.californiaprojectlean.org/)

California Project LEAN, from The Public Health Institute, supports several youth projects. One is *Food on the Run: Your Energy Wake Up Call*, a web site with simple nutrition and active solutions for teens @ [www.caprojectlean.org/](http://www.caprojectlean.org/)

### **Take 10!**

[www.take10.net/](http://www.take10.net/)

**Take 10** is a classroom-based physical activity program for kindergarten to fifth grade students, which is linked to academic learning objectives. The goal is to get American kids moving more – ten minutes at a time.

### **SPARK: The New PE**

[www.sparkpe.org/](http://www.sparkpe.org/)

SPARK's training and tools promise PE classes that are more inclusive, active, and fun. SPARK offers programs for Early Childhood, Elementary and Middle School Physical Education, Lifelong Wellness, and After School Recreation.

### **Texas Department of Agriculture ~ Child Nutrition Programs**

[www.agr.state.tx.us/](http://www.agr.state.tx.us/)

Commissioner of Agriculture Susan Combs is taking a strong stand for healthy schools, including a new policy on competitive foods (released 03/01/04). Site has a variety of resources, including PDFs of some awesome new brochures.

### **USDA Team Nutrition (US Department of Agriculture)**

[www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Default.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Default.htm)

The Team Nutrition program is a goldmine of materials, kits, and local efforts to enhance school nutrition environments. You can download free materials; read about Team Nutrition success stories; and find out what is going on in your state.

**VERB™: It's What You Do**

[www.verbnow.com/](http://www.verbnow.com/)

VERB™ is CDC's physical activity website aimed at tweens (ages 8 to 12). The site provides ways to record activities and win prizes – along with videos of dance moves, skateboarding tricks, and BMX bike actions.

**Vista (CA) Unified School District ~ Healthy Vending Information**

[www.vusd.k12.ca.us/cns/healthyvending.htm](http://www.vusd.k12.ca.us/cns/healthyvending.htm)

Enid Hohn, RD, Director of Child Nutrition Services in a large southern California school district, offers extensive information, including a PowerPoint presentation about the success of her healthful vending program.

**Wisconsin Department of Education: *What's Right for Kids***

[www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dltcl/bbfcsp/pdf/tnbooklt.pdf](http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dltcl/bbfcsp/pdf/tnbooklt.pdf)

Released in early 2004, this comprehensive document outlines child nutrition problems – and the multiple roles that schools can play in the solutions, including many examples of what Wisconsin schools are doing to improve nutrition.

**Wheat Foods Council: The Grains Information Center**

[www.wheatfoods.org/](http://www.wheatfoods.org/)

Yummy recipes, gorgeous photos, research updates, and professional resources – everything you wanted to know about grains, but didn't know who to ask. Need some rebuttals to today's low-carb craziness? Check here!

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## **RESOURCES by Dayle Hayes, MS, RD**

**Eat Right Montana's Healthy Families Campaign**

[www.montanadieticassociation.org/promo.html](http://www.montanadieticassociation.org/promo.html)

- 5 years of monthly packets with consumer handouts and resource lists

**Billings Gazette Nutrition Columns**

[www.billingsclinic.com/AboutUs/NutritionNews.htm](http://www.billingsclinic.com/AboutUs/NutritionNews.htm)

- Archive of weekly columns, published in Billings Gazette, Billings, MT