

# Benefits of Child Nutrition Programs

## Programs

## How they are keeping children healthy

### **National School Lunch Program (NSLP)**

- ✓ About 95% of public schools participate in the NSLP.
- ✓ In 2002-03, more than 27.8 million children in more than 97,000 facilities participated.
- ✓ On a typical school day, 16 million of these 27.8 million children, or 57.5 percent, were receiving free or reduced price lunches.
- ✓ Lunches provide one third or more of the recommended levels for key nutrients.

- ✓ Children who participate in the NSLP have higher nutritional intakes compared to those who bring lunch from home or do not participate.
- ✓ Proper nutrition improves a child's behavior, school performance, and overall cognitive development.
- ✓ Properly nourished children more actively participate in the education experience, which benefits them, their fellow students, and the entire school community.
- ✓ A healthy eating environment teaches children good nutrition and the elements of a proper diet. This can have lifelong positive effects on children's eating habits and physical well being.

### **School Breakfast Program (SBP)**

- ✓ In 2002, 8.2 million children in more than 76,000 facilities participated. 79% received free or reduced price breakfasts.
- ✓ In 2002-03, 42.3 children received free or reduced price breakfast for every 100 who received free or reduced price lunch.
- ✓ Universal SBPs dramatically increase student participation in school breakfast.

- ✓ Breakfasts provide one fourth or more of the recommended levels for key nutrients.
- ✓ Students who eat school breakfast increase their math and reading scores and improve their speed and memory.
- ✓ Children who eat breakfast at school perform better on standardized tests.

### **Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)**

- ✓ In 2002, the Summer Food Service Program served more than 1.8 million children at more than 29,000 sites.
- ✓ Although 15.5 million children get free or reduced price meals during the school year, only about 1.8 million participate in the SFSP when school is out.

- ✓ 93% of SFSP sites provide educational, developmental, or recreational activities in addition to nutritious meals and snacks.
- ✓ Many of the children served are at nutritional risk when they do not have access to school meals.

### **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)**

- ✓ In 2000, CACFP served over 2.5 million children daily in child care centers and day care homes.
- ✓ Provided approximately 1.6 billion meals and snacks
- ✓ Served over 67,000 elderly persons in the Adult Day Care portion of the program.

- ✓ Nearly 40,000 child care centers and 175,000 family child care providers participate
- ✓ 1,150 sponsors use the CACFP to provide high quality nutrition and learning experiences for children.
- ✓ Prepares kids to enter school "ready-to-learn" and assists low-income parents in maintaining employment.

### **Supplemental Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)**

- ✓ In 2000, WIC provided foods and services for about 7.2 million pregnant women, infants, and children each month.
- ✓ WIC has been proven to increase the number of women receiving prenatal care

- ✓ WIC has been proven to reduce the incidence of low birth weight and fetal mortality, reduce anemia, and enhance the nutritional quality of the diet of participants
- ✓ It is estimated that every dollar spent on WIC results in between \$1.77 and \$3.13 in Medicaid savings for newborns and their mothers.