

**Think
Breakfast!**

— CAFETERIA — CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

A GUIDE FOR TEACHERS AND SCHOOL NUTRITION PROFESSIONALS

STANDARDS-BASED NUTRITION EDUCATION
FOR GRADES 9-12

- EVENT IDEAS
- CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES
- SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT
- CAFETERIA CONNECTIONS
- COLLEGE AND CAREER EXPLORATION



ABOUT THIS GUIDE

THIS GUIDE CONSISTS OF LEARNING ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES THAT TEACH STUDENTS ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF EATING A HEALTHY BREAKFAST AND MAINTAINING A PHYSICALLY ACTIVE LIFESTYLE.



Research and experience has taught us that effective nutrition education programs begin with strong partnerships. The activities and resources in this guide can be used to engage the entire school community (students, teachers, school nutrition personnel, administrators, community organizations, and families) in support of this important health initiative.

Activities, lesson ideas, and subject-area tie-ins are organized around one service-learning project that can be led by any stakeholder. These activities can also take place anywhere in school such as a classroom, cafeteria, or at school-wide events.

EVENT IDEAS

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN AND BECOME INVOLVED IN EFFORTS THAT PROMOTE BREAKFAST AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY. IDEAS FOR ADMINISTRATORS INCLUDE:

- School Breakfast Week Activities
- **SCHOOL BREAKFAST DAY** – Ask all teachers to begin class with a short activity to teach students the benefits of eating a healthy breakfast and/or skills that support behavior change (time management, goal setting, etc.).
- Promote breakfast before special events – sports events, fundraisers, holiday celebrations, and/or school trips.
- Host morning meetings for the PTA, Parent Teacher Conferences, and promote school breakfast. Invite school nutrition professionals.
- Invite student government/student advisory boards to lead efforts to promote healthy breakfast habits.
- Organize volunteer/community service to serve breakfast at a local soup kitchen or organize a food drive for breakfast foods to be delivered to food pantries or local organizations.
- Plan a volunteer/internship/field trip opportunity to a local farm.

PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

IN THE NEXT SECTION, A SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT AND CREATIVE LESSON IDEAS FOR CONTENT AREAS ARE PRESENTED. TEACHERS FOCUS ON THE BENEFITS OF BREAKFAST AND HOW EATING BREAKFAST AND STAYING ACTIVE CAN HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY.



THE SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT AND LESSON IDEAS WILL EXPLORE THESE QUESTIONS, OBJECTIVES AND UNDERSTANDINGS.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- Why is breakfast an important meal?
- How can we make the healthy choice an easy choice to make?
- Can a healthy diet and more exercise improve my performance?
- What is the relationship between the body and the mind?

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Explain the short-term and long-term benefits of eating a healthy breakfast.
- Describe and identify the five food groups/components in various breakfast meals.
- Identify small changes that help ensure that students eat a healthy breakfast every day.
- Analyze the positive effects of breakfast for students, families, and schools (more energy, increased focus, reduced absenteeism, etc.).

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

- Eating breakfast gives students the energy they need to start the day.
- Healthy students are better learners.
- A balanced, nutritious breakfast can help students focus and concentrate in class.
- Eating a well-balanced breakfast contributes essential nutrients needed to be healthy and grow.
- Most schools offer a convenient, quick, and healthy breakfast each day.

RESOURCES

- Video Connection
- *Think Breakfast!* video, available at www.thinkbreakfast.com, can be used as a hook to engage students in the topic.
- Video can also be used during school-wide events, meetings, and in the cafeteria to facilitate discussions and promote key messages.
- *Think Breakfast!* Posters
- *Think Breakfast!* Website: <http://www.thinkbreakfast.com>
- NYSED-CNPA: <http://www.cn.nysed.gov>
- USDA Team Nutrition: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/team-nutrition>

SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT

SERVICE-LEARNING is an educational approach that combines learning objectives with community service, thereby using experiential learning to create positive change. Through service-learning, everyone can be involved in a school-wide initiative to promote eating a healthy breakfast and learning. Students will build understanding through hands-on service activities that can take place anywhere such as in the classroom, cafeteria, or community.

GUIDING QUESTION:
**HOW CAN I MAKE
THE HEALTHY
CHOICE THE EASY
CHOICE TO MAKE?**

PROMOTING AWARENESS

ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF BREAKFAST AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:

- **TEACHERS/STAFF TO YOUTH:** Assigned reading, class discussion, trips to the cafeteria, inviting school nutrition professionals to be guest speakers, coordinating volunteer opportunities at local farms or mentorships with professionals in nutrition education or public health fields.
- **SCHOOL NUTRITION STAFF TO YOUTH:** Food demonstrations of healthy breakfast meals served in school and how they can be prepared at home, tastings to promote nutritious breakfast foods, presentations on health benefits of specific foods, explaining what constitutes reimbursable meals, participating in student interviews and surveys, providing internship opportunities for students to assist food service director with promotion, marketing, and technology.
- **YOUTH TO YOUTH:** School announcements, classroom presentations, posters/PSA, social media, blogging, school newspaper, student leaders volunteer to teach students in lower grades, student-led classroom discussions on health-related topics.
- **YOUTH TO FAMILY:** Teach family members about MyPlate and share healthy breakfast recipes.
- **SCHOOL TO COMMUNITY:** Afternoon announcements and reminders by school nutrition staff, administrators, and/or teachers promoting next day's breakfast.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

In these activities you can teach about the benefits of breakfast and the school breakfast program. Learn strategies to increase focus and attention related to breakfast and exercise, community and health resources that promote wellness and physical activity.

- **GROUP WORK:** Assign readings about the benefits of breakfast and ask students to keep a journal and/or log, to see how eating or not eating breakfast affects them.
- **RESEARCH:** Assign a group to research breakfast and physical activity have positive effects in terms of athletic performance, academic performance, stress management, etc.
- **GROUP DISCUSSIONS:** Screen *Think Breakfast!* video. Identify the benefits of breakfast, discuss the barriers to eating breakfast and develop strategies to promote breakfast. Include school nutrition staff, parents, administrators, school nurses, etc. in discussions.
- **SMALL GROUP WORK:** Assign students to review the nutrition food label for breakfast foods they eat and examine the nutrition information. Use MyPlate to discuss a balanced breakfast and analyze breakfast meals.
- **SELF-ASSESSMENT:** Students answer the following questions: Am I eating a balanced breakfast that includes foods from different food groups? Are these food items nutritious? What is one change I can make to make my breakfast healthier or to make sure I eat breakfast every day?

BREAKFAST FUN IN THE CLASSROOM

LESSON IDEAS FOR SUBJECT AREA TEACHERS

These breakfast-themed activities make real-world connections that enhance learning, while building skills in specific content areas. Students will explore how a healthy lifestyle can improve performance in school and life. Use the *Think Breakfast!* Posters and Video to introduce these activities to your students.

CAFETERIA CLASSROOM CONNECTION

Students can learn through school nutrition presentations that touch on different topics including the process of preparing breakfast for a school breakfast program, nutritional value of breakfast, seasonal and local foods, farms and gardens, food safety, food tastings, and food demonstrations.

CONCLUDING ACTIVITIES

After participating in the learning activities, students can reflect and apply their new understanding to set personal health goals.

REFLECTION AND ASSESSMENT

Create and distribute a questionnaire and invite students to provide feedback on the activity and share a takeaway from the experience.

INDIVIDUAL GOAL SETTING

- Encourage students to set a goal to eat breakfast every day for a week.
- Help students make a plan to reach their goal.
- School nutrition staff, administrators, and teachers can motivate students by planning an incentive or award for students who eat breakfast every day.

MATH: Survey students in the class about breakfast eating patterns, sleep patterns, barriers to breakfast, and complete a statistical analysis (range, median, mode, average, standard deviation) of the data. Share findings with administrators and school nutrition staff and together develop recommendations for improving health habits and increasing participation in school breakfast together.

ELA: Write an expository essay about the positive effects of breakfast and physical activity or a persuasive essay to encourage your peers to eat breakfast. A shorter assignment could ask students to create an infographic or fact sheet about the benefits of breakfast. Ask school nutrition professionals to post, display or distribute student writing in the cafeteria.

SCIENCE: How do the structures of organisms enable life's function? Explain how nutrients and physical activity strengthen the body and why they are necessary in order for the body to function properly. Topics can include cell respiration, homeostasis, proteins, circulatory system, and brain function. Nutrition and physical activity can be tied to concepts in high school science – biology, chemistry, and physics. Ask school nutrition staff to share popular recipes and nutritional content of school breakfast to show how meals support healthy growth.

SOCIAL STUDIES: Research sporting events, athletes, moments in history that can begin a classroom discussion about leaders in sports, character (sportsmanship, determination) and healthy habits that contribute to success. Research whether or not these athletes ate breakfast and personal interviews about their routines. Ask school nutrition professionals to post these stories or display healthy habits and motivational quotes in the cafeteria.

ART: Create posters, photography, digital art, or social media posts about breakfast and physical activity (sports, dance, tai chi, exercise) and how healthy habits improve wellness and performance. Posters can be creative and persuasive to promote breakfast to their peers.

A BREAKFAST CELEBRATION

ORGANIZING A BREAKFAST DAY OR BREAKFAST WEEK

PREPARATION

- Create announcements about a special meal to be served.
- Announce incentives or group challenges to win prizes for classes and individuals who regularly eat breakfast.
- Create awareness of the benefits of breakfast through student leaders, student council, club activities and sports teams.
- Promote the week's breakfast menu.
- Arrange for spirit week activities to begin in the cafeteria with breakfast.

ON BREAKFAST DAY

- Display *Think Breakfast!* Posters
- Decorate the entrance to the cafeteria or grab-and-go cart location.
- Share a fact about breakfast using display screens, morning announcements, and classroom announcements.
- Screen the *Think Breakfast!* video available at <http://www.thinkbreakfast.com> and discuss the benefits of breakfast.

FOLLOW-UP

- Help students set a breakfast goal using a goal-setting prompt such as "I will eat breakfast ____ times a week in school or at home for the next ____ weeks."
- Have students write thank you notes to staff.
- Distribute "One thing I liked about breakfast day..." cards and place completed cards on display.
- Organize a classroom challenge to see how many students eat breakfast this week.

BREAKFAST WEEK ACTIVITIES

MONDAY

- **KICK-OFF:** Host a meet-up inviting students to learn about the breakfast-related activities in school. Announce a morning breakfast food contest where students use a creative outlet of art, photography, video, etc. to promote eating a healthy breakfast.

TUESDAY

- **BREAKFAST SOCIAL:** Announce that teachers, coaches, and students will eat breakfast in school and catch up before the school day begins.

WEDNESDAY

- **BREAKFAST RAFFLE:** Enter all students who eat breakfast at school in a raffle for a prize.
- **FUELED UP FOR SUCCESS TOURNAMENT:** Organize a pick-up game or basketball tournament.

THURSDAY

- **DEMO DAY:** Preview the breakfast menu or organize a demonstration showing of the recipe.

FRIDAY

- **MORNING INSPIRATION:** Plan or provide arts and crafts that can be completed during breakfast like making bracelets with positive messages or creating artwork to decorate the cafeteria.

THANKS FOR BRINGING *THINK BREAKFAST!* INTO YOUR CLASSROOM!

Visit www.surveymonkey.com/r/ThinkBreakfast to participate in a quick survey about your experiences using these materials.
We'd love to hear from you!