



# Community Nutrition Action Kit

**For People where they Live, Learn & Play**



# Community Nutrition Action Kit

## For People Where They Live, Learn & Play

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs and marital or familial status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the USDA Office of Communications at (202) 720-2791.

To file a complaint, write the Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., 20250, or call (202) 720-7327 (voice) or (202) 720-1127 (TDD).  
USDA is an equal employment opportunity employer.

Team Nutrition is a program of the Food and Consumer Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). USDA does not endorse any products, services, or organizations.

MP-1538  
September 1996

# Table of Contents

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Acknowledgements.....	5
Team Nutrition .....	6
What Is Team Nutrition?.....	6
Mission, Principles, and Messages.....	8
Preface .....	9
Getting Started:	
Using the Community Nutrition Action Kit .....	10
Matrix — Framework of Activities .....	12

## 2. YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Introduction to the Youth Activities .....	14
Roots and Things.....	15
The Grain Game .....	21
Pop-it and Rap-it! .....	27
What Am I?.....	33
Super Me!!!!.....	37
Pyramid Relay.....	43
Pyramid Tracking .....	49
Media Blitz .....	55
Food Label Scavenger Hunt .....	59
My Label Scrapbook .....	67
Line 'Em Up!!.....	71
Rainbow of Flavors .....	75
Sandwich Sense-ations.....	79
New Taste Sense-ations.....	99
Country Snapshot.....	105
Celebrate .....	115
Pen Pals Across the U.S.....	119

## 3. FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Introduction to the Family Activities.....	124
Close Encounters of an Agricultural Kind .....	125

Starting Small.....	127
Super Us .....	129
Tips To Be Tops .....	131
Pyramid Place Restaurant.....	133
Grain, Fruit, and Veggie Challenge.....	135
Supermarket Sleuth .....	137
Cabinet Check.....	139
Sense-able Scavenger Hunt .....	141
Family Taste Celebration .....	143
Salad Bowl.....	145
Bread in a Bag.....	147

#### **4. COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

Introduction to the Community Activities .....	150
Project Green Thumb .....	151
Community Sharing—Gleaning .....	155
Walkin’ the Walk.....	161
Food Guide Pyramid Food Drive.....	167
Food and Field Olympics .....	173
Passport to the Fabulous World of Food .....	185

#### **5. RESOURCES**

References .....	199
Contacting Cooperative Extension Service Offices .....	201
Regional USDA Team Nutrition Contacts.....	206
USDA’s Team Nutrition Supporters.....	207
How to Get Involved with Team Nutrition .....	209
Hotlines, Addresses, Internet.....	210
Publications List/Books, Pamphlets, and Brochures .....	212
Other Materials	
Information on Team Nutrition In-School Program	
Check It Out! The Food Label, The Pyramid, and You	
Leaflet No. 572, The Food Guide Pyramid	
The Food Guide Pyramid...Beyond the Basic 4	
<i>Join the Team!</i> Educational Video	
<i>Devour for Power</i> Poster	
<i>Sense-ational Foods</i> Poster	

# Acknowledgements

**This tool for enabling communities to work together to motivate children and families to make food choices for a healthy diet is the result of a one-year collaborative effort between the following units of the U. S. Department of Agriculture: Families, 4-H, and Nutrition of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion; and Food and Consumer Service. We thank the following people for their contributions:**

**From the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion:**

Eileen Kennedy, D.Sc., R.D., Executive Director; Bill Layden, Nutrition Promotion Staff Director; Carole Davis, M.S., R.D., Chief Nutritionist; Jackie Haven, M.S., R.D., Project Manager; and Catherine Tarone, M.P.H., Curriculum Supervisor. Special thanks to Anthony Grimm; Nancy W. Gaston, M.A., R.D.; Myrtle Hogbin, M.S., R.D.; Kristin Marcoe, M.B.A, R.D.; Nancy Schwenk; John Webster; and Vivian Waters for their help.

**From Food and Consumer Service:**

Patty Morris, M.A., Deputy Administrator for Special Nutrition Programs and Co-Chair of the Intra-departmental Working Group on Team Nutrition; Amanda Dew Manning, M.S., M.P.H., Associate Administrator; Maris Segal-Goodis, Director of Team Nutrition; Holly Harper McPeak, M.S.; and Lorie Conneen.

**From Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service:**

Alma C. Hobbs, Ph.D., Deputy Administrator, Families, 4-H, and Nutrition and Co-Chair of the Intra-departmental Working Group on Team Nutrition; Gladys Gary Vaughn, Ph.D., Project Coordinator; and National Program Leaders, Families, 4-H, and Nutrition: Wells Willis, M.S., R.D., Melvin Mathias, Ph.D., Virginia Goebli, Ph.D., and Jeanne M. Priestester.

Thanks to the Extension state and county faculty who comprised the Community Action Kit Working Group: Martha Johnson, Ph.D., Alabama, Chair of the State Team Nutrition Working Group; Linda Cook, Florida; Steven Garrett, Washington; Patricia Hammerschmidt, Michigan; Ingrid Holmes, Maryland; Debra Palmer-Keenan, Ph.D., Minnesota; Bonnie Pedersen, Washington; Paula Peters, Ph.D., Kansas; Sue Snider, Ph.D., Delaware; Nilda Tirado, New York; and Ellen Schuster, Minnesota, Youth Curriculum Writer. Thanks to Wanda Best, Hope Childs, Denise Gallman, and Faye Thompson.

Thanks to Extension faculty that participated in the field review and pilot test: Marlene Thibault and Linda Lyons, University of Vermont Extension System; Earlean Jones and Helen G. Hines, Montgomery County (MD); Kristi Meehan, Washington County (MD); Ingrid Holmes, University of Maryland Eastern Shore and National Association for Family & Consumer Sciences; Jamie Benedict, Ph.D., and Carolyn Leontos, University of Nevada, Reno; Diann Pommer, Missoula County (MT) Extension Office; Bonnie Pedersen, Vice President, National Association for Family & Community Education; Terry Egan, Montana State University Extension Service; Lorrie Ekman and Ellen DeFaya, Michigan State University Extension; Angela Worsley, Marlboro County (SC); Deborah Caples-Davis, R.D., and Orlenthea McGowan, Alcorn State University (MS); and Irene Lee, Ph.D., and Eugenia Hackett, Arkansas Cooperative Extension.

Our thanks to the State Extension Team Nutrition Contacts for disseminating information about the Community Nutrition Action Kit throughout their states and territories.

Thanks also to the USDA/DHHS Dietary Guidance Working Group and to the staff at the National Agricultural Library in Beltsville, Maryland, especially Sally Anger and Sandra Facinoli. Thanks to David Sutton and Julie Olson of USDA's Design Center.

# Team Nutrition

## WHAT IS TEAM NUTRITION?

Team Nutrition is the implementation tool for USDA's School Meals Initiative for Healthy Children. This is the plan to continuously improve school meals, and promote the health and education of 50 million children in 94,000 schools nationwide.

By leveraging government resources through public-private partnerships, Team Nutrition promotes food choices for a healthful diet through schools, families, the community, and the media.

## WHAT'S THE GOAL?

Our goal is to empower schools to serve meals that meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and motivate children in grades pre-K through 12 to make food choices for a healthy diet. Based on the best science, education, communication, and technical resources available, Team Nutrition will help children and their families to:

- ◆ Expand the variety of foods in their diet
- ◆ Add more fruits, vegetables and grains to the foods they already eat
- ◆ Construct a diet lower in fat

## HOW DOES TEAM NUTRITION WORK?

Team Nutrition's two components are:

*Technical Assistance and Training*, which supports school food service personnel by giving them the tools and skills they need to implement the School Meals Initiative for Healthy Children. New recipes created by teams of food service personnel, dietitians, and chefs, and taste-tested by children, are just one example of the materials USDA provides to help schools serve healthier meals with "kid-appeal."

*Nutrition Education*, a multi-faceted educational program delivered in schools, through the media, at home, and in the community to motivate and empower children to make food choices for a healthy diet. This effort brings science-based nutrition messages to children in fun and interesting ways in a language they understand, while

strengthening social support for children's healthful food choices among parents, educators, and food service professionals.

## WHAT IS A TEAM NUTRITION SCHOOL?

Team Nutrition Schools participate in an exciting incentive program designed to coordinate Team Nutrition activities at the local level and to encourage prompt implementation of the new school meals standards. Team Nutrition Schools represent the community focal point for individuals and organizations with a shared interest in working for healthier school meals and more nutrition information for children and their families.

USDA will highlight Team Nutrition Schools as they enroll to recognize schools and communities that demonstrate their commitment to improving the health and nutrition education of children.

In June 1996, thousands of USDA's Team Nutrition Schools from coast to coast celebrated the 50th anniversary of the National School Lunch Program. USDA Secretary Dan Glickman invited over 94,000 principals in the country to enroll their school in the Team Nutrition Schools Program. Urge schools in your area to join the team and be part of the celebration!

## WHO'S ON THE TEAM?

We want every child in the nation to have the opportunity to learn how to eat for good health. This ambitious goal is made possible by extensive, strategic public-private partnerships and over 200 Team Nutrition Supporters who represent all of the areas that touch children's lives, including:

- ◆ Nutrition/Health
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Food/Agriculture
- ◆ Consumer
- ◆ Media/Technology
- ◆ Government

Partnerships with Scholastic, Inc. and The Walt Disney Company are examples of Team Nutrition's strategic plan to work with organizations to leverage the government's investment and to extend the reach of this unique program.

We are working closely with Scholastic to develop age-specific nutrition curricula, children's magazines, parent guides, posters, and videos which are being offered to schools nationwide. The Walt Disney Company is providing Team Nutrition "spokestoons" Timon and Pumbaa from *The Lion King* to help deliver positive nutrition messages in ways that capture children's attention.

In an innovative public-private partnership with The Walt Disney Company, we have leveraged a small government investment into tens of millions of dollars in top-quality media promotion and education materials. With investments like these, Team Nutrition reaches millions of children in ways they can relate to through multiple, reinforcing channels. Team Nutrition is a great investment for taxpayers. And by being a part of Team Nutrition, partners and supporters have an opportunity to touch children's lives.

#### WHY IS TEAM NUTRITION IMPORTANT?

Team Nutrition is a wise investment in family health.

Today:

- ◆ 35% of elementary school-age children eat no fruit, and 20% eat no vegetables on a given day
- ◆ 27% of children 6-11 are considered obese
- ◆ 90% of children consume fat above the recommended level

Four of the leading causes of death—heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes—are diet-related. Accounting for more than 1.4 million deaths annually, these conditions cost society an estimated \$250 billion each year in medical costs and lost productivity.

Nutrition promotion efforts like Team Nutrition have had a proven impact; they can change behaviors, improve health, and lower these huge costs. Between 1972 and 1992, deaths from heart disease decreased by 50 percent and from stroke by 60 percent as the result of social marketing campaigns to change behavior to reduce high blood pressure, lower cholesterol, and reduce smoking.

#### WHAT ROLE CAN WE PLAY?

- ◆ **Enroll schools in Team Nutrition.** Work with USDA's Team Nutrition Regional Coordinators to enroll schools from pre-K and up as part of "the team."

Contact: USDA Regional Offices (see Contact Guide).

- ◆ **Participate in Team Nutrition School activities.** Team Nutrition Schools across the nation will be presenting nutrition and health fairs, tasting events, The Great Nutrition Adventure, and other nutrition education activities throughout the year. Support local Team Nutrition Schools by participating in any or all of these activities.

- ◆ **Write about Team Nutrition in your upcoming newsletter.** Let your members know about the great changes taking place in schools and communities across the nation. Updated newsletter information pieces are available through USDA.

Contact: USDA Regional Office (see Contact Guide) or headquarters, as listed below.

- ◆ **Reinforce Team Nutrition messages in the community.** Personalize and reproduce Team Nutrition materials for your employees, members, and community organizations to reinforce the Program's messages. Reproducible materials are available through the Team Nutrition headquarters, as listed below.

#### HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

##### USDA Regional Offices:

Call or write your Regional USDA Team Nutrition Coordinator (see Contact Guide).

##### Team Nutrition Headquarters Office:

USDA Team Nutrition  
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 802  
Alexandria, VA 22302  
Phone: (703) 305-1624  
Fax: (703) 305-2148

##### State Extension:

For a listing of State Extension Team Nutrition Contacts, refer to the Resource Section.

# Team Nutrition

## Mission

To improve the health and education of children by creating innovative public and private partnerships that promote food choices for a healthful diet through the media, schools, families, and the community.

## Principles

Supporters of Team Nutrition share these common values:

1. We believe that children should be empowered to make food choices that reflect the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
2. We believe that good nutrition and physical activity are essential to children's health and educational success.
3. We believe that school meals that meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans should appeal to children and taste good.
4. We believe our programs must build upon the best science, education, communication, and technical resources available.
5. We believe that public/private partnerships are essential to reaching children to promote food choices for a healthful diet.
6. We believe that messages to children should be age appropriate and deliver and actively involve them in learning.
7. We believe in focusing on positive messages regarding food choices children can make.
8. We believe it is critical to stimulate and support action and education at the national, state, and local levels to successfully change children's eating behaviors.

## Messages

Team Nutrition will help children and their families to:

- ◆ Expand the variety of foods in their diet
- ◆ Add more fruits, vegetables and grains to the foods they already eat; and
- ◆ Construct a diet lower in fat

# Preface

Team Nutrition's Community Nutrition Action Program is designed to deliver state-of-the-art nutrition education in the community. It features the vast networks and resources of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension System established in each State and Territory, and offers county Extension service personnel a unique opportunity to lead this coordinated, comprehensive action program at the community level.

"Making Food Choices for a Healthy Diet" is Team Nutrition's overarching theme, and is the mantra used as the call to action. Three principle messages—based upon the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Food Guide Pyramid—have been developed to support the theme: these messages are:

- ◆ Expand the variety of foods in the diet;
- ◆ Add more fruits, vegetables and grains to the foods children already eat; and
- ◆ Construct a diet lower in fat.

The learning activities in this community action program are grounded in the "tried and true" Extension approach enabling families and communities to "take charge" of their own well-being. It recognizes that community institutions have an important role in creating and sustaining environments that influence children's attitudes and behaviors about food. It uses county Extension personnel as a touchstone, bringing together diverse segments of the community to support the broad goals of improved child health while addressing the immediate needs of families and children. And by reinforcing nutrition messages learned through programs in Team Nutrition schools and other activities, the program helps point the way for community institutions to understand why it is important for them to become a stakeholder in the nutritional status of children.

These learning activities are based on the principles of the Food Guide Pyramid, the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and the Nutrition Facts Label. Further, they are based on (1) the learner-centered, experiential learning methodology of the National Juried Criteria for 4-H Curriculum model; (2) the three domains of learning (cognitive, affective, and psychomotor); (3) emerging thought on how today's children learn; (4) current research findings about nutrition and nutrition education; and (5) teaching/learning in non-formal settings. They also reflect national nutrition goals for children and the School Meals Initiative for Healthy Children. Care has been taken to make the activities behaviorally focused, hands-on, and fun!

# Getting Started:

## Using the Community Nutrition Action Kit

### A. KIT ORGANIZATION.

This kit contains information that enables communities to become more effective in demonstrating their commitment to improved nutrition experiences for children wherever they live, learn, and play. This kit is divided into five major sections, identified by labeled, colored tabs.

**Section 1** is the introductory section, and provides an overview of the Community Nutrition Action Program and Kit, information about its origins and development, and an introduction to Team Nutrition, including its mission, principles, and messages. This section also describes how the kit is organized, including its elements and program features.

**Sections 2, 3, and 4** present the learning activities which are the heart and soul of the kit, and include master copies for reproducing selected handouts and other materials.

**Section 5** contains a variety of resource material needed when implementing the activities, including two posters (“Devour for Power”—the Food Guide Pyramid poster for children and “Sense-ational Foods”), and information on the Food Guide Pyramid. It also contains the references for the learning activities, the list of State Extension Team Nutrition Contacts, the Regional USDA Team Nutrition network including a listing of the Team Nutrition supporters, and much more!

## B. KIT FEATURES.

The kit has three major features: (1) themes; (2) components; and (3) activities. Each of these is depicted by the matrix.

### 1. Themes and Definitions

The themes form the context of the content taught by each lesson and help the learner focus on the nutrition message to be learned. There are three themes, and each theme has two components, which define and focus the theme. The themes and their definitions are:

- ◆ *Theme #1: Nutrition Is the Link Between Agriculture and Health.*  
*Definition:* The earth provides us a variety of foods that feed our bodies and keep us healthy.
- ◆ *Theme #2: We Can Make Food Choices for a Healthy Diet.*  
*Definition:* We can use the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, the Food Guide Pyramid, and the Nutrition Facts Label to make healthy food choices where we live, learn, and play.
- ◆ *Theme #3: Food Appeals to Our Senses and Creativity.*  
*Definition:* Our senses help us create and enjoy a variety of foods from here, there, and everywhere!

### 2. Components

There are two components which further define and focus each of the three themes. They focus and frame the lesson content on a particular nutrition education concept, such as planting and growing foods, the Food Guide Pyramid, or cultural diversity. The unique names given the components help the leader identify the concepts that are the focus of the lesson.

### 3. Activities

There are activities for youth, families/caregivers, and the community. Each is theme-based, and is tied to a particular component. All of the activities have undergone field review, and all of the youth activities and several of the community and family activities have been pilot tested. There are 17 youth activities, 12 family activities, and 6 community activities.

The format for each type of activity is different, of necessity. The youth activities closely reflect the experiential model, including the traditional elements of an effective lesson (i.e., objectives, materials needed, estimated time, etc.). They also include two special features: (1) InfoNote—an alert to the leader to something that may need extra attention; and (2) Links (Home, School, Community)—a series of suggested activities designed to reinforce the lesson. The family activities tend to be handouts that encourage family members to become active participants in the nutrition education experiences of their children. The community activities are procedural guides for small and large community-wide events which again reinforce particular themes.

# Community Nutrition Action Kit—Matrix

Theme	Component	Youth Activity	Family Activity	Community Activity
<b>Nutrition is the link between agriculture and health</b>	From Seed to You	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Roots and Things</li> <li>◆ The Grain Game</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Close Encounters of an Agricultural Kind</li> <li>◆ Starting Small</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Project Green Thumb</li> <li>◆ Community Sharing—Gleaning</li> </ul>
	The Best Me I Can Be	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Pop-it and Rap-it!</li> <li>◆ What Am I?</li> <li>◆ Super Me!!!!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Super Us</li> <li>◆ Tips To Be Tops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Walkin' the Walk</li> </ul>
<b>We can make food choices for a healthy diet</b>	Pyramid Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Pyramid Relay</li> <li>◆ Pyramid Tracking</li> <li>◆ Media Blitz</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Pyramid Place Restaurant</li> <li>◆ Grain, Fruit, and Veggie Challenge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Food Guide Pyramid Food Drive</li> </ul>
	Label Me Healthy, Guide Me Healthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Food Label Scavenger Hunt</li> <li>◆ My Label Scrapbook</li> <li>◆ Line 'Em Up!!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Supermarket Sleuth</li> <li>◆ Cabinet Check</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Food and Field Olympics</li> </ul>
<b>Food appeals to our senses and creativity</b>	Making Sense of Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Rainbow of Flavors</li> <li>◆ Sandwich Sense-ations</li> <li>◆ New Taste Sense-ations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Sense-able Scavenger Hunt</li> <li>◆ Family Taste Celebration</li> </ul>	
	Passport to the Fabulous World of Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Country Snapshot</li> <li>◆ Celebrate</li> <li>◆ Pen Pals Across the U.S.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Salad Bowl</li> <li>◆ Bread in a Bag</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Passport to the Fabulous World of Food</li> </ul>