



## USDA's Eat Smart. Play Hard.™

Great Wellness Resources for Parents, Schools and Committees!

Pick up a newspaper or magazine these days and you'll probably find an article on the obesity epidemic that has wrapped its pudgy arms around America's children --- and with good reason. During the last couple of decades, the number of overweight children has more than doubled. One out of six young people today are overweight or obese and face a host of nasty health problems in the future unless something is done.

Of course, parents, schools and committees all need to do their part, and they are by working with USDA's Food and Nutrition Service, on a variety of programs that are making important strides in the right direction. School meals today, for example, contain much less fat in the past. Just as important, USDA is promoting fruits and vegetables as an important part of a nutritious diet and WIC has added more fruits and vegetables to its food package.



But, if we're going to break this cycle of obesity, we all need to do more. That's where Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ can help your school, students, teachers, parents & community. What happens at school and home is vital. Because that's where children develop eating and exercise habits that will last a lifetime. But where can busy school nutrition professionals, parents, students, and educators find the tools they need to establish a healthy school and home environment? What kind of foods should they buy? And, when it comes to eating, just how much is enough? What is available to help implement local wellness policies?

Answers for many of these questions and more are found on USDA's newly updated Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ interactive website for kids, parents and professionals. It's a wonderful resource (and just a click away). Educators will find "Bright Ideas" for using Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ in unique and creative ways in the cafeteria and classroom. The Educators webpage includes integrated, interactive, and flexible lesson plans for parents and kids on eating breakfast, healthy snacks, physical activity and related topics. Resources on the Parents webpage include tips on getting started on a healthier lifestyle, a calorie-burner chart, low-cost menus and recipes, plus planning and shopping tips. Kids can explore a virtual community: a Theater, Fitness Center, Eat Smart Grill, Fun Times Arcade and other intriguing places that make learning about healthy nutrition and lifestyle skills fun. They will discover songs, experiments, comics, games, e-cards, and other fun materials on the Kids' webpage.

School nutrition professionals will find Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ is a great resource that can help everyone take action and help childhood develop healthy habits that can last a lifetime. For more information, visit the Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ website at:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/Eatsmartplayhard/>. Also visit the other FNS Nutrition websites at: [www.fns.usda.gov/nutritionlink/](http://www.fns.usda.gov/nutritionlink/) and [www.mypyramid.gov/](http://www.mypyramid.gov/). Resources on the web page are downloadable.

