



Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation
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Leader Guide

Kids Eat Right

Empowered Parents for School Wellness

1 ½ hour parent workshop

About the Workshop

The Empowered Parents for School Wellness workshop is designed as a 1 ½ hour parent workshop held in a school setting, co-led by a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) and the School Food Service Director (FSD). The workshop empowers parents with information about school meals and school wellness that they can use to help promote the benefits of school meals among their peers and support and lead changes in the wellness environment of their child's school.

Workshop Objectives

After the workshop, parents will be able to:

1. List at least two reasons school wellness environments positively impact students.
2. Describe the benefits of the recent changes to the National School Lunch Program.
3. Identify at least one thing parents can do to help promote a healthy school environment.

What You Need

For workshop:

Prior to workshop, work with school to arrange day care, if possible

Folders, notepads, and pens (optional)

Parent roster

Table tent "awards" (Most Creative; Most Ideas; Best Idea; Most Passionate; Most Collaborative) (optional, best for large group)

Myth & Fact Quiz (for RDN and FSD only)

Myth or Fact cards (one green Fact and one red Myth card per parent)

Parent print materials:

Action for Healthy Kids Parent Leadership Series – Making the Case Questions and Concerns

Academic Success KER handout

Simple Facts about School Meals KER handout

Wellness Impact Parents Brief

Current month school menus (copies provided by school district)

Other, as desired by School Food Service Director (copies provided by school district)

(for middle schools, order free Team Nutrition handout-Healthier Middle Schools)

Sticker name tags

Sharpie pen

Paper or plastic food models, if available

Lunch tray (from Food Service Director)

Board (dry erase or paper board with easel) available in room with writing utensils

Laptop or access to computer (optional, if internet is available to view websites and/or YouTube videos)

For school meal tasting activity:

Discuss items that School Food Service Director will provide, including disinfecting wipes, hand sanitizer, food and paper goods needed to taste school meal recipe(s) of choice, and copies of recipe(s) and/or other printed materials if possible. Additionally, discuss providing water and/or other light and healthy refreshments to compliment the tasting(s).

Workshop Preparation:

Arrange with Food Service Director to arrive 30 minutes prior to workshop. Set up the room with chairs in a circle, or if the group is small, sit around a lunch table in the cafeteria. Set up refreshments (if applicable) and assist Food Service Director in setting up tasting(s).

Introduction (15 minutes)

- **Welcome (Est. 5 min.)**
 - Welcome parents* as they arrive and introduce yourself. Provide parent folder with handouts, notepad, and pen (optional). Offer refreshments if available.
 - Ask parents to write name on name tag and put it on.
 - Ask parents to fill out their information on the parent roster.
- **Introductions (Est. 10 min.)**
 - Begin by introducing yourself and the Empowered Parents for School Wellness workshop created by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation and Iowa Department of Education through a Team Nutrition educational grant. Thank the Food Service Director for helping to put together the workshop with you and allow Food Service Director to introduce self.
 - Review workshop agenda and introduce tasting items.
 - Ask parents to introduce themselves and identify number of children/ages and school(s) they attend. Ask parents to describe their fondest school lunch memories as a child.

School Wellness (20 minutes)

- **Why Should Schools and Parents Care About School Wellness? (Est. 5 min.)**
 - Distribute and review key points from “Academic Success” and “Making the Case.”
- **School Meals (Est. 5 min.) –Food Service Director**
 - Describe food service operations at the school district. Explain why school meals are an important part of school wellness and how it relates to academic success. **(Tip: RDN and Food Service Director should drive home the point about school meals and academic performance—most parents do not fully understand this connection.)**
 - Introduce the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program regulations and changes.
 - 2014-2015 reimbursement rates:
 - Free lunch \$2.98; reduced price \$2.58; all the rest (full pay) \$0.28
 - Free breakfast \$1.62; reduced price \$1.32; all the rest (full pay) \$0.28
- **Activity or Discussion: How Can Parents Promote School Wellness (Est. 10 min.)**
 - **If over 10 parents:**
 - Divide parents into groups of 4-5 parents (no more than 5 groups total).
 - Ask each group to list ways that parents can help promote school wellness—including all things—big and small.
 - Ask groups to share ideas.
 - After all groups have shared, award each group with a table tent award that best describes their work (Most Creative; Most Ideas; Best Idea; Most Passionate; Most Collaborative).
 - **If fewer than 10 parents:**
 - Ask parents to discuss ways that parents can help promote school wellness—including all things—big and small.
 - **List of ideas to prompt discussion (from Wellness Impact Parents Brief):**
 - Lead by example (be a good role model, serve healthy foods at home)
 - Eat breakfast or lunch at school with your child



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- Encourage your child to try new foods
- Ask principal about school wellness policy and how you can help
- Help school organize walkathons, health fairs, etc.
- Join and/or lead school wellness committee
- Talk with other parents about positive ways to get involved

School Meals (40 minutes)

- **Activity: School meal item(s) tasting (Est. 10 min.)**
 - School Food Service Director lead school meal item(s) tasting and discussion (ask all parents to wash their hands and/or use hand sanitizer prior to tasting).
- **Simple Facts about School Meals (Est. 5 min. or more, depending on parent interest)**
 - While parents are tasting item(s), review the Simple Facts about School Meals handout and introduce the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program regulations and recent changes. Pass out current month's school menu. Use paper food models if possible to demonstrate a reimbursable meal (as a large group or in small teams).
- **What is Happening in Our District? (Est. 15 min.)**
 - Food Service Director promotes some of the recent positive changes in the district (i.e. new fruit/vegetable options, new bean dishes, positive comments from kids, etc.).
 - **Activity:** Facilitate brainstorming session on what parents, schools, students, and others can do to encourage school breakfast participation. If large group, ask one parent volunteer to document ideas on board.
- **Dispelling Myths (Est. 10 min.)**
 - Address common myths about school lunch.
 - **Activity:** Fact or Fiction quiz (RDN reads from list of questions, participants answer Fact or Fiction by holding up the corresponding green-fact or red-myth flashcard)

Closing (15 minutes)

- **Visit Kids Eat Right (Est. 5 min.)** Tip: If internet access is available, visit the websites in class
 - Encourage parents to visit www.kidseatright.org and 'like' on Facebook at www.facebook.com/kidseatright for articles, tips, recipes, and short videos to help them shop smart, cook healthy, and eat right.
 - Choose one video to close the session:
 - The Pledge To Make Every Kid Healthy (2 min) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=POWLq4pFRGA>
 - An Apple a Day (3 min) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4SJ3T6EM3qU>
- **Questions (5 minutes)**
- **What Next? (Est. 5 min.)**
 - Ask parents to share one new thing they learned and what they will do with that information.
 - For additional school meal parent information, visit <http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/school-day-just-got-healthier-parents>
- **Thank you!**

**Note: Some participants may be caregivers such as grandparents or aunts and uncles, etc. Participants may not all be traditional parents, so please be sensitive to the individual circumstances in your group.*

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