

Milk's Role in Nutrition School Fact Sheet

The National Dairy Council® conducted a national survey to find out what moms really think about their kids' nutrition and how schools health professionals can make a difference by implementing a variety of nutritious food and beverage choices.¹

With children spending more than half their days at school and moms realizing their kids are not drinking enough milk, school health professionals have a great opportunity to contribute to healthy eating habits. Seventy-one percent of moms think their kids should consume at least three servings of low-fat or fat-free milk or milk products each day, yet 61 percent say they think their kids actually consume less than three servings, which is the recommended amount according to the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for children ages 9 and older.

Be a role model

- Although almost all moms (97 percent) think parents have the most responsibility for teaching their children about good nutrition habits, half of them believe this role is also the responsibility of school professionals.
- Almost all moms (97 percent) think it's important that their child's school offers healthy food options as part of school breakfast and/or school lunch.

Help kids make nutrient-rich beverage choices

- Sixty-nine percent of moms say the beverages their children drink at school are purchased in a school cafeteria.
- Forty-nine percent of moms say they would want their child to select low-fat or fat-free white milk or low-fat flavored milk if given a choice from among a variety of beverages offered by their child's school. Overall, moms most want their child to choose low-fat or fat-free white milk (34 percent) or bottled water (30 percent) and would rather their child pick low-fat flavored milk (15 percent) over sports drinks (2 percent) and soda (1 percent).

Kids drink the benefits

Moms name the following health benefits resulting from their children consuming the recommended three daily servings of milk a day:

- Strong bones and teeth (96 percent)
- Reduce the risk of bone fractures (82 percent)

Each serving of low-fat flavored milk provides the same nine essential nutrients as low-fat white milk.²

¹ National Dairy Council survey conducted online by Harris Interactive between September 6-13, 2007 among 1,020 mothers ages 18+ with at least one child age 5-17. Theoretical sampling error estimates cannot be calculated. A full methodology is available.

² U.S. Department of Agriculture. Food Supply Database. Nutrient Content of the U.S. Food Supply, 1999.



Add flavor to help kids drink milk

- More than eight in ten moms (84 percent) say their children would be very or somewhat likely to drink milk if it were offered in a variety of low-fat flavors such as chocolate and/or strawberry.
- Ninety-two percent of moms agree that offering low-fat flavored milk options in school cafeterias is a good idea.
- Research shows that children who consume flavored milk do not have higher intakes of added sugars or total fat than children who do not consume flavored milk, but flavored milk drinkers do have higher intakes of calcium.³

Offer milk in cool, kid-friendly packaging: It's important to many moms and kids

- About three in five moms (62 percent) say that packaging plays an important role when their children choose beverages at school.
- Recycling plastic milk containers or paper milk cartons by their children's school is important to 87 percent of moms.
- Three in four moms (75 percent) are likely to pay an extra 5-10 cents per container for their children's school to offer healthy beverage choices such as milk or water in appealing packaging if this packaging leads their child to choose a healthy beverage rather than a less nutritious beverage.

According to the 2002 School Milk Pilot Test, school milk consumption increased 37 percent by providing milk in plastic packaging, offering one or more additional flavors, and ensuring better refrigeration and merchandising.⁵ To help kids drink more milk at school and get the essential nutrients their growing bodies need each day, the National Dairy Council® encourages school health professionals to promote the "New Look of School Milk," a program that makes low-fat white and flavored milk accessible to kids in cool, convenient, kid-friendly plastic packaging at school.

Healthy habits can help improve academic performance

- The majority of moms (97 percent) feel that nutrition impacts children's academic performance and overall success in school.
- Educators and health professionals agree that nutritious choices help fuel academic performance.⁴



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NutritionExplorations.org

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and to find your
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³ Johnson, et al. The nutritional consequences of flavored milk consumption by school-aged children and adolescents in the United States. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, 2002; 102(6): 853-856.

⁴ Action for Healthy Kids. The Role of Sound Nutrition and Physical Activity in Academic Achievement. http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/filelib/facts_and_findings/fs_npaa.pdf

⁵ National Dairy Council and American School Food Service Association. The School Milk Pilot Test. Beverage Marketing Corporation for NDC and ASFSA, 2002.



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