



Team Up for School Nutrition Success
State Mentor Training

2017

Applied Research Division
The University of Southern Mississippi
1-800-321-3054

Team Up for School Nutrition Success State Mentor Training

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The Institute of Child Nutrition was authorized by Congress in 1989 and established in 1990 at The University of Mississippi in Oxford and is operated in collaboration with The University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. The Institute operates under a grant agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Institute of Child Nutrition is to improve the operation of child nutrition programs through research, education and training, and information dissemination.

MISSION

The mission of the Institute of Child Nutrition is to provide information and services that promote the continuous improvement of child nutrition programs.

VISION

The vision of the Institute of Child Nutrition is to be the leader in providing education, research, and resources to promote excellence in child nutrition programs.

This project has been funded at least in part with Federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service through an agreement with Institute of Child Nutrition at The University of Mississippi. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. government.

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Suggested Reference Citation:

Rushing, K., Lartey, M. & Nettles, M. F. (2017). *Team Up for School Nutrition Success State Mentor Training*. Hattiesburg, MS: Institute of Child Nutrition, Applied Research Division.

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TEAM UP FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION SUCCESS STATE MENTOR TRAINING

The Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act (HHFKA), which was initially passed in 2010, created new meal pattern requirements and nutrition standards for schools participating in the National School Lunch program and the School Breakfast program. The act requires most schools to:

- Increase the availability of fruit, vegetables, whole grains, fat-free milk, and low-fat milk in school meals;
- Reduce or limit the calories, sodium, saturated fat, trans fat, and sugar of all foods sold at school, including foods sold at meals, competitive foods and beverages, vending items, and foods sold for fundraising at school during school hours; and
- Restrict the type, content, and/or quantity of beverages sold at school based on the grade level of students at the school (United States Department of Agriculture [USDA] Food and Nutrition Service, 2012).

Anecdotal data has implied that the increased stringency of the new regulations have created challenges for some school food authorities, including:

- Reduced participation;
- Reduced ability to meet budget constraints due to increased cost of foods and decreased food sales;
- Inability to meet meal pattern requirements due to limited access/availability of required foods; and

- Lack of adequate/appropriate equipment to store, process, and/or prepare foods associated with the new requirements.

To address these challenges, The Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) piloted the *Team Up for School Nutrition Success* initiative. This pilot initiative was conducted in November of 2014, with school nutrition (SN) directors representing each of the eight states in the USDA Southeast Region. The goal of the pilot was to create an environment that would encourage SN directors to identify challenges associated with maintaining student participation and program operations under the current meal pattern standards outlined in the HHFKA, and to accomplish this through peer-to-peer mentoring. The desired outcome of this pilot program was to assist SN directors in formulating a plan of action that would move the individual SN program forward in providing a healthy SN environment that is financially stable and bolsters strong student meal program participation in the local school district, as well as lay the foundation for replication of the process in all seven USDA regions across the United States (US).

All mentors were asked to participate in a pre-meeting training to introduce the *Team Up for School Nutrition Success* initiative, and to explain the concepts that would be used during the workshop. The lead mentors and the mentors were divided and trained separately using a Webinar as the medium for the training. Each Webinar was supported by a training workbook that accompanied the Webinar. The *Lead Mentor Training Manual* and *Mentor Training Manual* contained helpful information, activities, and scripts related to the *Team Up for School Nutrition Success* workshop. With the assistance of these manuals, the lead mentors and mentors participating in the workshop were able to successfully facilitate panel discussions, facilitate breakout sessions, and act as a mentor to participants in the *Team Up for School Nutrition Success* workshop.

Based on the success of the pilot initiative, the *Team Up for School Nutrition Success* workshops were expanded to the remaining six USDA regions. In October of 2015, The Applied Research division (ARD) of ICN trained approximately 30 consultants to become lead mentors, and in November of 2015, ARD provided a train-the-trainer workshop for over 100 state agency staff to implement the initiative throughout each state in the country. Between March of 2015 and December of 2016, ARD was actively involved in state-to-state trainings for approximately 32 states and US territories.

The goal of the *Team Up for School Nutrition Success State Mentor Training* project was to continue providing support to states that are implementing the *Team Up for School Nutrition Success* workshops by providing training for additional lead mentors. Forty-one participants attended the workshop. The deliverables associated with this workshop include the following documents: The *Lead Mentor Training* presentation, and rosters of *Lead Mentor Training* Participants.

Lead Mentor Training Presentations and Materials



Lead Mentor Training Participants List



REFERENCES

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2012). *School Meals, Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act*. Retrieved from: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/healthy-hunger-free-kids-act>



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