

Manager's Corner

Including Parents in the School Nutrition Program

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NUTRITION



OPERATIONS



ADMINISTRATION



COMMUNICATIONS/
MARKETING



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PURPOSE

Improve the operation of child nutrition programs through research, education and training, and information dissemination.

VISION

Lead the nation in providing research, education, and resources to promote excellence in child nutrition programs.

MISSION

Provide relevant research-based information and services that advance the continuous improvement of child nutrition programs.

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Professional Standards

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING TRAINING – 4100

Employee will be able to develop plans that include involvement with school and community members, empowers school nutrition leaders and address excellent customer service.

4120- Promote the Child Nutrition Program

Introduction

Manager's Corner: Including Parents in School Nutrition Program is designed for managers to use in training their staff. Each lesson is roughly 15 minutes. *Manager's Corner: Including Parents in School Nutrition Program* provides a method for empowering managers to train their staff. This lesson plan contains the following:

- learning objective,
- statement explaining the importance of the topic,
- list of materials,
- instructions on how to present the information,
- questions to ask staff, and
- an activity to strengthen or refresh the knowledge of the staff.

Lesson Overview—Questions

Objective: Identify ways that schools can promote nutrition education and participation in school meals by getting parents more involved in the school nutrition program.

Why it is important: It is important for parents or guardians to be involved in the school nutrition program because children need to continue eating healthy meals when they leave school. Getting parents interested in making healthy food choices can encourage students to eat healthy as well.

Materials included in this document:

- Suggestion Activity
- Suggestion Activity Answer Key

Instruction:

Ask the staff to answer the questions included in this training. Facilitate the activity.

Questions for the staff:

- **What can teachers and the school administration do to get parents involved in the school nutrition program?**
Answer: The school administration can send out electronic newsletters that inform parents about what their children have learned about nutrition that week. The newsletter can also include easy, quick, and healthy recipes that parents can prepare at home. The school can hold monthly parent teacher meetings regarding updates on the school nutrition program. The school can also designate one day a week to invite parents to join their children at lunch.
- **What are the benefits to getting parents involved in the school nutrition program?**
Answer: Children are influenced by their parents, so if their parents are making healthy food choices then children can be influenced to make those same choices. It is important that students continue a nutritious lifestyle when they leave school and go home. This not only benefits the children, but it benefits the parents as well.
- **What can school nutrition staff do to promote parent involvement?**
Answer: Staff can post the weekly menu on the school website and send the attachment in an email as well. Staff can also hand out menus in the classrooms to the students so to give to their parents as well. This could help get the parents and the children to communicate about school meals.

Activity instructions:

- Ask staff to complete the **Suggestion Activity** using the above information. At the conclusion of the activity, review the **Suggestion Activity Answer Key**.

Suggestion Activity

Instructions: Write your response to the questions below and have an open dialogue with your manager and staff.

What information should be included in the newsletter?

What can teachers do to get parents interested in being involved in the school nutrition program?

Do you have any easy, quick, and healthy recipes that can be included in the newsletter? If so, please list them below.

Suggestion Activity Answer Key

Instructions: Write your response to the questions below and have an open dialogue with your manager and staff.

ANSWER:

What information should be included in the newsletter?

- The breakfast, snack, and lunch menu
- Nutrition facts of the food items
- Possible allergies

What can teachers do to get parents interested in being involved in the school nutrition program?

- Give letters to the kids to give to their parents
- Tell the students about getting their parents involved

Do you have any easy, quick, and healthy recipes that can be included in the newsletter? If so, please list them below.

- Roasted vegetables
- Baked chicken
- Zucchini noodles

References

Institute of Child Nutrition. (2019). *Reimbursable school meals*. University, MS: Author.

United States Department of Agriculture. (2015). *Professional standards for school nutrition professionals*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/professional-standards>



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