

CANFIT Connection

The Quarterly Newsletter of the California Adolescent Nutrition and Fitness Program

Paying the price in more ways than one.

When you are young and have money to spend, making wise food choices can be a challenge. Today's adolescents face tough decisions because of the increased availability, accessibility and visibility of high fat, high sugar foods. Considering the increase in childhood obesity and prevalence of Type II diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol among youth, it appears as if poor choices are being made.

The availability of unhealthy foods tempts youth everywhere they go. If a food is full of fat and sugar, you can count on it being easily accessible at the many fast food restaurants or corner stores where young people hang out. They can also purchase unhealthy foods while shopping at the mall, on the way to and from school, and from vending machines at neighborhood youth centers. They're even tempted at school as these types of foods are served in school cafeterias, snack bars and vending machines.

Unhealthy foods are also heavily marketed. Food companies recognize that children today have money to spend on food so they spend billions of dollars on advertising to entice them to purchase their products. Nowadays it's not uncommon to see a soda endorsement on a school score board or plastered across a school bus. And with all the TV kids are watching, it's hard to avoid the constant stream of commercials for candy, snacks, and fast food. It is estimated that the average child sees about 10,000 advertisements for food each year.

Given this environment, it's not surprising what youth choose, what is shocking is how much they spend. CANFIT examined the food spending habits of youth. The youth recorded the amount of money they spent on food over 7 days, keeping track of what they purchased as well as where and when they purchased it. On average, the youth spent \$17.80 on food each week, purchasing 48% of their snacks during school hours and 34% after school. 31% of their money was spent on fast food; 26% on chips, candy, cakes and cookies; and 11% on soda. This adds up to \$629.40 spent on junk food a year!

Youth need to learn how to be smart, responsible consumers. This will not only save them money, but also protect their health. Imagine 10 years from now if instead of spending money each year on junk food, these youth had saved their money and bought a savings bond earning 6% interest. Rather than dealing with the consequences of poor eating, such as diabetes and heart disease, they would instead only have to worry about how they were going to spend their \$9,921.

See inside this quarter's newsletter for display ideas to increase your youth's awareness of their spending and snacking habits.

FALL 2001

From the Executive Director

The California Legislature took a bold step on August 21 when the Assembly Health Committee passed SB 19 (Pupil Nutrition, Health and Achievement Act). SB 19 would limit the sale of soda and other junk foods from California schools. In a last minute compromise, the bill was amended to exclude high schools from its provisions. Now SB 19 only has to make it through the Assembly Education and Appropriations Committees before it returns to the full floor for a vote.

AB 367 (Physical Education) is currently in the suspense file of the Senate Appropriations Committee waiting the see if there is the money (~\$450,000) and political will to send it to the floor for a vote.

If you haven't already voiced your opinion on these important pieces of legislation, there's still time to contact your legislator. For more up-to-date information or a copy of the revised bills, visit www.leginfo.ca.gov.

Arnell J. Hinkle, RD, MPH

Make It Visual

Visual displays are a great way to share important information with youth. Try these displays to get your youth thinking about their spending and snacking habits.



Who Really Pays the Price?

You pay more when you purchase food at fast food restaurants. Fast food restaurants, overprice their foods in order to cover the cost of flashy advertising, packaging, rent, etc.. Find out what fast foods your youth frequently purchase and how much they spend. Determine what the cost of the foods would be if they made them from scratch.

When you eat out you pay:

\$2.29 for a McDonald's Quarter Pounder w/ cheese

\$1.65 for a McDonald's large fries

\$3.94

When you make it yourself you pay:

\$1.06 for hamburger ingredients

\$.48 for storebrand frozen fries

\$1.54

That's a difference of \$2.40!



What You Could Be Saving

Do you ever think about how much money you could save if you didn't buy so much junk food? Find out what junk foods your youth purchase frequently and how much they spend. Come up with alternate spending options.

What you buy

1. A \$.59 candy bar on the way home from school every day

2. A \$1.00 soda every day

3. A \$3.59 Burger King Whopper Meal 3 times a week

\$ you could save in 1 year

\$144

\$365

\$517

What you could buy with the \$ instead

17 regular priced movie tickets or

26 matinee-priced movie tickets

26 Music CD's (at \$14/CD)

7 new pairs of athletic shoes

(at \$75/shoe)

Active Ice Breakers

Fit activity in whenever possible. Start each day with an active ice breaker.



Knots

Groups of 8-10 form a circle. Each person joins hands with two others that are not next to them. While holding hands, they attempt to unravel themselves until they are untangled and back in a circle standing next to the person with whom they are holding hands.

Houdini Hoops

Youth form a circle holding hands and attempt to see how quickly then can move a hoop, around their circle without letting go of their hands. For more activity add more hoops!

Group Juggling

Players form circles of about 10. 1 player begins by passing an object to someone else. The object continues to be passed around the circle with each player always throwing the object to the same person. New objects are gradually thrown in until as many as 4 to 5 are going in the same pattern.

Straddleball

Form groups of 7-9 each with one ball. Have groups create a small circle, members touching outsides of feet. Legs should be wide to simulate a goal. The object of the game is to score a goal by striking the ball through the legs of others. Add a second and third ball for advanced groups.

Nutrition & Physical Activity Resources on the Web

Project Fit America (PFA) is a national non-profit dedicated to getting kids fit. PFA donates fully funded cardiovascular health and lifetime fitness education programs to schools, grades K-12. To find out more about the PFA, visit their website at <http://www.projectfitamerica.org>.

Track your eating habits on-line with the Dept. of Agriculture's interactive Healthy Eating Index (www.usda.gov/cnpp). Create an on-line profile, then enter what you eat each day to follow your vitamin, fiber, fat and cholesterol intake. A 20-day log helps you visualize eating patterns.

Get answers to food and nutrition questions at www.e-answersonline.org/

Find information, resources and tips on developing nutrition education programs for low-income, culturally diverse audiences at www.orst.edu/Dept/ehe/nutrition.htm

What's Happening at CANFit...

- **CANFit's 2001 Academic Scholarship Winners:**

Nicole Aeder Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

Jacqueline Berry Loma Linda University

Gloria Chuang CA State Polytechnic University

Erica De Lion Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

Alma Rivas CA State University Sacramento

Begona Cirera San Jose State University Perez

Rachel Mereus Loma Linda University

- Congratulations to 1999 CANFit Planning Grantee **La Clinica de la Raza** for receiving a Community Nutrition Grant from the Bay Area District of the California Dietetics Association. The grant money along with in-kind contributions will be used to provide a series of "Heart Healthy" cooking classes to low-income, uninsured, Spanish-speaking residents of Alameda and Contra Costa counties.
- CANFit grantee **Innercity Struggle** located in East Los Angeles shared some interesting findings from their youth survey in their final report. After surveying 196 girls and 204 boys (of Latino and Chicano heritage) they found that 53% of the girls and 42% of the boys reported feeling tired during school while 36% of the girls and 22% of the boys reported experiencing headaches. Both of these symptoms may be attributed to a lack of proper nutrition. Only 50% of the youth surveyed reported eating breakfast every day, yet 85% reported eating candy daily and 49% said they ate candy 3 or more times per day. Innercity Struggle works to promote overall "wellness" among youth by advocating positive behaviors and habits and fighting impinging factors such as poverty, crime, and violence. For more information contact Maria Texeira at (323) 780-7605.
- Interested in attending or helping to organize a 4-hour, interactive workshop on adolescent nutrition and physical activity in Los Angeles, San Diego or Sacramento? Contact CANFit for more info.

CANFit Calendar & Deadlines



September 9-15, 2001

National 5 A Day Week
Visit www.5aday.com
to download free resources

September/October 2001, date TBA

California's Children's Coalition for Activity & Nutrition (CCAN) Policy Summit
For more info: CEWAER at 916-278-3877

Tuesday, October 2

Walk to School Day. This international event highlights the importance of getting more children to and from school safely on foot and in other active ways. Contact 1-888-393-0353 to coordinate an event in your neighborhood or visit www.dhs.ca.gov/routestoschool to view event resources and materials.

October 8, 2001

Melida Manjarrez Community Service Award Application Deadline

November 1, 2001

Dia de los Muertos

Snack Idea



Cocoa-Orange Dip

Ingredients:

3 tablespoon honey
2 tablespoon cocoa
1 tablespoon low-fat chocolate milk
1/2 tablespoon frozen orange juice concentrate

Directions:

Mix cocoa, juice concentrate and honey in small microwave-safe bowl. Stir in chocolate milk, slowly. Microwave on high for 1 minute, refrigerate for 5 minutes.

Serve with fresh fruit. Now in season: apples, pears, and persimons.

CANFIT

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A Celebration of Culture: Dia de los Muertos



November 1 marks the annual Mexican-American holiday, "Day of the Dead" (DOD). DOD celebrates the continuance of life, family relationships, and community, while demonstrating love and respect for the dead. Beginning in mid October, the community prepares to welcome the souls of the dead who return to make sure all is well and that they have not been forgotten. People decorate their homes with flowers and candles, prepare special meals in honor of the dead, visit cemeteries for picnics at night, and remember their loved ones by telling stories. To learn more about DOD visit www.peoplesguide.com. Share stories from this meaningful holiday with your youth over a cup of Mexican Hot Chocolate.

Mexican Hot Chocolate

4 cups 1% or fat-free milk
1/4 cup powdered cocoa (or 3 oz. chunk of Mexican chocolate)
1/4 cup sugar, or to taste (unless using Mexican chocolate)
Pinch of salt
1/3 tsp. ground cinnamon (unless using Mexican chocolate)

Mix ingredients in a blender, or start with 1/2 cup of milk in a saucepan over very low heat adding ingredients gradually and stirring with a fork until smooth. Warm the mixture over medium-low heat.

CANFit is... a non-profit organization that engages communities, and builds their capacity to improve the nutrition and physical activity of California's low-income, American Indian, Latino, Asian/Pacific-Islander, and African-American adolescents (10-14 years of age).

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To submit an article or announcement, or to be added/removed from the newsletter mailing list...

Contact Us at...

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