

# The Facts about School Breakfast

## A Handout for Parents and Teachers

School Breakfast is proven to be good for children's bodies and their minds. Research shows that children who eat breakfast have improved memory, problem-solving skills, verbal fluency and creative abilities. So, why not start your kids off with school breakfast every day?

### School Breakfast Today—the Quick Facts!

- Permanently established in 1975, the School Breakfast Program (SBP), is a federally funded, locally delivered nutrition program, similar to the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).
- SBP provides a nutritious breakfast to more than 9.3 million children each school day
- Over 80,000 schools and institutions serve school breakfast every day, compared to almost 100,000 that offer NSLP
- For fiscal year 2006, Congress appropriated \$2.07 billion for the SBP
- Innovative approaches to serving breakfast include serving it during first period, 'grab and go' bags in the halls or even serving on the school bus.

### Why Eat School Breakfast?

School Breakfast really is the most important meal of the day for kids as it provides the necessary fuel to start a day of learning and achievement. Research has shown that children who eat breakfast have:

#### Higher Academic Scores

- Students who eat breakfast earn, on average, a letter grade higher in math than kids who don't according to *Pediatrics Magazine*
- Studies have also shown eating breakfast results in higher test scores<sup>1</sup>

#### Improved behavior

- Hungry children are more likely to have discipline problems
- Satiated teens are less likely to be suspended from school<sup>2</sup>

#### Reduced tardiness and absenteeism

- Kids who participate in the School Breakfast Program are tardy and/or absent from school less often<sup>2</sup>

#### Less visits to the Nurse's Office

- Research has revealed that children who eat breakfast visit the nurse's office less often<sup>2</sup>

### School Breakfast: Good for Kids

- School breakfast provides 25% of the recommended daily allowance of protein, calcium and iron, vitamins A and C and calories for your kids as well as meeting federal nutrition guidelines based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Eating breakfast positively impacts weight management as there is less risk of becoming overweight and/or obese for children who eat breakfast<sup>2</sup>
- School breakfast helps to build lifelong healthy eating habits<sup>2</sup>

**On any given day, 51% of kids go to school without breakfast<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> [www.schoolnutrition.org](http://www.schoolnutrition.org)

<sup>2</sup> "School Breakfast Scorecard 2006"; Food Research and Action Center; [www.frac.org](http://www.frac.org)

<sup>3</sup> Child Nutrition Foundation/National Dairy Council®

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