

Healthier Middle Schools

Every parent can help.

Your child needs your involvement at home and school.

At home you do what you can to make sure your kids eat healthier and stay active. But since they spend so much of their day in middle school, your influence is needed there, too.

Parents are key to making middle schools healthier. Together we can influence:

- ✓ Cafeteria menus
- ✓ Vending machine choices
- ✓ Fundraiser options
- ✓ Physical activity time during and after school

There is power in numbers.

The USDA is reaching out not only to you but also to middle school teachers, school principals, food service managers, and students. Why? Because in schools where healthier change has successfully been made, people from all of these groups worked together to make it happen.

Physical activity and healthier foods can help your kids do better in school.

As almost any teacher will tell you, healthy foods and regular physical activity can make a positive difference in the classroom.^{1,2,3,4,5} They may help kids to:

- ✓ Concentrate better
- ✓ Perform at their best
- ✓ Have better attendance



**Parents
have the
power.**



Some of the best ideas are on the back of this flyer, along with a web address where you can find ready-to-use materials to get started.

1. Florence MD, Asbridge M, Veugelers PJ. Diet quality and academic performance. J Sch Health. 2008; 78:209-215.

2. Fu ML, Cheng L, Tu SH, Pan WH. Association between unhealthful eating patterns and unfavorable overall school performance in children. J Am Diet Assoc. 2007; 107:1935-1943.

3. Sigfusdóttir ID, Kristjánsson AL, Allegranle JP. Health behaviour and academic achievement in Icelandic school children. Health Educ Res. 2007; 22:70-80.

4. Kim HY, Frongillo EA, Han SS, Oh SY, Kim WK, Jang YA, Won HS, Lee HS, Kim SH. Academic performance of Korean children is associated with dietary behaviours and physical status. Asia Pac J Clin Nutr. 2003; 12:186-192.

5. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The association between school based physical activity, including physical education, and academic performance. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2010.