

An Overview of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005* As it applies to School Lunch Services

- The *Dietary Guidelines* are the cornerstone of federal nutrition policy and education.
- The *Dietary Guidelines* are designed to help Americans choose diets that will meet nutrient requirements, promote health, support active lives and reduce risks of chronic disease.
- The Food Guide Pyramid will be replaced by the USDA's new Food Guidance System to be released in the spring 2005.

The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* is published jointly every five years by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Department of Agriculture (USDA). The sixth edition of *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* places stronger emphasis on reducing calorie consumption and increasing physical activity.

The report identified 41 key recommendations, of which 23 are for the general public and 18 for specific populations.

The key recommendations noted for our populations of children and adolescents are:

Weight Management

- Overweight children. Reduce the rate of body weight gain while allowing growth and development. Consult a healthcare provider before placing a child on a weight-reduction diet.

Physical Activity

- Children and adolescents should engage in at least 60 minutes of physical activity on most, preferably all, days of the week.

Food Groups to Encourage

- Children and adolescents should consume whole-grain products often; at least half the grains should be whole grains.
- Children 2 to 8 years should consume 2 cups per day of fat-free or low-fat milk or equivalent milk products. Children 9 years and older should consume 3 cups per day of fat-free or low-fat milk or equivalent milk products.
- Children and adolescents should keep fat intake between 30 to 35 percent of calories for children 2 to 3 years of age and between 25-35 percent of calories for children and adolescents 4 to 18 years of age, with the most fats coming from sources of polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fatty acids, such as fish, nuts, and vegetable oils.

With regard to the Child Nutrition Programs we practice in District 204, these recommendations currently have no impact or change to how we manage the program. In speaking with a representative from the USDA, the current Dietary Guidelines will have to be evaluated and no changes are expected for a few years.

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