



American  
Public Health  
Association

*[insert Affiliate logo if appropriate]*

## **[State] and Child Nutrition and Wellness Policies**

The federal child nutrition programs authorized by the Child Nutrition Act (CNA) and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provide nutritious foods to millions in the United States every day. These programs are vital resources for vulnerable populations who face economic challenges in obtaining reliable access to nutritious foods. The American Public Health Association (APHA) fully supports measures to continually improve quality and access to these and other federal child nutrition programs.

### **Get the Facts**

**Children are living in poverty without access to adequate nutritious foods.** Children who don't have reliable access to food are more likely to be overweight or obese. But all those who are eligible for federal child nutrition programs are not taking full advantage of them because of lack of knowledge about benefits, inefficient or complex application processes, or poor access to programs.

- Eighteen percent of all children—more than 13 million—under the age of 18 in the United States live in poverty.
- **XX** percent of all children under the age of 18 in **[insert state here]** live in poverty. (<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/profile.jsp>)

**Rates of obesity and diet-related chronic conditions among children are rising quickly.**

- The rate of overweight children and adolescents has tripled over the last 20 years, with a 120 percent increase in overweight African-American and Hispanic children, compared to a 50 percent increase among white children.
- The rates of obesity in **[insert state here]** have grown from **XX** in 2000 to **XX** in 2010. (<http://healthyamericans.org/states/>)

**Access to healthy foods and opportunities for exercise is often limited.**

- More than 90 percent of children and adolescents exceed U.S. Dietary Guidelines for daily sodium intake.
- Eighty-five percent of children consume more saturated fat than is recommended in the U.S. Dietary Guidelines.

- Only 30 percent of children attend daily physical education classes.

### **Federal child nutrition programs serve millions every day in every state.**

- Across the country, more than 30 million school children participate in the National School Lunch Program.
- Over 10 million low-income children receive free or reduced-price breakfasts, and 17.9 million low-income children receive free or reduced-price lunches.
- In **[insert state here]**, **XXX** children participate in the National School Lunch Program and **XXX** receive free or reduced price breakfasts and/or lunches.  
([http://www.frac.org/pdf/SOS\\_2008\\_withcover\\_nov08.pdf](http://www.frac.org/pdf/SOS_2008_withcover_nov08.pdf))

### **Local and regional food sources provide ready access to fresh foods and positive economic benefits.**

- Studies show that farm-to-school programs contribute positively to students' knowledge, attitudes and behaviors toward local, healthy food; promote healthier dietary choices; and increase consumption of fruits and vegetables.

Sources: Institute of Medicine; U.S. Department of Agriculture; American Heart Association; Food Research and Action Center, Pediatrics; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; Farm to School

## **Actions Needed**

- Expand access to child nutrition programs.
- Improve the nutritional quality of children's meals.
- Update nutrition standards for competitive foods.
- Strengthen nutrition education in schools.
- Increase the use of foods from local and regional sources.
- Strengthen local school wellness policies.
- Maintain and increase the quality and effectiveness of the WIC program.

**For more information visit [www.apha.org](http://www.apha.org) or [insert website here]**