

CHILDREN'S HOME ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS  
HEALTH AND WELLNESS POLICY

BELIEF STATEMENT

The Children's Home Association of Illinois, Kiefer Academy and Academy for Autism, in order to help families and children become whole and healthy, is committed to providing a learning environment that supports and promotes wellness, good nutrition, and an active lifestyle. The Children's Home Association of Illinois recognizes the positive relationship between good nutrition, physical activity and the capacity of our students to develop and learn. Schools and school communities have a responsibility to help students' acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to establish and maintain lifelong healthy eating and living habits. It is the Children's Home Association of Illinois belief that a well planned and well implemented wellness program will positively influence our students' health.

INTENT

It is the Children's Home Association of Illinois' intent to promote a school environment that supports students' health and wellness, help to reduce childhood obesity and meet the requirements of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 and the Illinois School Code, including, without limitation, goals for nutritional education, physical activity and other school based activities designed to promote student wellness. In addition, the entire School environment shall be aligned with healthy school goals to positively influence students' beliefs and habits and promote health and wellness, good nutrition and regular physical activity. School staff shall encourage students in healthy eating and physical activity.

RATIONALE

The link between nutrition and learning is well documented. A healthier lifestyle fosters student attendance and education. Healthier eating patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, full physical and mental growth, and lifelong health and well-being. Healthy eating and physical activity are demonstrably linked to help reduce the development of many chronic diseases.

A disturbing number of children are inactive and do not eat well. The result is an alarming 16% of children and adolescents are overweight. Obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades, and physical inactivity and excessive calorie intake are the predominant causes of obesity. An unhealthy lifestyle promotes heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes. Major risk factors for these diseases include unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity and obesity which are often established in childhood.

Studies have further revealed that 33% of high school students do not participate in sufficient vigorous physical activity and 72% of high-school students do not attend daily physical education classes; only 2% of children (2 to 19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the 5 main recommendations from the Food Guide Pyramid.

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, regular physical activity is one of the most important things people can do to maintain and improve physical health, mental health, and an overall well-being. Regular physical activity and eating well reduces the risk of premature death. They also reduce the chances for heart disease, high blood pressure colon cancer and diabetes.

### GOALS FOR NUTRITIONAL EDUCATION

- Students from the Primary wing through grade 12 shall receive nutritional education as a part of a school classroom curriculum program. The program shall be designed to offer students with the knowledge and skills necessary to adopt healthy eating behaviors and intended to influence students' knowledge, attitudes and eating habits. Special emphasis on education pertaining to nutrition shall be placed in the Primary and Middle wings as eating habits are established at a young age.
- To maximize classroom time and to achieve positive change in students' eating behavior, education pertaining to nutrition shall be integrated or embedded into lesson plans of other school subjects like math, science, language arts, physical education, health, voc-ed and social sciences.
- To achieve positive changes in eating behaviors, it is recommended that at least one (mini-lesson) per week be conducted for all students with the focus on nutritional education. The mini-lesson can be conducted during opening, breakfast or lunch, physical education class, voc-ed or field trips.
- The nutritional education program shall include enjoyable interactive activities such as contests, promotions, field trips and school gardens.

### GOALS FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Each student has an IEP (Individual Education Plan) for physical activity.

### GOALS FOR OTHER SCHOOL-BASED ACTIVITIES

#### Parent Partnerships

- Parents shall be provided information to help them incorporate healthy eating and physical activity into their student's lifestyle. This information may be provided in the form of handouts, postings on the school or agency website, newsletters, presentations that focus on nutrition and healthy lifestyles and any other appropriate means available for reaching parents.

#### Consistent School Activities and Environment – Healthy Eating

- It is recommended that the Kitchen Coordinator and Kitchen staff share information about the nutritional content of school meals with students, parents and Kiefer Academy and Academy for Autism Staff in order to assist School staff in the deliverance of lesson plans.

- Kiefer academy and School for Autism meals shall be served in a clean and safe environment with adequate time provided for students to eat. The national Association of State Boards recommends that students have adequate time to eat, relax, and socialize. It is recommended that a minimum of 15 minutes be provided for breakfast and a minimum of 25 minutes be provided for lunch.
- All kitchen staff have adequate pre-service and regularly participate in development activities that provide strategies for providing healthy school meals and eating habits.
- The kitchen staff shall work with suppliers to obtain foods and beverages that meet the nutritional requirements of school meals.
- School staff, students, parents, and community members bringing foods and beverages into our Schools for parties/celebration/meetings/mornings are encouraged to provide healthful options. Some examples of this could be:

Baked chips with salsa or low-fat dip (Ranch, onion, bean, etc.)  
 Low-fat muffins (small or mini), granola bars and cookies (graham crackers, fig bars)  
 Mini bagels with whipped light or fat-free cream cheese  
 Pasta salad  
 Bread sticks with marinara  
 Fat-free or low-fat flavored yogurt & fruit parfaits  
 Fat-free or low-fat pudding cups  
 Fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products (string cheese, single-serving cottage cheese, cheese cubes)  
 Flavored soy milk fortified with calcium  
 Ice cold water

- Kiefer Academy and Academy for Autism shall make efforts to promote nutritious foods and beverage choices utilized for rewards and or snacks. Examples include fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy foods and whole grain products.
- The kitchen staff and nursing staff shall work closely with the Instructional staff of each school in order to provide information concerning healthier eating and lifestyle habits.

#### Consistent School Activities and Environment-Physical Activity

- School staffs are encouraged to limit extended periods of inactivity. When activities such as testing make it necessary for students to be inactive for long periods of time, it is recommended that School Staff give students periodic breaks during which students are encouraged to stand and be active. Examples of this would be stretching in place and light calisthenics.
- Physical Education Staff are encouraged to develop community partnerships with other child-serving organizations to provide students with various opportunities and various places to be active.

- Kiefer Academy and Academy for Autism are encouraged to provide student and community access to and promote use of the school's physical activity facilities and equipment outside of the normal school day.
- Physical activity facilities, equipment and activities on school grounds shall be safe.
- Kiefer Academy and Academy for Autism are encouraged to work with the community to create an environment that is safe and supportive for students walking or riding bikes to school.

#### Food or Physical Activity as a Reward or Punishment

- Kiefer Academy and Academy for Autism staff shall not withhold food from students as punishment.
- Students shall not be forced to eat specific portions of a meal.
- As long as a student is exhibiting safe behavior, School staff shall not withhold an entire period of participation in recess or physical education class as a punishment. School staff shall promote participation from all students in regards to recess and physical education classes.
- School staff shall not use physical activity as a punishment. Examples of this are doing push-ups or running laps.
- Kiefer Academy and Academy for Autism staff are encouraged to use non-food items for incentives or rewards for students. Some examples of this are:

- Going first
- Verbal praise
- Sit by friends
- Teaching the class
- Helping the teacher
- Enjoy class outdoors
- A field trip for the class
- Choosing a class activity
- Walk with a teacher during lunch
- Eat lunch outdoors with the class
- Eat lunch with a teacher or principal
- Extra credit or class participation points
- Taking care of the class animal for a day
- A photo recognition board in a prominent location in the school
- A note from the teacher to the student commending his or her achievement
- A phone call, email, or letter sent home to parents or guardians commending a child's accomplishment

## NUTRITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR OTHER FOODS AND BEVERAGES AVAILABLE AT KIEFER ACADEMY AND ACADEMY FOR AUTISM

- It is recommended that Kiefer Academy and Academy for Autism staff provide healthy drinks for snacks, rewards and or incentives. School staff are encouraged to provide: water or flavored water that has no added calories due to sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free milk.  
School staff are encouraged to not utilize the following drinks for snacks, rewards and or incentives: soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks; iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 50% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, excluding low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk.
- All school staff will begin to restrict the utilization of soft drinks, pop and candy for incentives, rewards and snacks.
- At school functions, school staff are encouraged to provide healthy food options to promote student, staff and community wellness. Examples of foods that are consistent with the Kiefer Academy and Academy for Autism nutritional goals are:
  - Raw vegetable sticks/slices with low-fat dressing or yogurt dip
  - Fresh fruit wedges – cantaloupe, honey dew, watermelon, pineapple, oranges, tangelos, etc.
  - Sliced fruit – nectarines, peaches, kiwi, star fruit, plums, pears, mangos, apples, etc.
  - Fruit salad
  - Dried fruits – raisins, cranberries, apples, apricots
  - Single serving applesauce or canned fruit in juice
  - Peanut butter with apple wedges or celery sticks
  - Trail mix (dried fruits and nuts)
  - Dry roasted peanuts, tree nuts and soy nuts (not coconut or palm nuts)
  - Party mix (variety of cereals, nuts, pretzels, etc.)
  - Pretzels or reduced fat crackers

## GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE

- School meals served shall be consistent with the recommendations of a nutritionist, the Kitchen Coordinator and the Illinois State Board of Education.
- Meal planning will offer students a variety of age-appropriate, healthy food and beverage choices in the dining center. The kitchens will employ food preparation and meal practices consistent with federal guidelines, state guidelines, County Health Department regulations and CPS Nutrition

Standards for school meals.

- Locally Grown. Kiefer Academy and Academy for Autism are committed to using locally grown fruits and vegetables when available, in season and economically feasible.
  
- Nutrition Education and Wellness in the School Dining Area includes: food service staff receive training regarding nutrition, meal planning and food safety. Serve school meals in a clean, pleasant setting. Reinforce healthy food messages in the dining center with printed materials like posters and nutrition pamphlets and presentations like taste testing or cooking demonstrations.