



IFAS Extension

Start Smart With School Breakfast

Tallahassee Democrat

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Governor Charlie Crist knows how important breakfast is to Florida's children. He signed a resolution creating Florida School Breakfast Week. There is no better time to celebrate Florida School Breakfast than during Better Breakfast Month in September. The week of September 15-19, 2008 has been designated for the celebration.

The theme for this year's campaign is, "Super Foods Create Super Heroes". Students will be introduced to the Super Nutrient Heroes for vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, fiber and protein. They will learn how these nutrients tie into the overall theme of "excellence begins with breakfast." By eating a good breakfast each morning students can become their own super hero.

Florida is committed to providing quality nutrition programs that support the growth and development of Florida's children, and looks forward to the state becoming a national leader in promoting the health, academic and physical benefits received from eating breakfast at school.

It can seem as if mornings just fly by when rushing to get ready for work or school. Parents of school-age children sometimes do not have time to make their children a nutritious breakfast. Parents can encourage their children to perform as well as they can by eating school breakfast. If their children participate in the School Breakfast Program, they can always be assured that they will have a hearty and healthy breakfast each morning.

Breakfast at school is very affordable, and if you qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, you also qualify for free or reduced-price breakfast. These qualifications are based on income and are completely confidential. Even if you do not qualify for free or reduced-price breakfasts, your children can often purchase a breakfast for less than one dollar.

It has been shown that children who eat a nutritious breakfast everyday tend to perform better in both academic and extracurricular activities than children who do not eat breakfast. Eating breakfast helps keep them focused and well behaved. To improve your children's performance, encourage them to eat a nutritious breakfast each day.

Florida School Breakfast Week promotes the availability of breakfast for all children at school and the strong link between eating a nutritious breakfast and improved academic achievement.

Mr. Tim Tankersley, Leon County Food Service Director reports that local schools serve between 7,000 and 8,000 breakfasts each day. Mr. Tankersley stated "all schools serve breakfast each day and we try and offer at least two breakfast choices each day. We work with each school to tailor the breakfast program to the needs of that school. For instance at Bond Elementary, we use scan cards that can be handed out to children as they get off the bus to expedite their getting the breakfast meal." For more information on how to participate in the school meal program contact your school or the Food Services Department at 487-7426.

As we continue to search for wise money saving ideas consider having your children participate in the school meal program. Try the breakfast program for a quick and effortless way to help your youngsters reach their potential in school. Not only are dollars saved but the investment in our young people will last a lifetime.

Resources and/or additional information:

<http://www.fldoe.org/FNM/breakfast/>

<http://sharepoint.leon.k12.fl.us/food/default.aspx>

<http://www.frac.org/pdf/cnsbp.PDF>

<http://www.frac.org/pdf/breakfastforlearning.PDF>

Have a question? Contact the University of Florida IFAS - Leon County Extension office at 606-5203, weekdays 8 a.m. to noon or 1 to 5 p.m.

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