

EDITOR'S NOTE

The Journal of Child Nutrition and Management (JCNM) serves as a public forum for publishing relevant articles on research and current issues related to the field of school nutrition. From papers published in *JCNM*, child nutrition professionals can often glean ideas to improve their own school operations.

Many school nutrition directors are still struggling to encourage students to consume the fruits and vegetable servings mandated by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act. This *JCNM* issue features three research articles that focus on fruit and vegetable consumption from different angles. Andersen and associates explored administrator and school nutrition staff perspectives related to the Let's Move Salad Bars to Schools initiative in Louisiana. They concluded that strong support from staff and adequate equipment are factors that may contribute to success of salad bars. Activities that accompany a Farm to School (FTS) program can encourage students to consume more of the fruits and vegetables served in school meals. Kang et al. surveyed school nutrition employees in FTS programs to learn their perceptions related to type of operations and length of participation in FTS. These activities can include not only purchasing and serving local produce, but also educating students about local produce, taste testing, farm visits and school gardens.

The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program can provide fruits and vegetables for snacks free of charge to elementary school children for 2 to 4 days per week. But what will motivate children to bring and consume fruits and vegetable snacks to school on the other days of the week? A study by Bica and co-researchers demonstrates the important role teachers can play by providing classroom incentives, prompting and role modeling that will encourage children to bring and consume fruits and vegetable snacks on the days that free snacks are not provided.

Two articles in the Current Issues category review previously conducted research and summarize conclusions. Lopez-Neyman and Warren investigated barriers and advantages to student participation in School Breakfast Programs (SBP). Based on a review of 24 studies, they concluded that offering universal free breakfast, promoting breakfast consumption as a method of maintaining weight status and marketing to older students could increase SBP participation. School lunches versus packed lunches brought from home have been a continuing competition for many years. Minaya and Rainville's review of recent research shows that packed lunches contain more calories, fat saturated fat, desserts and sugar-sweetened beverages than National School Lunch Program meals. The authors suggest that child nutrition professionals should market the nutritional benefits of school lunches to parents and also research student preferences through surveys and taste testings.

Sixteen research abstracts presented at the 2016 Child Nutrition Showcase held in San Antonio are also included in this issue of *JCNM*. Abstract topics include Farm to School, Summer School Food Service Programs, staff diversity, fruit and vegetable preferences, food safety, administration of free/reduced meal applications and point of sale (POS) systems. Six recently completed research projects funded through the Institute of Child Nutrition (formerly the National Food Service Management Institute) are described in a report authored by Mary Frances Nettles. Two of these projects focused on Child and Adult Care Food Programs,

while the others examined diversity in the school nutrition workforce, student milk selection, POS systems and the Team Up for School Nutrition Success pilot workshop.

Readers are reminded that *JCNM* welcomes submission of papers at any time during the year. Journal articles are published online biennially at the School Nutrition Association (SNA) website, and abstracts for these articles are included in two national databases—AGRICOLA and ERIC. Research articles are an important component of the *Journal*, and child nutrition administrators are encouraged to work with researchers at colleges and universities to conduct practical research that can support SNA positions and goals. However, *JCNM* also publishes papers in the categories of Commentary, Current Issues or Practical Solutions. So if you are a child nutrition professional with strong opinions about current issues or innovative ideas for solutions to problems faced by school nutrition programs, please consider submitting a manuscript for publication in one of these categories. Author guidelines for the four categories of papers published in *JCNM* are available on the SNA website at <https://schoolnutrition.org/JCNM/ContributionReprintGuidelines/>

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