

## Editor's Note

*Please note that this study was published before the SY2014-15 implementation of the Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards for Competitive Food in Schools, as required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. As such, certain research relating to food in schools may not be relevant today.*

The *Journal of Child Nutrition & Management* provides a valuable and useful forum for the child nutrition community to address challenging research questions, present research results, discuss applications of research findings, and to suggest topics for future studies that will improve the effectiveness, availability, and quality of nutrition programs for children. In this issue of the Journal, we are pleased to enrich this conversation by including two research contributions from an international perspective.

A well-respected leader in the child nutrition community opens the spring issue of the Journal with a commentary to stimulate thought on the implementation of the Paid Lunch Equity requirement, introduced in the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. Girard shares the valuable perspective of a director implementing these changes and carefully considers possible unintended consequences, including reducing the reach of the critical safety net that school nutrition programs provide.

As we complete the first school year of the implementation of the Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program, 2012, Yon and colleagues provide a perspective on the requirement that flavored milk in schools must be fat-free. The study presented addresses the controversial issue of serving flavored milk in schools, and results underline the importance of engaging school nutrition practitioners in nutrition and policy issues.

An emerging trend is the promotion of breakfast-in-the-classroom programs to increase access and participation in school breakfast programs. Through data collection of financial records and student outcomes, in addition to stakeholder interviews, Rainville and colleagues provide results of a study to determine the effectiveness the integration of breakfast within the school day. The research methods used in this study provide a useful model for the use of case study research methodology to assist in guiding strategies for program improvements.

Guinn and colleagues examine factors influencing fourth-graders participation in both school breakfast and lunch programs. As emphasized in this study, working with researchers to analyze school meal participation data may assist practitioners in gaining insight into factors influencing program participation. For example, results demonstrated that participation in school-provided breakfast and lunch differed significantly by weekday, month, and socioeconomic status. Also of significance, this study adds to the literature showing that breakfast located in the classroom is associated with greater breakfast participation.

Next, Olumakaiye's study addresses a need for information on the prevalence of undernutrition among children in southwestern Nigeria. This study found an association between undernutrition and dietary diversity, providing evidence that a dietary diversity score may be useful in identifying school children at risk of undernutrition, in addition to identifying food groups needed. The study also contributes evidence that malnutrition existed in the study area among school children, and that undernutrition (wasting, stunting, and underweight) was more prevalent among the children in public schools, while overnutrition (overweight/obesity) was found only in private school students.

Leaving meals uneaten, known as plate waste, is a problem worldwide. Using a behavioral sciences approach, Abe and Akamatsu use the Theory of Planned Behavior to identify important factors influencing plate waste among elementary school children in Tokyo, Japan. This study provides a unique example of how behavioral science research may assist in targeting educational programs to encourage positive behavior change.

Another change on the horizon for the school nutrition community is the implementation of a plan for the professional standards required under Section 306 of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act. In anticipation of a growing demand for professional education and training programs, Jones and colleagues examine the

perceived training needs of school nutrition personnel employed in California. Three themes emerged when examining training needs receiving the highest ratings: program management; menu planning/nutrition standard requirements; and nutrition, health, and wellness. Refer to this study for more details on the perceived

training needs of the school nutrition professionals surveyed. For states and regions preparing to provide the programs needed to meet the new professional standards, this study provides a resource for assessing training needs.

This issue also includes the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service Research Corner, a continuing series of summaries of recently completed and current research conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of interest to Journal readers. Sincere appreciation is extended to John Endahl for his continuing and valuable contribution.

The Editors also wish to commend Deborah Fetter, Assistant Editor, for her outstanding manuscript processing and communications management at the Department of Nutrition, University of California, Davis, Journal office.

We are pleased to report that manuscript submissions have been steadily increasing, and confirm the important role of this Journal in facilitating communication among practitioners, researchers, and those with an interest in the child nutrition community. We encourage you to contact us if you are interested in serving as a manuscript reviewer or are interested in more information about submissions in the *commentary, practical solution, or current issue* Journal categories. We look forward to your feedback and contributions to the Journal.

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**Sheri Zidenberg-Cherr, PhD**  
Executive Editor

**Marilyn Briggs, PhD, RD, SNS**  
Editor