

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.

Readers will find that the Spring 2014 issue of *The Journal of Child Nutrition and Management* contains much useful information related to current issues in the field of school nutrition. The increasing number of manuscripts accepted for publication (11 in this issue) indicates the growing importance of the *Journal* as a forum for child nutrition professionals.

Food safety in school nutrition programs is the topic of several articles in this issue. While only a small number of foodborne illness outbreaks occur in schools, it is still important to research ways to improve food safety in child nutrition programs. The article by Roberts and colleagues reveals ways that schools can improve implementation of their HACCP programs. Another article by Lee et al. deals with food allergies. Their focus group study documents some of the issues and challenges faced by child nutrition directors in providing training on this important topic. Do age and weekly hours worked by school foodservice employees influence their perception of safe food handling practices? This topic was investigated by Strohbehn and her colleagues. Their results indicate that training methods may need to be adapted for those part-time employees who work less than 10 hours per week.

Other articles in this *Journal* issue relate to nutrition standards that were mandated by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 and the accompanying challenges these pose for child nutrition program directors. Roger Echon presents results of a unique USDA-funded study that used School Food Image Analysis (SFIA) to evaluate how school lunches served between Fall 2010 and Spring 2012 compare to the new nutrition standards recently instituted by USDA. The planned phase-in of reduced sodium standards for school meals may be a controversial topic for many readers. However, an article by Patel and associates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention documents public support for policies that lower sodium content of school cafeteria foods. With School Wellness Policies again in the news, child nutrition professionals may wish to review a case study by Harriger et al. that describes how staff at one Texas school viewed their School Wellness Policy.

Many child nutrition directors are concerned about children's consumption of fruits and vegetables, and several articles deal with this topic. Haas et al. studied lunch plate waste of high school students, their attitudes about school lunch, and their reasons for discarding foods. Amin and colleagues found that elementary students are more likely to choose processed fruits and vegetables rather than whole fruits and vegetables. And according to Cirignano and associates, coordinating in-classroom nutrition education with taste testing of fruits and vegetables can increase acceptance of new fruits and vegetable menu items by elementary school children. Likewise, in the Practical Solutions category, Tande et al. show how exposing preschool children to new fruits and vegetables may influence their acceptance of these foods on a school menu.

Readers should be aware that many other countries face urgent problems with school nutrition programs. A Current Issues article by Wojcicki and Elwan highlights the unavailability of healthy, nutritious foods for school children in Swaziland (a country in Southern Africa). This situation may be one that is common in the developing world.

This Journal issue also includes an update on recently completed and upcoming USDA research projects that focus on school nutrition. Thanks to John Endahl and Melissa Abelev of USDA's Food and Nutrition Service for their contribution.

Readers are reminded that *The Journal of Child Nutrition and Management* publishes articles on a wide variety of topics related to child nutrition programs. Manuscripts may be submitted in four different categories: Research in Action; Commentaries; Current Issues; and Practical Solutions. Not everyone is a researcher, but many child nutrition professionals may have strong opinions about current issues or innovative ideas for solutions to problems faced by school nutrition programs. If you are one of these individuals, please consider submitting a manuscript for publication in the Commentary, Current Issues, or Practical Solutions category. We would particularly welcome articles on the proposed sodium standards for school meals, acceptance of fruits, vegetables, and whole grain menu items, smart snacks policy, or the new professional standards for school nutrition personnel. Authors are not required to be a member of the School Nutrition Association, and submissions from international researchers are strongly encouraged.

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Editor