

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 Acts of 2010. As such, certain research relating to food in schools may not be relevant today.

The *Journal of Child Nutrition and Management* appears to be growing in stature as the number of manuscripts submitted has been steadily increasing. Twenty-five manuscripts have been received thus far in 2014 compared to 18 for the same period last year. This issue of the *Journal* includes seven Research in Action papers and one in the Practical Solutions category. Many of these articles reflect the combined efforts of child nutrition directors and academic researchers. Partnerships can strengthen research efforts, and obtaining documentation of outcomes in child nutrition programs with specific data can support efforts to influence policy makers and legislators. The *Journal* serves as a vehicle to publicize this data.

Research articles in this issue mainly focus on the new nutrition standards associated with the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act and nutrition environments in schools. Alcaraz and Cullen investigated perceptions of elementary school cafeteria staff related to the new USDA school meal standards. They concluded that staff can play an important role in making food recommendations and encouraging students to eat more fruits and vegetables. Bergman and associates compared NSLP lunches served at HealthierUS School Challenge schools with lunches brought from home and found NSLP lunches to be more nutritious. Bergman and colleagues also researched the nutritional content of lunches served under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) before and after the July 2012 implementation of nutrition standards mandated by HRFKA. Positive changes for meals selected and consumed included reductions in sodium and percentage of calories from saturated fat and an increase in dietary fiber.

Can students who dislike vegetables be encouraged to consume them in other ways? A paper by Vale and associates explores student acceptance of entrees that have been enriched by a vegetable puree containing carrots, beans, and tomato paste. Nutrition education at an early age may be one of the keys to preventing childhood obesity. In another research paper, Huye and colleagues describe how the Color Me Healthy program successfully influenced nutrition and physical activity in Mississippi preschool child care facilities.

Food recalls have become a familiar challenge in today's food safety landscape. Grisamore and Roberts surveyed child nutrition directors and found that most were confident they could adequately respond to a food recall. However, results indicated that websites such as Recalls.gov and FoodSafety.gov could be more fully utilized to inform directors about recalls in a timely manner.

With the probable implementation of professional standards for school nutrition staff looming in the near future, school nutrition directors may be concerned about career succession. Dodson and Arendt have explored what may motivate Registered Dietitians to consider careers in the child nutrition field.

In the Practical Solutions category, Jamelske and Bica's description of how a Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program was implemented at one Wisconsin elementary school may serve as a guide for other child nutrition directors. At this school, teachers assisted the director and researchers in documenting consumption of free fruit and vegetable snacks served in classrooms.

Also in this issue are 19 abstracts from research posters presented at the 2014 Child Nutrition Showcase and Mary Frances Nettles' summary of child nutrition research recently conducted by the National Food Service Management Institute. We also recognize the 40 qualified professionals who currently review manuscripts submitted to *The Journal of Child Nutrition and Management*. Without this assistance, the *Journal* could not maintain high standards for the papers that are published.

Readers are reminded that not all papers published in the Journal need to focus on research. Child nutrition professionals are encouraged to consider submitting papers in the Current Issues category that discuss today's challenges faced by school nutrition programs. Also, the *Journal* is open to publishing more articles about school nutrition programs in countries other than the US.

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Editor