



Practice #5: Strengthen Food Security

Step-by-step to success...

- 1 Create an environment that supports healthy eating habits
- 2 Encourage students to take advantage of school breakfast, lunch and summer meal programs
- 3 Participate in snack and supper programs
- 4 Provide families with more healthy foods, including fresh fruits and vegetables
- 5 Keep families informed and engaged
- 6 Advocate for policies that make healthy low-cost food more available
- 7 Make food security a priority!

"Ensuring that children have enough healthy food to eat has become a high priority for us. We're working closely with our families, schools and community partners to make this happen, and it's making a real difference."

- Rhonda Patterson, Sacramento START

INDICATORS FOR PRACTICE #5:

INDICATORS	
<i>Program Environment</i>	
1	Our program serves healthy snacks
2	We encourage all students to participate in the school breakfast and lunch programs.
3	Our program participates in the federally funded meal (supper) program.
4	Foods offered in our program are healthful and comply with state and federal laws and requirements for schools.
5	Our staff creates and maintains an environment that is free from marketing of products that do not align with our goal to create a healthy program.
6	Students have opportunities to take fresh vegetables and fruits home.
<i>Staff Knowledge, Attitudes and Skills</i>	
7	Our leadership team, staff and partners understand what food security means, and our staff is knowledgeable about the ways in which food insecurity negatively impacts children and young people's lives and their risk of obesity.
8	Our staff is familiar with the National School Lunch and Breakfast programs, SNAP/CalFresh, the WIC Program and other programs that provide food resources to low-income families.
9	Our staff is knowledgeable about local food resources such as food banks, pantries and farmers' markets.
10	We work with students to help them overcome barriers that may discourage them from participating in the school breakfast and lunch programs.
11	We recognize that children and young people are capable of influencing the eating habits of their parents in a positive direction and actively encourage them to do so.
<i>Partnerships with Schools, Parents and Community-Based Organizations</i>	
12	We work with our school district's food service staff (or our snack/meal sponsor) to improve the quality, quantity and variety of snacks/suppers for students in our program.
13	We have a system in place to regularly inform parents and guardians about the availability of federal food assistance programs they may be eligible for.
14	We routinely make information about food sources available to families of children enrolled in our program.
15	We use a variety of approaches to educate parents about the importance of good nutrition.
16	We regularly hold special events that include healthy meals, which include fruits and vegetables, for children, young people and their families.
17	We keep parents informed about the progress their children are making in choosing healthy foods.
18	We support children and families' enrollment in health insurance through the Affordable Care Act and Medi-Cal.
19	We work with local organizations to provide additional fruits and vegetables and other healthy foods to our students and their families.
20	We work to bring about policy changes in our community that increase access to healthy foods for children and families.
21	We regularly assess the impact our program is having on the food security of our students and their families.

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