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This newsletter is produced by the *Nutrition Education Network of Washington*, to enhance communication and coordination among those who educate Washington families about nutrition and food. *Energize* shares brief information about programs and materials that support healthful and enjoyable eating.

#### Tell Us What's New...

What's new with your organization? To submit news to *Energize*, call Martha Marino 206-817-1466, e-mail [martha\\_marino@yahoo.com](mailto:martha_marino@yahoo.com).

Deadline for submission is the last day of each month.

#### Subscription Information

*Energize* can be sent to you electronically each month. There is no charge.

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For more information about the *Nutrition Education Network of Washington* or to access past issues of this newsletter, see <http://nutrition.wsu.edu>.



**ENERGIZE YOUR LIFE!  
EAT HEALTHY-BE ACTIVE**

Information provided by Washington State University Extension's NEN of WA. This material was funded in part by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact your local DSHS Community Service Office.

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## This Month's Focus: Breakfast

It has been called "the most important meal of the day," and breakfast certainly is important to do well in school and on the job – and to keep at a healthy weight. This month's issue of *Energize Newsletter for Nutrition Educators* focuses on breakfast, the importance of this meal, and tips for encouraging kids and adults to start their days with nourishing food.

**Webinar on Breakfast in the Classroom** – On Tuesday, December 6 from 1:00 to 2:00 pm Pacific Time, a free webinar will feature guidance and resources to help implement breakfast in school classrooms. Sponsored by Action for Healthy Kids, the webinar is the second in a five-part series on the health, fiscal, and academic benefits of school breakfast programs. To register, go to <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/598434482> [www2.gotomeeting.com/register/598434482](http://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/598434482).

**Quick Tips for Breakfast** – Breakfast preparation can be accomplished in just two minutes using the tips in "Breakfast: The Best Meal of the Day." The handout lists the benefits of breakfast and shopping suggestions for healthier breakfasts.

The downloadable handout in English and Spanish by University of Nevada Cooperative Extension will be available soon at [www.unce.unr.edu/publications](http://www.unce.unr.edu/publications) under the Health and Nutrition link. If you want it sooner, just contact *Energize* newsletter writer Martha Marino at [martha\\_marino@yahoo.com](mailto:martha_marino@yahoo.com).



#### Bilingual Breakfast Education –

Vivian Smallwood with WSU Skagit County has received positive feedback and great interest among adults who participate in her class, "Breakfast is Better." Co-taught with a Spanish-speaking instructor, the two-hour class covers the importance of breakfast, foods to include in a healthful breakfast, and food demonstrations. The classes are held at the Department of Social and Health Services office in Mount Vernon. Participants receive a zippered plastic bag with ingredients for a healthful breakfast: mixed grain cereal and dried fruit. "Many don't have breakfast at all," says Smallwood, "and we teach that anything can be a breakfast food. For example, pizza is better than nothing." For a copy of her six-page handout (in English and in Spanish) and more information about the class, contact Vivian Smallwood, Program Assistant for Food Safety, WSU Skagit County Extension, 360-428-4270 ext 238, [vivians@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:vivians@co.skagit.wa.us).

**Benefits of Breakfast** – Breakfast truly is the most important meal of the day and students who eat school breakfast are:

*More likely to:*

- Score higher on math and reading tests
- Improve their speed and memory in cognitive tests
- Perform better on standardized tests, if they eat at school shortly before the test
- Get to school on time

*Less likely to:*

- Be overweight
- Eat more fruits, drink more milk, and consume a wider variety of foods
- Have discipline problems
- Go to the nurse's office

(Source: Food Research and Action Center, <http://frac.org/federal-foodnutrition-programs/school-breakfast-and-lunch/school-breakfast-program>.)

**Breakfast Educational Resources for Kids** – A variety of nutrition education materials for use with children and teens is available from the Washington State Dairy Council: *Breakfast = Achievement* refrigerator magnet, *Breakfast Boosts Brain Power* leaflet, *Breakfast = Brain Power* poster, and *Start Your Head* poster with reproducible masters on the reverse side for classroom activities. A new breakfast poster featuring Seattle Seahawks mascot Blitz was recently released. (Source: Washington State Dairy Council, [www.EatSmart.org](http://www.EatSmart.org).)



**Breakfast Messaging with a K.I.S.S.** – Sometimes the most effective nutrition education messages are the simplest. With breakfast, all it may take is to keep in mind the well-worn phrase, “Keep It Simple, Stupid.” Margaret Viebrock with WSU Douglas County says, “We teach very simply about breakfast: the best breakfast has foods from three food groups. We also give ideas for quick breakfasts, things to take on the go, and why breakfast is important.” (Contact: Margaret Viebrock, Director, WSU Extension Douglas County, 509-745-8531, [viebrock@wsu.edu](mailto:viebrock@wsu.edu)) A simple message used by *Food \$ense* in Washington State is “Skip rope, not breakfast.” A jump rope is used as an incentive (Contact: Kathleen Manenica, State Coordinator, *Food \$ense*, WSU Extension, 253-445-4598, [manenica@puyallup.wsu.edu](mailto:manenica@puyallup.wsu.edu).)

**Breakfast Helps Keep Weight Off** – The National Weight Control Registry tracks individuals who have lost weight and successfully prevented gaining the weight back. What’s one of the secrets? Eating breakfast! Most of the people enrolled in the registry report continuing to maintain a low calorie, low fat diet and doing high levels of activity, and 78% eat breakfast every day. (Source: National Weight Registry research findings, [www.nwcr.ws/Research/default.htm](http://www.nwcr.ws/Research/default.htm))

**Washington Schools Take the Breakfast Challenge** – Superintendent of Public Instruction Randy Dorn is challenging school districts to make changes to their school breakfast programs to increase participation by 50%. Districts that make the greatest improvements will receive cash prizes. To learn about the program and read success stories, go to [www.fuelupfirstwithbreakfast.org](http://www.fuelupfirstwithbreakfast.org).

## IN THE MEDIA

**At a Glance – How Healthy Is That Food?** – A new, unified labeling system for the “Front-of-Pack” (FOP) will soon be in the works. In the past decade, many systems have found their way to the FOP labels on foods, such as the traffic light system (green, yellow, and red), Energy Star program, and others that have simply led consumers to more confusion. To help consumers select healthful foods, Congress directed the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to undertake a study with the Institute of Medicine, and soon the Food and Drug Administration and USDA joined as sponsors. The result is a recommendation for a simple, clear numerical measure that can be understood without written information. The FOP point system scores foods for saturated and trans fats, sodium, and added sugars. The more points a food or beverage has, the healthier it is. The report released October 2011 can be found at [www.iom.edu/Reports/2010/Examination-of-Front-of-Package-Nutrition-Rating-Systems-and-Symbols-Phase-1-Report.aspx](http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2010/Examination-of-Front-of-Package-Nutrition-Rating-Systems-and-Symbols-Phase-1-Report.aspx).

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## TOOLS OF THE TRADE

**Raw Milk: In Washington, the Consumer Chooses** – In our state and about a dozen others, it's legal for raw milk to be sold at retail stores and on farms. Although unpasteurized milk is legal and available, Washington residents have suffered from multiple outbreaks of food borne illness from raw milk, particularly *Listeria monocytogenes*. To inform nutritionists and others about raw milk, the Center for Science in the Public Interest and STOP (a food safety education organization) hosted a webinar called "Raw Milk: A Raw Deal." Beginning with real-life examples of people sickened by raw milk, the webinar also included information by Kathy Donnelly, PhD, from University of Vermont whose expertise is in raw milk cheese, and Sarah Klein, attorney for CSPI. They covered safety risks of drinking raw milk, claims made by raw milk proponents, and long-term health consequences of illness. The webinar is archived and can be accessed for free at [www.stopfoodborneillness.org/content/webinars-and-podcasts](http://www.stopfoodborneillness.org/content/webinars-and-podcasts).

**Slow Down and Smell the ... Stew** – How much time do we Americans spend eating and drinking? Earlier this month a USDA study was released that measures the way Americans spend their time: On an average day, those age 15 and older spent 67 minutes eating and drinking as a "primary" or main activity – that's all meals and snacks. They spent an additional 24 minutes eating and 63 minutes drinking beverages while doing something such as watching television, driving, or working. Eleven percent of the population spent at least 4.5 hours on an average day engaged in eating and drinking activities. The study also looked at time use by people on the SNAP Program (formerly called food stamp program). (Source: Hamrick, KS et al, "How much time do Americans spend on food?" *Economic Information Bulletin No. (EIB-86)*, November 2011, accessed at [www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/EIB86](http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/EIB86).)

## DID YOU KNOW?

Nearly half of all students in Washington State qualify for free breakfast at school, yet very few actually take advantage. Students who don't qualify for the School Breakfast Program also are unlikely to eat at school. Of the 946,901 students who have access to breakfast in school, on an average day only 169,253 participate. That's a meager 18%. Increasing participation would not only benefit students nutritionally, it would benefit schools because they can qualify for federal money to help pay for the program. (Source: Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition, "Fighting Childhood Obesity & Hunger with School Breakfast," <http://copcwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Childhood-Obesity-Hunger-With-School-Breakfast-brief-final.pdf> and October 2010 enrollment figures reported to Child Nutrition Services.)

### EAT TOGETHER EAT BETTER – Family Meals Focus

*Because our readers have told us that Family Meals is a hot topic, in the May issue we began a small section on recent news relating to this topic and our long-standing signature program, Eat Together, Eat Better.*

**Breakfast as a Family Meal** – Mornings can be a workable time in some households to share a family meal. Depending on schedules for kids and parents, this can be a healthful and enjoyable way to start the day together. Breakfast generally is not considered a "communal" family meal but rather a meal that members eat separately because of schedules or time constraints. One study found that the frequency of eating breakfast as a family was: 27% never, 42% 2-4 times/week, 15% 5-6 times/week, and 4% 7 times a week. Some families particularly enjoy weekend breakfasts. A "family meal" doesn't necessarily mean dinner or supper – the benefits can be there whatever the time of day. Some families have "breakfast for dinner" with eggs, whole grain toast, fruit, and milk. Those foods can make a healthful meal – and fun if everyone wears pajamas to the table! (Data source: Fulkerson, JA et al, "Focus groups with working parents of school-aged children: What's needed to improve family meals?" *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 43(3):189-198, 2011.)



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