

# Child Nutrition Reauthorization - 2015 Talking Points

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## **MAIN MESSAGE**

**Problem:** *The diets of most children fall short of recommendations for good health.*

More than one in five American households and one in ten children still experience food insecurity.

Childhood obesity has more than doubled in children and quadrupled in adolescents in the past 30 years.

**Solution:** *Child Nutrition Programs*

Child Nutrition Programs provide infrastructure that can be mobilized to improve children's diets and health on a national scale, while also improving school attendance, test scores and educational attainment.

These programs are administered in more than 100,000 of America's public, private and parochial schools, 42,000 community food sites, 57,000 child care centers, 122,000 home day care sites and more than 1,900 local WIC agencies in 10,000 WIC clinic sites in low- income community settings<sup>1</sup>

There is evidence of social and economic benefits of the Child Nutrition Programs that extend into local communities.

These include improvements in the diet of other family members, healthier options in the general food marketplace, economic stimulus to communities, stable customers for American agriculture, job creation and poverty reduction<sup>2</sup>

**Share your story or the story of one of the many Academy members leading these programs.**

## **PROGRAMMATIC ASKS**

### ***Nutrition Education***

Nutrition education and food literacy are critical components of many federally funded nutrition programs that promote good health and the development of lifelong healthy behaviors.

**Ask: Ensure strong, comprehensive nutrition education is included in all child nutrition programs. Continue to support research that provides evidence-based improvements for comprehensive, nationwide nutrition education approaches that foster healthy behavior, educational attainment and lifelong health for all children.**

### ***National School Lunch and Breakfast Program (NSLP & NSBP)***

NSLP & NSBP are federally assisted meal programs providing nutritionally balanced meals at reduced or no cost to 31 million (lunch) and 12 million (breakfast) children each school day.

**Ask: Maintain current science-based meal and nutrition standards to help ensure the health of American children. More than 95 percent of schools already are meeting these standards. The Academy supports our member leaders who work in school nutrition. Their dedication to students is unparalleled and demonstrated through business savvy, delivery and development of appealing menus and commitment to high-quality nutrition education.**

### ***Summer Food Service Program***

Provides meals to schoolchildren in low-income areas during the summer to fill the hunger gap at local sites such as schools, parks and community centers.

**Ask: Expand access to innovative and effective interventions that reach children in rural and underserved areas. Facilitate administrative streamlining with other programs, which would allow this underutilized program to reach children throughout the summer months.**

### ***The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)***

WIC offers federal grants to states to provide supplemental foods, nutrition education and health care referrals to low-income pregnant and postpartum women and infants and children up to age 5 who are at nutritional risk.

**Ask: Continue to support nutrition education and breast-feeding counseling as successful cost-effective health care services and support the science-based, prescriptive WIC food package.**

### ***Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)***

CACFP serves more than 3.5 million children and 120,000 adults every day with nutritious meals and snacks in after school centers, adult and child care centers and emergency shelters.

**Ask: Support adequate funding for CACFP nutrition and wellness education and adequate reimbursement to implement improved nutrition standards.**

### ***Farm to School Grant Program***

Provides opportunities for local and regional producers and increases access to nutritious local foods for more than 40,000 schools (23 million children) in the U.S. through grant funding.

**Ask: Provide support for expansion of the grant program to include preschool, summer, after-school and tribal communities.**

### ***The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)***

Introduces children to a wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables to help develop eating habits that improve health and prevent obesity and subsequent chronic disease.

**Ask: Protect program integrity and continue to let children experience a variety of fruits and vegetables and promote healthy eating habits.**

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1. Congressional Research Service. (2014). School Meals Programs and Other USDA Child Nutrition Programs: A Primer.

2. IOM (Institute of Medicine). (2012). Accelerating Progress in Obesity Prevention: Solving the Weight of the Nation. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

3. US Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. Key Statistics and Graphics. <http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/key-statistics-graphics.aspx#foodsecure>. Accessed January 10, 2015.