

School district nutrition services departments realize that they cannot solve the problem of child obesity or increase the number of GO foods *consumed* by students on their own. Any modeling or encouragement that the school staff can provide to help increase the consumption of GO foods in school meals is greatly appreciated. If you have suggestions on how to improve the implementation of the GSW program, please contact nutrition services. We hope the answers to these commonly asked questions help.

### **Why implement the Go Slow Whoa program? Isn't it more important to improve what is being offered for school meals?**

Recommended school meal requirement changes were made in the Institute of Medicine of the National Institutes of Health *School Meals: Building Blocks for Healthy Children* 2010 report. Many of these recommendations are now required in the current school meal requirements. In addition to the recommended changes, they stated:

*"The Meal Requirements will be beneficial only to the extent that program participation is maintained or increased and the participants' food consumption improves. The effectiveness of revised Meal Requirements will be determined in a large part by the manner in which they are implemented. Strategies that can be used to promote change include engaging the school community; involving students, parents, and the community; providing nutrition education; training and mentoring of food service workers; and providing technical assistance "*

–(Page s-4 of the report). The Go Slow Whoa program sponsored cooperatively by Channel 7 and Livewell Colorado is designed to do just that.

### **How can foods such as chicken nuggets or pizza be labeled as Go or Slow foods on a school menu?**

School district nutrition service search for products that are well accepted by children but modified to be a healthier food. Schools can purchase chicken nuggets that are breaded with whole grain, use only white meat and are oven baked instead of deep fat fried. Commercially branded pizza available to schools has been specially formulated to meet school meal requirements. Modifications include pizza products made with white whole grain crusts and reduced fat cheese.

### **There is so much waste in school meals. Will the Go Slow Whoa program help to reduce the waste?**

Yes. A *coordinated* approach (foodservice, school staff, and parents) has been shown repeatedly to increase student consumption of GO foods, helping reduce food waste. Recess before lunch paired with adequate seat time for students to consume a meal is an evidenced based practice for reducing waste and ensuring students consume more of all food groups offered.

If your district doesn't have recess before lunch and allow adequate seat time to eat, consider implementing these as school meal policies. The standard for adequate seat time to eat is 20 minutes. This does not include time standing in line waiting to be served.

### **Is Nutrition Services doing anything to reduce the number of processed foods in school meals?**

Yes. Many school district nutrition services are reviewing meal preparation and serving practices and modifying menus to meet the revised school meal requirements, which include offering fewer processed foods. Livewell Colorado offers training to school districts on preparing recipes that are student friendly and healthy.

It is a requirement to serve each student one-half cup of fruits and/or vegetables. Only low-fat milk can be offered. Increasing the *consumption* from these three food groups along with offering more foods from scratch would go a long ways towards helping reduce food waste and more importantly help children establish healthy eating habits that help them maintain a healthy weight.