

First Nations Student Nutrition Program

Ministry of Children and Youth Services

Resource Guide for Program Sites



March 2016

Early Child Development Branch

About this Guide:

The purpose of this document is to share information and tips that program staff, volunteers, school administrators and others can use to support Student Nutrition Programs (SNPs) in First Nations communities.

This guide has information about:

- Ministry requirements for program funding;
- Developing a program menu;
- Starting up a student nutrition program;
- Food Safety;
- Fundraising; and,
- Roles and Responsibilities of program staff and volunteers.

Thank you to the following schools that provided information about their student nutrition programs:

- Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute, M'Chigeeng First Nation
- Lakeview School, M'Chigeeng First Nation
- Mary Jane Naveau Memorial School, Mattagami First Nation
- Shawanosowe, Whitefish River First Nation
- St. Joseph's Anishnabek, Sheshegwaning First Nation
- Wasse-Abin Junior, Wikwemikong First Nation
- Wasse-Abin Pontiac School, Wikwemikong First Nation

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About Student Nutrition Programs in Ontario

Student nutrition programs provide food to children and youth at school or in other community locations before or during the school day. Nutritious food is served free of charge to students.

Many First Nations communities across Ontario operate breakfast, snack or lunch programs. Programs are funded by a number of charitable organizations, private donors and other Band Council funding. Some programs are supported through a combination of different funders.

The Ontario First Nations Student Nutrition Program was launched in January 2016. The program provides some provincial funding for breakfast, lunch or mid-morning meals in First Nations educational settings. Funding to First Nations, schools and community locations is administered through 35 organizations including Band Councils, Tribal Councils and other organizations. Organizations were selected in Summer 2015 through a First Nations led application process.

The goal of Ontario's First Nation Student Nutrition Program is to provide nutritious food to school age children and youth to support their learning and healthy development.



If you have questions about Ontario's First Nations Student Nutrition Program, please contact: firstnationssnp@ontario.ca

Program sites with questions about program requirements, funding and data collection must contact their MCYS partner organization (i.e., Band Council, Tribal Council, other organization that receives funding from the ministry) listed on page 12.

Ministry of Children and Youth Services

First Nations Student Nutrition Program Requirements

All program sites receiving ministry funding for breakfast, mid-morning meal or lunch programs as part of the First Nations Student Nutrition Program, must meet the following requirements:

Offer a full meal

- Programs can offer breakfast or lunch.
- Meals must include at least three out of four food groups.
- Meals must include one serving of vegetable or fruit and one serving of milk/milk alternative. See page 4 for additional examples of calcium rich foods.

Offer nutritious food in a safe environment

- Use *Canada's Food Guide for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis* to help you choose healthy food for your program menu.
- Make sure to offer children and youth food that is safe to eat.

Be universally accessible to all children and youth at a site

- All children and youth at a program site are eligible to participate in the program.
- Encourage all children and youth to participate in the program.

Offer the program every day that the school is open

- Programs must operate every day that students attend school and every month that the school is open (example: September to June with the exception of holidays).

Submit program data to demonstrate the outputs and impact of the funding.

- Sites must record data on the number of children/youth served, number of meals served and school/site attendance each day that the program operates.
- Financial information must be submitted to MCYS partner organizations and to the ministry.
- Sites must also share information with MCYS partner organizations to demonstrate the impact of the program and nutritional quality of meals served.

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First Nations Student Nutrition Program Requirements

Eligible Expenses for Program Sites

Sites are allowed to use MCYS program funding for the following items, as per the approved budget:

- Program food costs
- Food transportation/shipping
- Cultural activities (e.g., honorariums for Elders, garden costs, food literacy activities, other approved activities)
- Staff (part-time/full-time) and/or honorariums for staff

Some sites also receive one-time funding in the first year of program operation to support start-up activities. This funding can be used for equipment, equipment installation, supplies, training and dietitian fees.

Sites must work with their MCYS partner organization (e.g., Band Council, Tribal Council, other organization that receives funding from the ministry) to develop an annual program budget, in accordance with the ministry's service agreement. The majority of the site budget must be used for the purchase of nutritious program food.



Ineligible Program Expenses

Ministry SNP funding cannot be used:

- To purchase capital (e.g., structural renovations to program sites, vehicles);
- To operate programs in child care facilities/day cares and post-secondary institutions;
- To fund community kitchens (that are not a partner of the student nutrition program);
- For start-up activities not approved by the ministry.

Making a Program Menu

Making a menu in advance can help you serve nutritious meals more easily to help children and youth be ready to learn. A cycle menu is one that is planned for and repeated over a defined period of time, such as two weeks. Using a cycle menu reduces planning time, makes shopping for food easier, and helps ensure children and youth are offered a variety of foods. Consider using the template on page 5 to help you make a program menu.

Ask children, youth, parents, Elders, and program staff/volunteers to help plan menus and choose foods. Children and youth are more likely to eat foods if they are involved in choosing them.

Consider the seasonal nature and availability of foods when making your menu. Consult the *Healthy Eating Guidelines for School Nutrition Programs* resource for First Nations Schools (page 13) for information about including traditional foods in your program menu.

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide: First Nations, Inuit and Metis

Use *Canada's Food Guide for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis* to help you plan your menu. Meals should have at least one serving from at least three of the four food groups. Portions should correspond to the serving sizes outlined in the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Food Guide.

Vegetable or Fruit + **Milk/Milk Alternative*** +
Grain Product or **Meat/Meat Alternative**
= one meal

Focus on foods that fit into one of the four food groups. *Calcium can come from other foods. Examples of calcium rich foods are bannock (made with baking powder), fish with bones, nuts, beans, and leafy greens.

Tip

A registered dietitian can help you plan your program menu and answer your nutrition questions. Contact EatRight Ontario at 1-877-510-5102 to speak to a registered dietitian for free or visit www.eatrightontario.ca.

Do not serve foods that have artificial *trans* fat. Artificial *trans* fat is known to be harmful to health. Read the nutrition facts table to find out if a food has artificial *trans* fat.

Artificial *trans* fat is found in the following common foods:

Type of Food	Examples:
Deep fried foods	Frozen hash browns
Ready-to-eat frozen foods	Burritos, beef patties
Commercially baked goods	Danishes, donuts
Convenience foods	Pancake mixes, snack puddings
Toaster Pastries	Frozen waffles and pancakes



"We often involve our students with regards to healthy suggestions." Shawanosowe, Whitefish River First Nation

Sample Program Menu Template

You can use and customize this template or develop your own to help plan your program menu. Post the menu in a visible area where program food is prepared.

Meal Type:	_____				
School/Site Name:	_____				
Week: _____ (Insert 1, 2, 3, 4)	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Vegetable/Fruit:	Example: Berries				
Grain Product:	Whole Wheat Toast				
Milk/Alternative:	Yogurt				
Meat/Alternative:					
Checklist of Requirements:	<input type="checkbox"/> Vegetable/ Fruit <input type="checkbox"/> Milk/ Alternative	<input type="checkbox"/> Vegetable/ Fruit <input type="checkbox"/> Milk/ Alternative	<input type="checkbox"/> Vegetable/ Fruit <input type="checkbox"/> Milk/ Alternative	<input type="checkbox"/> Vegetable/ Fruit <input type="checkbox"/> Milk/ Alternative	<input type="checkbox"/> Vegetable/ Fruit <input type="checkbox"/> Milk/ Alternative

Planning and Shopping

Planning and shopping for food for a large group of people can be a challenge. Follow these steps to make shopping for program food easier:



- **Plan ahead**

Make menus at least one week in advance. Include both the name and amount of the food you plan on serving to each child or youth. Take inventory of your staple items to learn which foods you use most often.

- **Make a list**

Use your menu and inventory as a guide to help decide what you need to buy.

- **Shop with strategies**

Follow your list when shopping, but be flexible and take advantage of sales. Use the nutrition facts table to compare similar products. Buy in bulk when possible.

“In order to maximize our program funding we spend a few moments looking at a few flyers to see where things might be on sale. We purchase items that are multi priced and try to buy larger quantities (especially for apple sauce and oatmeal).” - Mary Jane Naveau Memorial School, Mattagami First Nation

Planning Your Program Space to Promote Healthy Eating Habits

Give children and youth enough time to eat (at least 20 minutes). If space allows, provide a pleasant eating environment where they can interact with their peers, teachers and the program staff/volunteers.

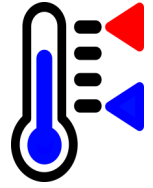
Sit down and eat with children and youth when possible. Children and youth are more likely to try new foods when eating with their peers and adult role models who are enjoying the same foods.

Tips

- Generally, more nutritious foods are located along the walls of the store and not in the aisles.
- Frozen fruits and vegetables are just as nutritious as fresh.
- Frozen berries add natural sweetness to blended smoothies. Some seasonal locally-grown fruit can be frozen and used in the program year-round.
- Canned fruit or vegetables are a good alternative to fresh or frozen produce.
- Rinse canned vegetables to remove salt before serving.
- Look for fruit canned in water instead of syrup.
- Where possible, choose foods grown locally (Examples: berries, corn).

Food Safety

Precautions must be taken to offer children and youth food that is safe to eat.



Food Safety Principles

Clean

Wash your hands and sanitize all work surfaces before and after preparing food, especially raw meat, poultry, eggs, and seafood. Use warm soapy water to wash all food preparation equipment. Use paper towels instead of sponges to wipe surfaces.

Separate

Keep raw meat, poultry, and seafood away from ready-to-eat foods to avoid transferring harmful bacteria, parasites, and viruses (i.e., cross-contamination). Cross-contamination can happen at any stage of food preparation, serving, or storage.

Cook

Use a food thermometer to check the internal temperature of food, especially meat, to make sure it is cooked. Different foods need to reach different internal temperatures to kill harmful bacteria. When serving, keep cooked foods at 60°C (140°F) or higher.

Chill

Keep the refrigerator at 4°C (40°F) or lower and the freezer at -18°C (0°F) or lower to reduce the growth of harmful bacteria. Refrigerate or freeze food, including leftovers, within two hours and preferably as soon as possible.

Donated Foods

Donated food should meet basic safe food storage and handling principles:

- Packaged foods and beverages are not past their best before date
- Cans are free from rust and are not leaking or swollen
- Milk and milk products are pasteurized
- Cooked foods are kept at 60°C (140°F) or higher
- Refrigerated foods are kept at 4°C (40°F) or lower

Best Practices

- Ask your local Public Health Unit for information and/or training on safe food handling practices for program staff and volunteers. Program staff involved in cooking/preparing food should be trained on safe food handling.
- Always look for proof of CanadaGAP or Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) certification when considering a partnership with a supplier for the Student Nutrition Program.
- Look for CanadaGAP or Safe Quality Food (SQF) certification when sourcing produce directly from a farm. If the farm is not CanadaGAP or SQF certified, ask your MCYS funded partner for a checklist to help you determine if the farm is a safe source of produce.
- Refrigerate perishable food soon after it is purchased or delivered to the program site.
- Mark all foods with the date it is purchased or received and rotate food to maintain freshness by using older food items before newer ones.

Starting A New Program

Successful and sustainable student nutrition programs require planning, leadership and collaboration.

Consider the following best practices to prepare for program set-up:

Share information with the community about the program

- Information can be posted at the nursing station or other shared public spaces.
- Give parents, Elders and other community members the opportunity to give input into the program and help choose foods (including traditional and local foods) that can be included the program.

“We publish our successes each month in our community newsletter. It helps the community see what we are doing in the school for our students.” - Mary Jane Naveau Memorial School, Mattagami First Nation

Start a local program committee to help manage the program at the site.

- Committees can include program staff/ volunteers, students, parents, school staff, nurses, dietitians and other interested community members.
- The committee can be responsible for helping to develop the menu, fundraising, coordinating volunteers (if applicable) and providing other feed back to continuously improve the program

Start off the program with a “soft-launch”.

- Gradually build up to offer meals five days per week over the course of the first month. Adjust menus, food preparation approaches and the amount of food served according to observed patterns.

Tips

- Consider your program space when picking the program model. SNPs can be offered through ‘grab and go’ programs, bin programs that provide food in the classroom or sit-down meals where all students eat in a central location. See page 9 for more information about common program models.
- Generate excitement about a new program by hosting a “kick-off” event. Invite parents or local sports teams to share a meal with students or help prepare and serve meals. For example, some schools host a “Bring A Parent to Breakfast” day to generate community support and awareness for their breakfast program.
- Create a pleasant and inviting atmosphere for the program by redecorating a lunch room or designated space for the program. Invite students to create art work.
- When installing plumbing, or purchasing and installing equipment for the program, check with the local public health unit for food safety equipment recommendations.



“We send home the menus monthly. We find this to be effective in getting students motivated to come. We offer the SNP program for an hour each morning. This incorporates both our early and late risers.” - Mary Jane Naveau Memorial School, Mattagami First Nation

Common Student Nutrition Program Models

There are many of different ways to provide meals to children and youth in student nutrition programs. The following chart outlines three approaches. Communities may adapt one of the following models or implement their own program model.

Delivery Approach	“Grab & Go”	“Bin Program”	“Sit Down”
Description of model	Meals are provided in a centralized location, supervised and replenished by a program coordinator (employee or volunteer). Individual servings are pre-arranged before children and youth arrive and can be placed in brown bags for easy access. When children and youth enter the program site, they may help themselves to the food. A benefit of this program model is that food is accessible quickly.	A bin is given to each classroom that has all the meals for one class. The bin can be picked up from a kitchen, staff room or other central location by students, school staff or program coordinators. Meals are distributed to each child and/or youth from the bin when it arrives. A benefit of this program model is that children and youth can eat with their peers in the classroom, allowing for opportunities to promote healthy eating during lessons. Children and youth who eat with their peers and/or with their classroom teacher are also more open to trying new healthy foods.	Children and youth sit and eat together. A benefit of this program model is that children and youth can be offered hot meals.
Ideal Setting	Large programs serving many children and youth and site locations without a central space to serve meals and eat together.	Programs with limited space and a large number of students. For example, a school without a large kitchen area or cafeteria.	Program sites with kitchen facilities that have space and staff. Program sites with equipment.

Volunteers and Program Staff



Your student nutrition program may include staff or volunteers to support programs at the site.

Daily Program Activities for program staff or volunteers include:

- Planning the menu, in collaboration with dietitians, with input from parents and students;
- Shopping for program food;
- Setting up the program site;
- Cleaning and preparing program materials (examples: cutlery, bins, trays);
- Preparing program food;
- Cleaning up the program site;
- Monitoring inventory of food and program supplies;
- Recording daily program data;
- Working with program committee;
- Outreach and fundraising; and,
- Seeking feedback from program participants.

Recruiting Volunteers

A team of volunteers may include parents, students, grandparents and other community members. If your site does not have consistent volunteers that attend the program every day, develop a volunteer schedule based on the day of the week.

Let your community know you need volunteers by:

A) Setting up a bulletin board in the school or other community location (e.g. nursing station);

B) Having a regular column in the parent newsletter, school newspaper or other local paper; and,

C) Sending a media release to local radio stations.

Recruiting students to help support program delivery is a great way to generate excitement about the program.

Tips

- Hold an orientation to introduce staff or volunteers to each other, school staff and the principal and tour the school.
- Check with your school principal to identify the screening policy for staff or volunteers at your program site.
- The school principal can provide information about the school's anaphylaxis policy and emergency procedures. All program providers must adhere to the school's allergy policy.
- Make sure all volunteers to fill out a registration form with their contact information.
- Use formal and informal ways to recognize program volunteers (Examples: volunteer certificates, student artwork/letters).

Program Funding

Student nutrition programs in Ontario are cost-shared. Program sites and their partner organizations may be required to secure additional resources to meet ministry program requirements.



Fundraising can take place locally (at the program site) and/or regionally (by your MCYS partner organization).

Consider the following fundraising approaches:

Some schools ask for donations for their program from businesses on and off reserve, service clubs or faith organizations.

- ⇒ Check with your partner organization (organization that receives funds from the ministry for your program) to see whether they have a registered charitable number. Giving tax receipts for donations may be an incentive.
- ⇒ Some schools ask that businesses hold a food drive for the program. Give interested businesses a list of shelf-stable staple food items and other items that are commonly used in the program.

Ask farmers in the region to donate or discount fresh produce to use in the program.

- ⇒ Farmers are eligible for tax credits for agricultural products donated to eligible community food programs, including student nutrition programs. See the following link for more information: <http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/credit/cfpdtc/>.

Ask retailers in your area if they have existing programs in place that could be leveraged to support your student nutrition program.

- ⇒ Some retailers offer discounted food purchased for school meal programs or allow for proceeds from the purchase of plastic grocery store bags to be directed to community programs like school meal programs.

Stretch your dollars for food purchases by:

1) Minimizing food waste

Determine the number of food items you will need for breakfasts or lunches in advance using your average daily participation.

2) Choosing foods when they are in season

Take an inventory of your program staples (e.g. fruits, grains). Look for any seasonal patterns or changes in price for your staple items and substitute items when they are out of season and more expensive.

3) Choosing foods that were grown or hunted locally when available

4) Buying in bulk to reduce cost

5) Spreading the word about your program

Ensure that the retailers and suppliers you work with are aware of the local student nutrition program. Discuss potential options for discounts when buying in bulk.

- Look for funding from a variety of sources. Breakfast Club of Canada, Breakfast for Learning, Canadian Feed the Children and ONEXONE offer funding for First Nations meal programs.

Tip

- Calculate and monitor your food costs per child. Divide total food costs (exclude shipping) by your average daily participation. Set a target cost per child for your program site based on the funds you have.
- Check with your Band Council and/or MCYS partner organization to identify records management practices (Example: keeping/submitting receipts for program purchases).

First Nations Student Nutrition Program

MCYS Program Partners

**Anishinaabeg of Kabapikotawangag
Resource Council Inc**

Batchewana First Nation of Ojibways

Bimose Tribal Council

Brunswick House

Chapleau Cree First Nation

Chippewas of Rama First Nation

Eabametoong First Nation

Fort Albany First Nation

Keewaytinook Okimakanak

**Kwayaciiwin Education Resource
Council**

Lac Seul First Nation

Matawa First Nations Management

Mattagami First Nation

Whitefish River First Nation

Beausoleil First Nation

**Hastings Prince Edward Learning
Foundation**

Oneida Nation of the Thames

Walpole Island First Nation

Naotkamegwanning First Nation

Nipissing First Nation

Nokiiwin Tribal Council

Aroland First Nation

Pic River First Nation

Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation

Sandy Lake First Nation

Shawanaga First Nation

Shoal Lake #40 First Nation

Temagami First Nation

Wahta Mohawks First Nation

Wasauksing First Nation

Weenusk First Nation

Wikwemikong First Nation

Chippewas of Georgina Island

**Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First
Nation**

Six Nations of the Grand River

Additional Resources

Cancer Care Ontario - Healthy Eating Guidelines for School Nutrition Programs: A Resource for First Nations Schools

<https://www.cancercare.on.ca/common/pages/UserFile.aspx?fileId=121004>

- The guidelines include a Traditional Food Guide Medicine Wheel, tips to build healthy meals and snacks, information about portion sizes, tips for successful school nutrition programs and food safety.
- The document highlights practical approaches to support healthy eating that are possible to put in place in First Nations communities across Ontario, including northern remote communities.

Student Nutrition Program – Nutrition Guidelines (2008)

http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/documents/topics/schoolsnacksandmeals/nutrition_guidelines_2008.pdf

- Ontario's SNP Nutrition Guidelines (2008) are the current nutrition guidelines developed for provincially funded schools off-reserve.
- While not intended to be used as the guidelines for First Nations Programs, the document provides important information about safe food storage and handling (pg. 14), planning and shopping (pg. 15), and nutrition information (pg. 16).
- The Guidelines will be updated to better reflect the cultural diversity of healthy and traditional foods available in Ontario for First Nations.

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide (First Nations, Inuit and Métis)

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/alt_formats/fnihb-dgspni/pdf/pubs/fnim-pnim/2007_fnim-pnim_food-guide-aliment-eng.pdf

- A nutrition resource that incorporates traditional foods into Canada's Food Guide.
- This document identifies the recommended number of food group serving per day by age and includes examples of nutritious foods for each food group.

Public Health Units

<http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.alphaweb.org/resource/resmgr/images/alphaontario2.pdf>

- Provides a map of Public Health Units in Ontario.

Student Nutrition Program Lead Agencies (Off-Reserve)

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/topics/schoolsnacks/locations.aspx>

- Provides a list of 14 Student Nutrition Program Lead Agencies (off-reserve) that administer provincial funding for breakfast, snack and lunch programs in provincially funded schools and other community locations. Note: Beginning in 2016-17, program sites that participate in the First Nations Student Nutrition Program are not eligible to receive funding from SNP Lead Agencies.
- Your local SNP Lead Agency can be contacted to share best practice information and other helpful advice about managing and operating SNPs.