TOWARDS SCHOOL POLICIES IN SUPPORT OF CHILDHOOD OBESITY

BEYOND THE CALL TO ACTION EVENT

NOVEMBER 20TH, 2018  HILTON HOTEL BARBADOS

MINISTRY OF HEALTH, NASSAU, BAHAMAS
SCHOOL LUNCH STANDARDS IN BAHAMIAN SCHOOLS
Ministry of Education Schools

- Public Schools are organized by districts
- Governed by districts school boards
- Lead by district school superintendents
- Who brings recommendations to the table for consideration
School Feeding in The Bahamas

- A system of (private) vendors who are to approved to sell lunch at schools;
- A state-sponsored programme of school feeding called the “National School Lunch Program” (NSLP); Fully funded by the MOE since 2013
- Tuck shops operated by the schools; and
- Parent supplied meals to students.
- School Lunch and Tuck Shop Standards were developed in 2006
Disturbing Trends

- Emerging food and health habits
- Diet quality
- Diet quantity
- Unhealthy weight patterns
- Fast food epidemic
- Abundant supply of cheap high energy dense foods and beverages now available within the school environment
School Lunch Back Then...
Choices and Decisions
CHILDHOOD OBESITY IN THE BAHAMAS

6 in 10 children are overweight or obese.

69% of children drink carbonated beverages every day.

84% of children don’t get enough exercise.

Health Risks
- Pre-diabetes
- Joint Problems
- Sleep Apnoea
- Low self-Esteem
- Heart Disease

Source: PAHO/WHO, Global School Health Survey (2013)
THE BASIS OF THE NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS

The Nutritional Standards are based on the food groups represented in the Food Guide Drum. The Food Guide Drum provides a visual representation of the types and proportions of foods people need for a healthy and balanced diet.

1. Use our drum to help you choose a variety of foods daily.
2. Limit the amount of high fat & greasy foods you eat.
3. Make starchy vegetables, peas & beans a part of your diet.
4. Choose foods with less sugar & less salt.
5. Choose a variety of fruits & vegetables everyday.
6. Drink plenty of water everyday.
7. It is advisable not to drink alcohol, but if you drink, do so in moderation.
8. Make physical activity & exercise a part of your lifestyle.
9. Choose foods for their medicinal value, not for the ‘name brand’ or cost.
10. Breast milk is the best choice for infants to start a healthy life.
COMPULSORY STANDARDS FOR HEALTHY MEALS IN BAHAMIAN SCHOOLS

- Nutritional Standards for Meal Planning
- Food Safety and Hygiene
- Personal Hygiene and Dress code
THE USERS OF THE SCHOOL LUNCH STANDARDS

- Ministry of Education Schools
- Lunch vendors & Caterers
- Administrators
- Teachers
- Parents
- Students
NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS

- Reflects the current National Dietary Guidelines
- Reduction of fat, sugar, sodium and trans fat consumption
- Identifies the types & quality of food & beverages to be sold or offered
- Guides in how often to sell or offer various types of foods
- Guides shopping list
- Guide menu selections
- Rationale for the standards
NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS FOR MEAL PLANNING: GOALS

- Increase emphasis on food groups to encourage a healthier food consumption pattern
- Offering variety and larger amount of fruits and vegetables
- Offering variety of starchy vegetables
- Limiting refine carbohydrates
- Limiting intake of saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, added sugars, and salt, fewer sweetened foods and foods with little added salt
SCHOOL LUNCH AND TUCK SHOP STANDARDS AWARENESS

- To sensitize school lunch vendors of the growing problem of childhood obesity and chronic diseases
- To relay the body of evidence that nutrition and physical activity are link to academic performance and behavior
- To show school lunch vendors the role of schools and by extension their role in safeguarding students’ health and wellness.
- To inform school lunch vendors of the up coming training in the use of the Compulsory Standards for Healthy School Lunch
- To administer KAP Survey to lunch vendors
SCHOOL LUNCH VENDORS TRAINED IN USE OF THE COMPULSORY STANDARDS FOR HEALTHY LUNCHES

“Healthy Eating feeds our Future and Secures our Health”.

Day 1

- To train school lunch vendors and tuck shop operators in the use of the Compulsory Standards for Health Lunch and Snacks
- To increase knowledge of basic nutrition concepts
- To Introduce the Food Based dietary Guidelines
- To show school lunch vendors the role they play in assuring food security in the school setting.
SCHOOL LUNCH VENDORS TRAINED IN USE OF THE COMPULSORY STANDARDS FOR HEALTHY LUNCHES

“Healthy Eating feeds our Future and Secures our Health”.

Day 2

- Identify flavors influencing food selection
- Understand the ingredients and methods to develop flavor in nutritional cuisine
- Write standardize and price menus
- Plan and prepare healthy menu options for school age children
BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION

- There is no legislation governing the SFP or the School lunch
- Poor monitoring of meals provided by school lunch vendors and caterers
- Adherence to guidelines appear to be purely voluntary
- Political
RECOMMENDATIONS

- Legal framework and Policy to support standards and to maintain sustainability
- Development of a School Feeding Operational Manual
- Annual mandatory training for school lunch vendors and caterers
- Ongoing awareness and education of all stakeholders especially parents
- Structured Monitoring and Evaluation
WAY FORWARD

- Implementation of a National School Feeding Systems Committee
- Development of a School Feeding Policy
- Development of School Feeding Operational Manual
- Establishment of a monitoring and evaluation plan
- Continued advocacy for the complete removal of SSBs sold or offered in schools
Thank you for your attention!