

UNIT OF
STUDY

Care 2 Eat

LESSONS FOR A LIFETIME OF HEALTHY EATING

ALLIANCE FOR A
HEALTHIER
GENERATION



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Introduction

Care2Eat: Lessons for a Lifetime of Healthy Eating is a unit of study designed for use with students in grades 7-12. The Alliance for a Healthier Generation developed this unit to help students understand changes that may be happening around them in their school food environment. It guides students to identify why healthy food choices have relevance to them and to those for whom they care. When students are not educated about, or not participating in, the changes, they often feel the decisions made are imposed upon them. Care2Eat can prepare students to be advocates for healthier food choices, especially the snacks and drinks available to them in school.



Knowledge is vital prior to action. While this unit of study can be foundational in increasing students' interest and readiness to mobilize for change, prior instruction on nutrition and healthy eating is recommended.

Schools that implement Care2Eat will address the skill-based healthy eating lessons within the Alliance's Healthy Schools Program (HSP) Framework for Health Education, as well as engage students in their school food environment. For more about the Healthy Schools Program visit, <https://schools.healthiergeneration.org/>.

Founded in 2005 by the American Heart Association and the Clinton Foundation, the Alliance for a Healthier Generation is leading the charge against the childhood obesity epidemic by engaging directly with industry leaders, educators, parents, healthcare professionals, and—most importantly—kids.

The thing I liked best about Care2Eat is that the lessons are well laid out. I did not have to guess or determine what the next step in the lesson would be. I also liked how the students are “walked” through the process of evaluating food choices. Students are shown that they can become their best advocates. —HIGH SCHOOL FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCE TEACHER

Introduction continued

About Care2Eat:

Care2Eat is appropriate for all 7-12 grade students to enhance their abilities to be critical and flexible thinkers and effective advocates and communicators.

As students progress from middle to high school, decision-making opportunities often increase: There are more food and beverage choices they can make, they have more money to spend and they have room in their diet for more discretionary calories.

Care2Eat motivates students to be active participants.

Care2Eat engages students to be more aware of—and perhaps care more about:

- The foods served and sold around them
- The way decisions and changes are made regarding their food environments
- Social and civic issues related to food and eating
- Steps they can take to be more actively involved in food choices

Upon completion of this unit of study, students will likely:

- Identify with the content. “This applies to me!”
- Question. “Why isn’t healthy eating the norm in my school community?”
- Care. “I care about my health and the health of others.”

Care2Eat included interesting, new ideas. Fun to use!

—MIDDLE SCHOOL FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE TEACHER

How to Use Care2Eat: Lessons for a Lifetime of Healthy Eating

Intended as a unit of study geared toward health education, specifically complementing nutrition education, Care2Eat may also fit within a civics class, language arts or other core subject area. (Please note that Care2Eat does not reflect all of the concepts and skills of a comprehensive nutrition education program.) While the unit of study is best presented in its entirety and sequence provided, educators might pick and choose activities to conduct and identify those that best fit within the larger curriculum.

The unit of study provides:

- Four lessons, aligned with the National Health Education Standards, with multiple activities, lesson extensions, integration ideas and more! (See chart on the next page.)
- Handouts and worksheets included in the back of each lesson
- Appendices as additional resources

In order for Care2Eat to be most culturally relevant, activities should be tailored to meet the diverse needs of a school community. For example, when discussing food choices, select foods particular to the region and/or student population. It is recommended that all student perspectives be considered within each lesson given that most schools in the United States represent a variety of student backgrounds and experiences. Lessons might need to be altered to better apply to each setting and a school system's policies and practices.

The lessons are clear to understand and to successfully implement. Furthermore, the cross curricular connections are valuable learning strategies to enhance and reinforce the importance of the topic. The message delivered through the Care2Eat lessons is of great importance to today's youth." –MIDDLE SCHOOL HEALTH EDUCATION TEACHER

To help you plan best how to integrate this unit into your class, this chart offers a synopsis of the unit’s content and time considerations:

LESSON NAME	DESCRIPTION	SUGGESTED TIMEFRAME
Lesson 1: Why Should I Care?	Using a personal reflection tool, students consider what they care about and explore where healthy eating fits into their “Circles of Caring.”	Part 1: 35 - 40 minutes Part 2: 35 - 40 minutes
Lesson 2: Who Else Cares (I Mean Really Cares)?	Students examine common scenarios and factors influencing how decisions are made about food and beverages sold and served in schools. Students conduct a scavenger hunt to find where foods and beverages are served or sold on the school grounds and uncover the myriad of messages they receive related to foods and beverages.	Part 1: 40-50 minutes Part 2: 45-60 minutes <i>This lesson takes place over 2-3 class periods with time allowed for students to conduct their work and prepare to report out.</i> <i>If adding a Media Literacy component, add another day of instruction.</i>
Lesson 3: Now I Care.	Through research on health or civic issues related to food and eating, students analyze issues from multiple perspectives and then respectfully present a personal stance and recommendations.	Part 1: 40-50 minutes Part 2: 45-60 minutes <i>This lesson takes place over 2-3 class periods with time allowed for students to prepare and deliver their presentations.</i>
Lesson 4: Because I Care!	As a large group, the class selects projects advisable for the school community to enhance healthy food and beverage choices. Students identify key steps to take to implement the identified project. <i>Students are not expected to implement the projects for this unit of study.</i>	Part 1: 35-40 minutes Part 2: 35-40 minutes

1. Why Should I Care?

Students relate their values and practices to food choices and healthy eating.

RELATED NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS:

STANDARD 1: Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.

STANDARD 3: Students will demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION:

- Circles of Caring Worksheet—one per student
- Sample Circles of Caring Worksheet or teacher/student generated ideas
- ½ sheet of paper—one per student
- “Most Healthy” and “Least Healthy” signs
- One post-it per student, or a square of paper per student and tape
- Projector and screen or whiteboard
- Nutrition Facts panel (from any processed food package) projected on a board, wall or screen; OR collection of labels from a variety of foods and beverages that are available to students at school

(Optional: Ask colleagues, students and friends to supply you with empty boxes, cans and/or packages. Be sure to keep the Nutrition Facts panels and list of ingredients from the products or keep the full packaging, if possible. You may want to make copies of the labels and enlarge the print so the text is easier for students to read.)



PART 1: 35-40 MINUTES; PART TWO: 35-40 MINUTES

DIRECTIONS:

Introduce. This lesson will provide the opportunity to reflect on what you care about and things that are important to you.

PART 1: START ACTIVITY.

Ask the students to close their eyes or look down at their desks and think about:

““What is important to you? What do you care about?” Think about what or who you would miss if they were no longer in your life.

Note: Students may act out a bit—such as laugh or giggle—this is a normal emotional response.

Step 1: Engage students. Distribute the Circles of Caring Worksheet. Share the provided sample worksheet or create a sample using ideas generated by you and/or the students.

1. Why Should I Care? continued

Step 2: Self reflect. Ask students to complete their Circles of Caring Worksheet by writing in the circles the people, things, places and activities they thought about during their reflection. They should capture those things they care most about in the innermost circles and place less influential people and things in the outermost circle farthest away from the center circle that represents the student. Let the students know they will not be sharing the worksheets but will be working with them later in the lesson. Challenge students to identify what they truly care about regardless of what others might think.

Alternative Strategy: Ask students to write in the circles those things they thought about during their reflection that help them to be healthy and well. Have them place the more significant things in the inner circles.

Step 3: Pair and share. Ask students to share some examples from their worksheets with a partner (only those things they feel comfortable sharing). Ask students to consider including “healthy eating” on their worksheets, if they have not done so already.

Note: Encourage students to place “healthy eating” where it is most authentic for them. It may be necessary to review or discuss and define “healthy eating.” See Dietary Guidelines for Americans in Glossary.

Acknowledge that people have different relationships with food and remind students to be respectful of all differences.

Step 4: Think deeper. Ask the students to think about how healthy eating can impact the people and things they care most about. Have students select up to three people, things or activities from the circles and list them in the section of the worksheet titled “Think deeper.” For each item, have students write a brief statement describing how “healthy eating” can have a positive impact.

Step 5: Think more. Distribute half sheets of paper to each student. Ask students to write (legibly) what action they would need to take in order to move “healthy eating” into an inner circle (showing that “healthy eating” is something they care about). Have students crumple their papers into balls, stand up and form a circle and toss their papers into the middle of the circle. Students each pick up one paper ball, trade the ball with another student and read the paper they end up with. request a sampling of students to share their papers. Encourage students to identify one action they can individually take to make “healthy eating” a higher priority and write it on the back of their Circles of Caring Worksheet.

Alternative Strategy: Collect the action steps and post the list for all to see throughout the unit of study. Remind students of their action steps. Assigning journal or blog entries to students on a weekly basis—for students to share their progress including identification of barriers and helping factors—can serve as an assessment of implementing personal change.

PART 2: PREPARATION.

Create a continuum. Write the words “Most Healthy” on a paper and post on the right side of a wall. Leave a space (10 feet or more, if possible) and on the left side post the words “Least Healthy.” Distribute a post-it (or sheet of paper) to each student.

Step 1: Engage students. Did you know that many students eat 50% of their daily calories while at school? Have students make groups of 3-4 and answer the question, “What are students eating and drinking at school?” Ask students to write one food or drink on their post-its (or square of paper)—not duplicating any answers within their group. (Ask students to write or print in big letters so the words can be seen from a distance.) By group, have students post their answers where they best fit along the continuum, placing foods and drinks that are somewhat healthy in the middle section.

1. *Why Should I Care?* continued

Step 2: Discover. Project a Nutrition Facts panel on a screen or board (or see Alternate Strategy below). Ask students to examine the panel. As a class, categorize the nutrients as ones that people should try to have more of in their diets (dietary fiber, proteins, vitamins and minerals, such as calcium and iron) and less of in their diets (fats, cholesterol, sugars and sodium). Let students know that, in general, Americans consume too many calories, typically in the form of fats and sugars. Calories also relate to number of portions ingested and it is important to be aware of the serving size listed on the Nutrition Facts panel.

Note: For more instructional content on general nutrition, portion sizes and label reading, go to the first three websites listed at the end of this lesson.

Alternative Strategy: Distribute labels from a variety of foods and beverages, preferably that are available at school, for students to examine.

Step 3: Analyze. Review the foods and beverages posted on the continuum and decide if the items were placed correctly using the knowledge gained. Ask a few volunteers to come up and read the post-its and, as a class, identify if any of the items need to be moved along the continuum and explain why. (Foods high in fiber, proteins, vitamins and minerals—posted near the “Most Healthy” side; foods high in fats, sugars and sodium—posted near the “Least Healthy” side.)

Step 4: Process.

In their small groups, ask students to respond to these questions (post or project):

- Do the foods and drinks that students are consuming in school contribute to their health and ability to learn?
- Do you care?
- Should you care?

Alternative Strategy: Discuss collectively as a class.

1. Why Should I Care? continued

WRAP-UP:

Encourage. Voice encouraging statements that let students know they can take responsibility for their health and can influence the choices they make.

Remind. State how healthy eating is important to overall health and how you will collectively explore food choices and the effects on individuals and the school community.

GLOSSARY:

Beverages: Also known as drinks or by category such as milk, juice, soda/pop, sports drinks, etc.—any liquid which is specifically prepared for human consumption.

Dietary Guidelines for Americans: Science-based advice to promote health and to reduce risk for major chronic diseases through diet and physical activity

Nutrition Facts Panel: Also known as the Nutrition Facts label and Nutrition Information panel—is required on most pre-packaged foods in the U.S. and in other countries. The information in the main or top section can vary with each food product; it contains product-specific information (serving size, calories, and nutrient information). The bottom part contains a footnote with Daily Values (DVs) for 2,000 and 2,500 calorie diets. This footnote provides recommended dietary information for important nutrients, including fats, sodium and fiber. The footnote is found only on larger packages and does not change from product to product.

INTEGRATION IDEAS:

Language Arts: React to the following quote from Rob Gilbert: “First we form habits, then they form us. Conquer your bad habits or they will conquer you.”

Science: Explore nutrients and their impact on the human body.

For a listing of web sites related to this lesson, go to

[CARE2EAT WEB SITES](#)

Use the Smart Snacks Product Calculator to analyze snacks and side items. Find the Calculator at:

[CALCULATOR](#)

Review the USDA’s Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

Use the Smart Snacks Product Calculator to determine if your snack, side, entree or beverage is compliant.

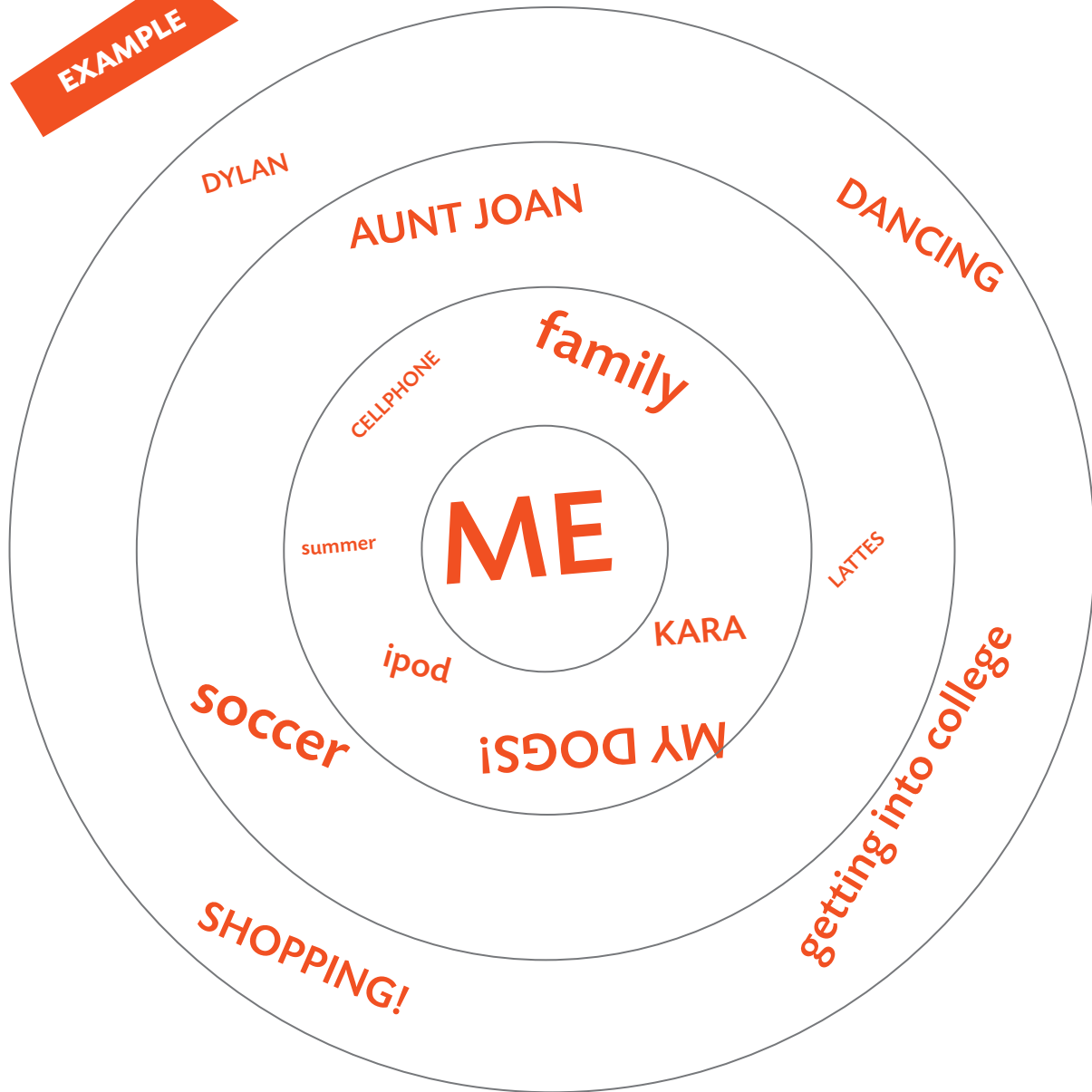
My students really enjoyed the Circles Activity.

—HIGH SCHOOL HEALTH EDUCATION TEACHER

CIRCLES OF CARING

My name is ALEX and I care about...

EXAMPLE



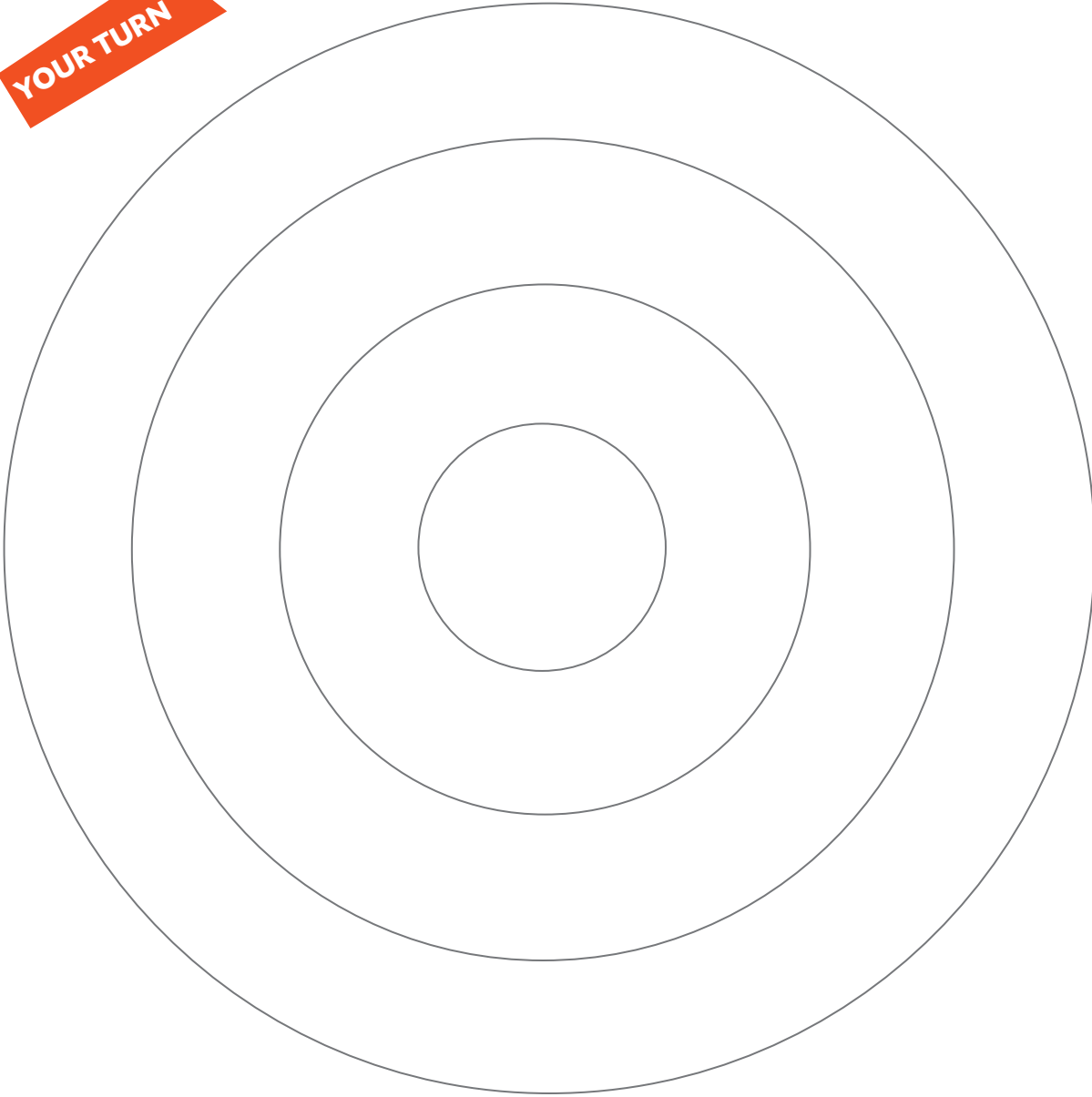
THINK DEEPER

- 1 **Family**—having dinner with my family and eating healthy foods gives us all more energy and we'll be able to do more things outdoors together (skiing, biking...)
- 2 **Dogs**—if my dogs eat healthy, they will live longer
- 3 **Soccer**—good food = good player

CIRCLES OF CARING

My name is _____ and I care
about...

YOUR TURN



THINK DEEPER

- 1
- 2
- 3

THREE HOLE PUNCH

THREE HOLE PUNCH

THREE HOLE PUNCH

2. Who Else Cares? (I MEAN REALLY CARES!)

Students identify how decisions are made that affect their health.

RELATED NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS:

STANDARD 3: Students will demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health.

STANDARD 5: Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION:

- Who Makes Decisions about What You Eat in School? Worksheet—one copy per student
- School Foods Scenarios—cut out and separate the six scenarios
- Six signs with scenarios' roles (one role per sign): Principal, School Store Manager, School Nurse, Parent, Vendor, Food Service Director—post around the room roughly equal distance apart (provide room for students to gather by each sign)
- Materials for the Scavenger Hunt—see Part 2—Step One (Step One may include paper and markers, digital cameras, a map of the school, student-created maps, etc.)



PART 1: 40-50 MINUTES; PART 2: 45-60 MINUTES IN CLASS TIME DEPENDING ON THE MANNER OF REPORTING OUT.

Note: This lesson takes place over 2-3 class periods with time allowed for students to conduct their work and prepare to report out.

DIRECTIONS:

Introduce. In this lesson we will explore what influences food choices in the school environment: What foods are sold and purchased and who makes these decisions?

PART 1: START ACTIVITY.

Distribute the **Who Makes Decisions about What You Eat in Schools? Worksheet**. Ask students to complete the worksheet.

Step 1: Engage students. After students have completed the worksheet, ask them to assume one of these three physical postures based on which one most reflects their opinions: 1) Stand upright—if they feel they have complete control over the foods that they can purchase at schools; 2) Get out of the chair, but crouch or squat to demonstrate that they feel they have some control over the foods they can purchase; 3) Stay seated if they feel that they have little or no control over the foods they can purchase at school. Have students look around to see the result of this “poll.”

Step 2: Discuss. As a large group, discuss who has the control over foods sold in schools and what influences these decision-makers. Make sure the discussion reflects how students feel, as demonstrated in Step 1.

Step 3: Enact scenarios. Assign the roles of the persons in the scenarios to six students (one scenario to each student). Encourage the “actors” to be serious, passionate and convincing in their roles. Have the students “perform” their roles one at a time in front of the class—being sure to introduce their assigned role/title.

Step 4: React and respond. Ask all students to individually stand by the sign of the person they think shows the least concern for having healthy food and drink choices for students; the person whose comments are most unacceptable. Students talk with others by the same sign to come to consensus on why they think this person is the least caring, most offensive or “clueless” and discuss what they would like to say to that person. Additionally, ask students to consider the paradoxes, contradictions and/or mixed messages inherent in that person’s message. Have groups report out briefly. After the students have reported out, ask if any of the students want to change the sign that they are standing by and allow them to move to that sign. Still standing by the signs, have the students come to consensus on one or more solutions or alternatives for the person; what would be a way for this person to better demonstrate care about the food and drink choices that students have at school? What other options does this person have to meet his/her needs and concerns while ensuring healthier choices for students?

Note: You might want to add blank chart paper by each sign so students have a place to write their messages and/or capture the solutions or alternatives that they generate.

Step 5: Process. Applaud students’ efforts in performing their roles and in giving the situations some serious thought. Rhetorically pose the questions, “Who else might be selling your health and in what ways? And, how might you be playing a role in perpetuating these practices?” Let students know that Part 2 of this lesson will explore these notions.

Alternative Strategy: A lesson or activity on Media Literacy inserted here could enhance students’ understanding of concepts related to marketing and advertising. See the resources and lesson extensions or consider using Lesson 9 from the ReadB4UEat! Teacher Guide found at www.HealthierGeneration.org/readb4ueat.

PART 2: PREPARATION.

Remind students that the character of the “Food Service Director” in the scenarios in Part 1 defined competitive foods and beverages as those items that “compete” with the school meals programs (those that receive federal reimbursement or support). These competitive foods and drinks are found in a la carte lines in the cafeteria, vending machines, school stores, snack carts and snack bars and in fundraisers.

Step 1: Conduct a Scavenger Hunt. Give students a certain amount of time (such as an additional class period or as homework/out of class time) to locate competitive foods and drinks on the school campus and to find messages aimed at students around the school to eat or drink something outside of the school meal. Encourage students to be creative in looking for marketing and branding messages (see definitions in Glossary) they get in such places as scoreboards and book covers. Offer students the following options—selecting the ones that best fit your school environment and the time you’ve allotted for this lesson:

CHOOSE ONE:

- Create a map of the school and indicate on the map where competitive foods and drinks—those sold outside of the school meals—and marketing and branding messages are found. Develop a key to identify foods, drinks and messages.
- Create two columns and list on the left side the competitive foods and drinks and on the right side identify where these are found.
- Take photos of competitive foods and drinks and marketing and branding messages. Put the photos together in a collage. Consider adding actual packages of products for this collage (or craft a collage just using wrappers and other packaging).
- Use the USDA’s Smart Snacks in School Standards in the Appendices, or go to:
www.healthiergeneration.org/smartsnackbeverages
www.healthiergeneration.org/smartsnackfoods
 to compare all the competitive foods and drinks that the school sells. Also, use the Smart Snacks Product Calculator at
www.healthiergeneration.org/productcalculator
 to determine if snacks meet the Smart Snacks in School Nutrition Standards. To find a variety of snacks and beverages that meets the Smart Snacks in School Nutrition Standards, go to the Product Navigator at
www.healthiergeneration.org/productnavigator

Alternative Strategy: In addition to noting where competitive foods and drinks—and related marketing/branding—are found, students can also be asked to distinguish between healthier and less healthy choices to reinforce learning from Lesson 1. All of the choices can be divided into 3-4 groupings of locations (such as cafeteria and gymnasium; outside the building—including fields and/or courts, the auditorium and teachers’ lounge; offices, all classrooms and hallways including lockers). Assign each student to one grouping of locations ensuring that all are covered. When students reconvene, they can process their findings with students representing other locations so, as a whole group, they get a sense of the entire school environment. (This kind of activity is called a “Jigsaw.”)

Step 2: Recount and regale. Determine a way for students to report out on their findings. One example is that this can be done as a Gallery Walk where all students post their survey tools, inventories, maps and photos and students mull around the room and look at all the items. Consider that sharing can be done in small groups or as presentations to the whole class.

Step 3: Process. As a whole class (or in small groups), lead a discussion that covers the following questions:

- Who is selling students’ health on the school campus and in what ways?
- How do students participate in this practice and what do students do to perpetuate their vulnerability as objects by which others profit?
- What, if any, connection can be made between “personal choice” (what you and your peers like to eat/buy) and the marketing presence/availability of these foods at school or in the community on the way to school?
- What school practices promote healthy eating?
- What are benefits for schools in modeling and reinforcing healthy eating behaviors for students?
- How can schools access healthier food choices; what recommendations do you have for changing the school food environment?

Alternative Strategy: Questions can be used as a homework assignment or a separate language arts lesson.

2. Who Else Cares? I Mean Really Cares! continued

WRAP-UP:

Re-examine. Have students review their worksheet “Who Makes Decisions about What You Eat in School?” Ask students if their choices have changed. (They can re-mark the grid by filling in the boxes that now best apply.) Discuss if there has been a shift in thinking as to whom and what influences their food choices at school.

Role model. Choose to eat healthy food choices while at school. Consider stepping up and working to mobilize change in the school nutrition environment—such as by joining the School Wellness Council.

GLOSSARY:

Branding: Connecting a product or producer with a recognizable name, trademark—a “brand” (can include linking an item with a logo).

Competitive Foods and Beverages: In most schools, the nutrition environment has two components: the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) school meals program and the sale of competitive foods. USDA defines competitive foods as those foods and beverages, regardless of nutritional value, sold at a school separate from the USDA school meals program.

Marketing: Promotion, distribution and selling of a product or service.

School Meals Programs: Federally assisted food program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. The program was established under the National School Lunch Act, signed by President Harry Truman in 1946, and now includes a school breakfast and after-school snack initiatives.

INTEGRATION IDEAS:

Language Arts: Write a position paper about the following statement: “Food and drink choices that are healthier give students more—not less—options, even when less healthy items are removed from the school’s campus.”

Visual/Performing Arts: Find creative ways to express any frustration, anger or excitement you feel about the eating choices at school or the way money is raised at the possible expense of student health.

LESSON EXTENSIONS:

Research definitions and concepts of media literacy.

Create mock ads and/or parodies of packaging.

Write slogans, jingles, etc. For example, instead

of “Smarties,” create an ad and packaging for

“Dummies.” Or create media for truly healthy

products. Explore what an honest ad might look or

sound like. Post a commercial on YouTube.

Using the foods located at school as examples, discuss serving sizes and nutritional values of the foods found.

Extend the Scavenger Hunt to include the community, especially those venues where students typically buy snacks and beverages.

For a listing of web sites related to this lesson, go to

[CARE2EAT WEB SITES](#)

Who Makes Decisions about What You Eat in School?

Your name _____ Today's date _____

Directions: In the chart, fill in the box that you feel best describes how much you agree with each statement:

Belief Statements	DON'T AGREE	KIND OF AGREE	AGREE	TOTALLY AGREE
Example: I like the foods I choose to eat at school.			X	
The school offers a wide selection of snack, drink and food choices.				
I can eat healthfully at school.				
The principal makes decisions that impact the food and drink choices I can make at school.				
The kitchen/food service staff makes decisions that impact the food and drink choices I can make at school.				
Other school staff make decisions that impact the food and drink choices I can make at school.				
My friends influence the food and drink choices I make at school.				
Food companies influence the food and drink choices I make at school.				
I feel that I have complete control over my food and drink choices at school.				
Comments or thoughts about the choices provided for you at school:				

School Food Scenarios (all are actual—or composites of—real-life situations)

PRINCIPAL

“One of my biggest responsibilities is keeping this school afloat financially. There are salaries for the teachers and such things as heat and electricity for the school building. I need to make sure this school is a safe place to work and learn. We always need to raise money to support activities that enhance the core subject areas. For example, sport teams and the band need equipment and uniforms. Some days it feels hard to make sure there is enough paper and pens in the buildings never mind functioning computers! Selling lots of snacks in vending machines, on lunch lines and through fundraisers helps kids get more of what they need at school as well as some of the extras that they enjoy.”

SCHOOL STORE MANAGER

“My role in helping manage the school store is to teach kids about business skills. We sell all kinds of food from chips and chocolate to ice cream and soda. This is what makes money; this is tried and true. I want the kids who operate the store to feel successful and to understand the concepts of supply and demand. Kids won’t buy healthier items and the store would have to close. What kind of lesson does that teach? Plus, we give some of the proceeds of our store to classes for field trips. How else would kids get to visit some of the places they like to go if the school store closes?”

SCHOOL NURSE

“I am really concerned about the epidemic of childhood obesity. Today, nearly 1 in 3 youth are at an unhealthy weight. The obesity epidemic is clearly taking its toll, as more and more kids are developing conditions and diseases typically associated with adults. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 in 3 individuals born in the year 2000 will develop type 2 diabetes. It’s also hard on our healthcare system. There is a high personal and emotional cost too. Kids with diabetes are often absent more than other kids. I care so much about these issues that I’m organizing a fundraiser for diabetes prevention and treatment. I’m working with parents in the school to conduct a series of bake sales. Our slogan is ‘Sweeten your family’s day— bring them home some sweet treats and help prevent diabetes.’”

School Food Scenarios (all are actual—or composites of—real-life situations)

PARENT

“I’m one of the parents working with the school nurse to conduct bake sales that will take place every week immediately after school throughout the fall. I like bake sales because they are quick and easy to put together. I just buy a box of cookies and then give my son and daughter a few dollars to buy some of the treats they like. Sometimes I bake things too—when I have time. I feel good about contributing to the school—it’s the least I can do! I’m also doing my part by buying other things there to bring home to share with my family and friends. I like to think that I’m bringing a little sweetness to the whole neighborhood!”

VENDOR

“I stock the vending machines at school. I’m a small business owner and just stock what the school folks tell me to put into the machines. I did get a letter from the food service director asking about healthier options, and I tried to put a few things like baked chips into the machines. But they didn’t sell as well as the usual stuff. I know what kids buy and that’s what I’m selling. I have to put food on my table for my family. I can’t risk things not selling. Plus, the manufacturers give me bonuses when I sell certain things. I’ve got to follow the money. I would help more, but I also don’t have time to figure out what’s healthier and I just can’t risk a drop in revenue.”

SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE DIRECTOR

“I constantly walk a tight line when it comes to managing my budget. The federal government does not give me enough money to cover the rising cost of food and the whole operation of the food service department. I have to pay staff, keep equipment functioning and buy food. The list goes on and on. I try not to raise the price of the meals but sometimes I have to. If the amount of reimbursement that the government gives me does not go up, I have to sell all this other stuff called competitive foods and beverages. The food and drinks in the a la carte line (like the chips, ice cream, snack cakes, and iced tea) and the vending machines (even food and drinks sold in the school store and through fundraisers) are called ‘competitive’ because they compete with sales of the school meals program. I know some people also think these ‘compete’ with students’ health. I sell healthy options but students prefer the unhealthier items. I get pressure from the principal and school board to make money. I get pressure from the students about the food. I get pressure from parents to improve the food. And now there are stricter regulations about what I can serve and sell. I need help but I can’t find anyone to turn to and I don’t know where or how to start doing something different. Who has time?”

3. Now I Care.

Students will communicate their position on one or more health or civic issues related to food and eating.

RELATED NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS:

STANDARD 1: Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.

STANDARD 2: Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology and other factors on health behaviors.

STANDARD 4: Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

STANDARD 8: Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family and community health.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION:

- ☐ I Believe ... Worksheet—enough pages for each student to make notes on all presentations



PART 1: 40-50 MINUTES; PART 2: 45-60 MINUTES DEPENDING ON THE NUMBER OF PRESENTATIONS.

Note: This lesson takes place over 2-3 class periods with time allowed for students to prepare and deliver their presentations.

DIRECTIONS:

Introduce. This lesson will provide an opportunity for you to examine personal freedom and personal rights vs. the good of the society, explore public health and civic issues relative to food and eating and communicate a message with your position to peers and adults.

Note: To help younger students grasp these concepts, select fewer choices that are developmentally appropriate and most relevant such as those marked with an asterisk () below.*

PART 1: START ACTIVITY.

Food choices and one's body weight are personal matters that transcend into the realm of public health and society as a whole. As a result, issues of civil rights and social justice are interconnected with food and eating options.

Step 1: Engage students. Discuss some situations—related to food and/or eating—where the balance of personal and societal rights may conflict. These issues provide opportunities to explore individual rights, as well as government, private sector (corporate) and community responsibility. Examples include:

- Menu-labeling in restaurants/schools*
- Proximity of fast food restaurants and convenience stores to schools*
- Schools charging more for unhealthy foods in vending machines or on a la carte lines*
- Rules applied to students eating in schools—including time allowed*
- Content of School Wellness Policy*

3. *Now I Care.* continued

- Using food as a reward or incentive*
- Student access to affordable healthy food choices
- Schools weighing and measuring students to keep track of their Body Mass Indexes and writing letters to families to notify them of the results
- Closed vs. open school campus policies
- Communities having access to affordable fresh fruits and vegetables
- States taxing soda and/or snack foods (similar to tobacco and alcohol taxes)
- Food marketing to children
- Government requiring individuals to have health insurance
- Economics of obesity
- Food and poverty
- Weight bias e.g. airlines charging more for overweight passengers

Step 2: Brainstorm. Lead students in a brainstorm about other global, national, local or school-based situations related to food and/or eating that impact individuals' rights and potential responsibilities of the broader community and public.

Step 3: Take a stand. Ask students to work individually, in pairs or in small groups, to select one issue and 1) think critically about the balance of personal rights with societal rights and social justice, 2) see the issue from multiple perspectives—provide pros and cons, 3) assert a personal stance, and 4) make recommendations for responsible action to respectfully address the issue. Each topic should be approved by the teacher.

STUDENTS WILL SELECT A METHOD TO PRESENT THEIR VIEWS SUCH AS A:

- Personal debate (where a student goes back and forth with him/herself presenting both sides of the issue)
- Debate with another person each taking a different point of view
- Research paper
- Essay
- Newspaper article
- Blog or series of blog postings
- Radio spot
- Role play
- Other creative presentation

Notes:

Students should title their projects; I Believe _____
(fill in the blank)

Remind students to be mindful of the culturally diverse and interdependent world in which we live.

Their presentations should reflect respect for personal and cultural differences.

Establish a time limit for the presentation of the final product such as 5 minutes.

Instruction on how to develop views based on pros and cons, cause and effect, etc. may be needed if the students are unfamiliar with this kind of persuasive writing.

Students are to prepare an outline of their presentations.

Give students additional class time and/or assign the project as homework with a clear deadline.

PART 2: PREPARATION.

Designate a process for the order of presentations. Distribute the I Believe ... Information Worksheet to each student.

Step 1: Present. Ask students (alone or in pairs or small groups) to present their positions. Remind them of the time limit. You may want to ask a student to be the timekeeper. Provide the class directions on the I Believe ... Information Worksheet that students will complete after each presentation.

Step 2: Process. Have the students reflect on whether approaching issues from two sides was difficult to do—why or why not. Discuss the general themes of the recommendations presented. Ask students how their opinions may have changed as a result of what was presented.

WRAP-UP:

Acknowledge. Thank the students for their thoughtful presentations and discussion.

Remind. Tell the students that many of their ideas presented will be useful in the next lesson and to think about what they have learned.

GLOSSARY:

Civic issues: Issues that take into account the recognition that a person is a member of a larger social fabric. Therefore issues that affect the society also affect the individual and vice versa

Personal rights: Rights pertaining to one's own person—including one's body

INTEGRATION IDEAS:

Language Arts: Write a persuasive "op ed" commentary on one or more of the issues and submit it to the student newsletter/newspaper/blog.

Social Studies: Discuss civil rights and social justice issues around access and affordability of food from a community perspective.

LESSON EXTENSIONS:

Use Twitter to tweet every time you eat something healthy or post on a student blog that has been established for the class.

Research local, state or national issues that relate to school or community food policies and prepare a one-page summary to share with school authorities.

Talk with the school Food Service Director or cafeteria manager to learn about food procurement processes.

For a listing of web sites related to this lesson, go to: [CARE2EAT WEB SITES](#)

I BELIEVE

(INFO WORKSHEET)

Your name _____ Class _____

PRESENTERS:

Format of Presentation:

Issue:

Main Points:

Recommendations for Action:

PRESENTERS:

Format of Presentation:

Issue:

Main Points:

Recommendations for Action:

PRESENTERS:

Format of Presentation:

Issue:

Main Points:

Recommendations for Action:

PRESENTERS:

Format of Presentation:

Issue:

Main Points:

Recommendations for Action:

PRESENTERS:

Format of Presentation:

Issue:

Main Points:

Recommendations for Action:

4. Because I Care!

Students will identify steps in advocating for healthier snacks and other food and beverage choices in their school community.

RELATED NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS:

STANDARD 5: Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.

STANDARD 8: Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family and community health.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION:

- On a board, flip chart or screen post the Projects to Consider list (see Part 1: Start activity)
- Index cards—enough for three cards per students
- Step Up for a Healthier School Worksheet—six copies
- Optional: Post directions for the Wild Card Brainstorm, especially reminding students of the symbols for the cards (Plus Signs +++, Frowning Face (☹), Smiling Face (☺))



PART 1: 35-40 MINUTES; PART 2: 35-40 MINUTES

DIRECTIONS:

Introduce. In this lesson we will examine what it takes to make changes in the school food environment and recognize that change is a process with different phases. Change can take a long time and usually requires persistence. Think about cultural shifts; how long it takes for legislation to become enacted. Traffic safety, for example, has gone through many iterations of change and continues to do so with shifts in required safety features in cars and speed limits. Tobacco use behaviors continue to evolve with taxes and prohibitions of use in more and more public places. These societal shifts have been decades in the making!

PART 1: START ACTIVITY.

Post the following list titled “Projects to Consider”:

- Design and conduct a non-food fundraiser (e.g., fun run, auction, car or dog wash...)
- Conduct taste tests of healthier foods and drinks
- Create a social marketing campaign to encourage healthier snack choices
- Promote the sale of healthier choices in the school store (e.g., lower the price of healthier options and increase the price of less healthy choices; implement a “frequent buyers” discount program; offer product samples; etc.)
- Take steps to host a Farmer’s Market on your school campus (or other ways to bridge farmers and the school)
- Take steps to start or enhance a school garden (can include growing produce in containers)
- Use the cafeteria/school kitchen to learn more about nutrition and cooking; work on menu-labeling

4. *Because I Care!* continued

- Start a student nutrition club
- Improve the food choices in the cafeteria (e.g., add a salad bar)
- Create a mentor program with younger students to encourage healthy snack choices and snack preparation (consider pairing it with lessons on literacy—finding books to read about food)
- Conduct a project of your own design out of the school (e.g., working with convenience stores to stock fresh fruits and vegetables, efforts to change the foods and drinks that your family buys, changing vending machine choices in places that youth tend to go...)

Step 1: Explain. Request that a volunteer read the list of Projects to Consider. Tell students that this is not a list of projects that the students will undertake. It is a list of projects that students will examine in order to identify and recommend potential steps of action. After the list has been read, ask students to brainstorm other possible projects. Add suggestions to the list.

Step 2: Vote. Conduct a “Power Vote” of the items on the list: Each student gets 3 votes as s/he wishes (e.g., can put all 3 votes on one item, or split the votes up...). You may consider asking students to put their heads down on their desks or close their eyes—so they won’t be influenced by watching each other. Read each item on the list one at a time and ask students to raise their fingers according to the number of votes they want to use. If necessary, conduct enough rounds of power voting until the top 5-6 choices are clearly identified (eliminating the “lowest voted on” items in each round).

Step 3: Group students. Ask students to equally distribute themselves among the 5-6 choices selected in Step 2. (Suggest that students go to their first choices. See if tweaks need to be made to the groups for more even sizing. Ask for volunteers from the largest groups to distribute themselves among the smaller groups. Thank those students who volunteer to move.)

Step 4: Conduct the Wild Card Brainstorm. Students are now in their small groups—each group representing one of the 5-6 “Projects to Consider.” Give students a stack of index cards (enough for 3 cards per student). Explain that this is similar to traditional brainstorming, except students will write ideas down instead of calling them out. Students will brainstorm their Strengths (skills and talents they can contribute relative to their “Project to Consider”), Possible Barriers (things that could get in the way of the project getting implemented), Possible Helping Factors (people and resources that could help make the project successful).

Note: Offer an example of what students might write on their cards. Use the example of a non-food fundraiser:

Strengths: Susan is a good artist, so she can create posters for a fundraising event;

Possible Barriers: People who liked the candy and bake sales might get angry;

Possible Helping Factors: The principal is supportive and can serve as an adviser.

4. *Because I Care!* continued

Post the three symbols and their meaning for easy reference. Direct each student to take three cards and draw three Plus Signs (+++) on the top of one of their cards which stand for Strengths. On another card, they draw a Frown (☹) which stands for Possible Barriers. On the third card, they draw a Smile (☺) which stands for Possible Helping Factors. Walk the students through the first round or two of this activity by having them write one thing on each card: A strength they can contribute to this project, something they think could be a barrier, and something or someone they think could be helpful. Ask them to write their first name and last initial by the strength they wrote.

Note: Explain that students need to write neatly and small enough so a few other students can also write on the cards.

When students are finished with the three cards, have them place the cards face down in the middle of their small group. For the next 10 minutes, ask students to pick up a card at random and as quickly as possible write an idea on the card as appropriate. Every time they finish writing on a card, they turn it back into the mix and pick up another card. They can write on both sides of the cards. Have students continue until you let them know 10 minutes is up. Encourage them to generate as many ideas as possible. Remind them to put their initials every time they write a strength.

Step 5: Review. In their groups, have the students read through their cards to see all the strengths they have generated and the barriers and helping factors they identified.

PART 2: PREPARATION.

Disseminate one copy of the **Step Up to a Healthier School Worksheet** to each group and walk through the directions with the students.

Step 1: Identify action steps and more. Staying in their small groups, write the project that is under consideration at the top of the page (e.g., conduct a non-food fundraiser). Use the worksheet to list 5 key steps that will help get this project implemented. For each step, the group should use the cards from the brainstorm to select one or more of the group members who would be good at that step (because of a strength that s/he brings). Write the person's name (or persons' names) on the worksheet and why s/he was chosen. Aim to get every group member's name on the worksheet.

Each group should identify on their worksheet an important advocate (someone who could speak up about their project and/or help get it implemented) and note why they think this person would want to help their cause.

Note: Remind students that this is an action-planning tool—they are not expected to actually implement these plans.

Step 2: Share. Each group has three-five minutes to share their action steps with the class. In their reporting out, students should state who their advocate is and why they selected this person.

Step 3: Process. After each group has presented, ask the class how messages or requests for assistance might be adapted for a different advocate or a different audience (for example, if they were presenting their action steps to a school board, the principal or superintendent, a community leader...).

WRAP-UP:

Reflect on change. Engage the class in a conversation about changes they've made that have had a positive impact on their lives, or changes they observed or participated in with their families and/or communities, or as a member of the larger society. (This might relate back to the social and civil issues addressed in Lesson 3).

Congratulate. Give the students kudos for their work throughout the unit and for being collaborative with one another. Ask students what they learned and about changes they have made or considered.

Note: Students could review their Circle of Caring Worksheet—or create a new one—from Lesson 1 to see if any shifts have occurred. Ask students to reflect on the lesson titles and determine if they've moved along the "continuum of care"—from Why Should I Care to Because I Care!

Encourage mobilization. Students might now feel motivated and ready to actually make changes in their school environment and go through the phases of change (assessing the environment, getting important support, taking action and evaluating and promoting success).

4. *Because I Care!* continued

GLOSSARY:

Ally (Allies): One that is associated with another that is a helper.

Change process: The process during which the changes of a system are implemented by following a predefined framework or structure. Key phases include assessing the situation or environment, determining helping and hindering factors, designing and taking action, evaluating actions/monitoring change, and notifying others (e.g., describing change outcomes, promoting successes...)

INTEGRATION IDEAS:

Social Studies:

1. Explore the process of change in government—consider using civil rights as an example (especially indicating the true timelines of change).
2. Identify where food in the cafeteria comes from and determine environmental impact of shipping, packaging, buying locally, etc.

Family Consumer Science:

1. Conduct nutritional analysis of school menus. (Links to science too. For mathematics, post nutrient analysis in the cafeteria and track food sales. Also, measure food waste.) Make sure to meet with the Food Service Department in advance. Do this work as a partnership.
2. Include local farm products or produce from a school garden in recipes.

Engagement and empowerment of youth is not an easy thing and I think that this unit of study has done an excellent job of engaging youth. —AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM EDUCATOR

LESSON EXTENSIONS:

Create messages for the school's PSA or morning announcement system for promoting healthy eating.

Students present their action steps to the advocates they identified.

Students implement one or more of the projects identified in the lesson.

For a listing of web sites related to this lesson, go to

CARE2EAT WEB SITES

STEP UP TO A HEALTHIER SCHOOL

Your name _____ Class _____

Project name _____

Directions: Complete the worksheet by filling in the steps.
(Start with Step One—the foundational step!)

WHAT: Identify a step needed to implement the project

WHO: Identify a person who has (or persons who have) skills needed to complete this step

WHY: Identify what skills this person can contribute to the completion of this step



What:
Who:
Why:



What:
Who:
Why:



What:
Who:
Why:



What:
Who:
Why:



START HERE!

What:
Who:
Why:

Advocate: An important person who could help make the project successful.

Identify an advocate:

Name:

Title:

THREE HOLE PUNCH

THREE HOLE PUNCH

THREE HOLE PUNCH

Appendices

Appendix A—USDA’s Smart Snacks in School Standards

Appendix B—Smart Snacks Food Inventory
www.healthiergeneration.org/smartsnackfoods

Appendix C—Smart Snacks Beverage Inventory
www.healthiergeneration.org/smartsnackbeverages